

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
April 25, 2011
Special Teleconference Meeting

Chair Cox called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. All members were present except Col. Sullivan and Donald Handeland. Col Sullivan was excused, and Mr. Handeland was absent due to technical difficulties. The chair asked if there were any disclosures. There were none. The agenda was approved as presented with motion made by Pat Shier and seconded by Jim Merriner. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. There were no persons waiting to make public comment.

Work Session

Commissioner Hanley said the purpose of the meeting was to review the proposed Alaska Performance Scholarship regulation as it pertained to the grace period. He introduced Eddy Jeans, Education Policy Coordinator. Mr. Jeans said the proposed regulation did two things: 1) it allows students to use their Alaska Performance Scholarship during a grace period, approved by the commissioner, during which the students have one year to complete the required curriculum for the scholarship; and 2), if the student is taking the course at a public school, it allows the student to be counted as a part-time student, thereby giving the district state funding for the student. If the student was to take the courses in a postsecondary setting, then the course would retroactively apply to the high school curriculum requirement. Students can take the grace period courses through correspondence, public school, or at the university level, and can access the scholarship while completing the requirement. Mr. Jeans reiterated that if the student takes the course through the university, the scholarship pays; otherwise, the foundation formula pays. The grace period will be effective for two years; then it will expire. It is there to help students who might otherwise not have sufficient credits or time to qualify for the scholarship. By 2013, all students will have the opportunity to take all of the required curriculum, and the grace period will not be necessary. Mr. Jeans said there was no provision for pay back for the student who was in the grace period, received the scholarship money, and did not complete the course.

Regarding the concerns raised by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Mr. Jeans said he had worked with them to resolve their issues. He noted that Fairbanks would not have any students applying for the grace period because they offered all the required subjects. He also verified that the count would be .25 for one course.

Business meeting

Pat Shier moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the amendments to 4 AAC 43.035, Grace period for curriculum requirements. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Board Comments

Carol Schaeffer said she has some questions about what the board did at its March meeting concerning the Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) graduation requirement changes. She indicated that Superintendent Randy Hawk said that the issue still rested with the State Board of Education. She said her intent was for the proposal to be taken back to the MEHS advisory board for further discussion, but it had not been on the recent agenda. She said there was another advisory meeting on May 4 and asked if it could be put on the advisory agenda at that time. Deputy Commissioner Morse said that the MEHS Manual states that only the superintendent or the chair of the advisory committee can place something on the advisory agenda. There was a short discussion regarding the board's action at the March meeting. Most recalled that the MEHS graduation proposal had been taken off the agenda to be taken up again in June. The chair asked the board secretary to research the action.

Geri Benshoof, Tiarna Fischler, Janel Keplinger, Phil Schneider, Jim Merriner, Pat Shier and the Commissioner had no comments.

Esther Cox reminded the board that at the June meeting the board would be setting its calendar for the next fiscal year. She asked the board to come ready with dates they will be available for all the meetings, including being aware of spring break dates.

The meeting was adjourned by mutual consent.