

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
Juneau, AK
March 17 & 18, 2011

March 17, 2011

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, AK. Chair Cox welcomed Commissioner Hanley. Commissioner Hanley administered The Oath of Office to Pat Shier having been reappointed by the Governor to the board. A quorum was present. Janel Keplinger and Col Sullivan were excused. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The chair asked if anyone had any conflicts of interest. Donald Handeland said he was a student at Mt. Edgecumbe High School, and the discussion did not affect his graduation status. Pat Shier said his wife was employed by the Yukon Koyukuk School District. The chair ruled that they could participate. There were no objections.

The Chair asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none. The agenda was moved by Pat Shier and seconded by Jim Merriner and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Welcome

Andi Story was present to welcome the board to Juneau. Ms. Story is the vice chair of the Juneau School Board. She said that the district graduation rate was 76% last year. She said they had students in the alternative programs who didn't complete their work in four years but were still in school. She said they had open enrollment with smaller learning communities in ninth grade, career pathways, a place-based curriculum, and had secured a grant to extend the school day for students to make up credits from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. They do weekly intervention and allow for an enrichment time, they are using the instructional coaching model, and they have an hour early release for professional development every other week. Ms. Story also noted that they work closely with the Association of Alaska School Boards and invited the board to participate in the November annual conference.

Public Comment

Cathy LeCompte in the Anchorage LIO spoke in favor of the Tech Prep Consortium Program. She described the program as one in which students would earn college credit while still in high school. She said they were looking for sustainable funding. They are currently being funded by the federal Perkins Tech Prep, which may not be funded this year.

Theresa Holt from the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education spoke about eliminating the practice of restraint and seclusion in schools. She said it was a big issue with students with disabilities. A council survey found there was little training with restraint and seclusion and few policies regarding it in districts. She advocated for a regulation and for its use only in emergency situations.

Amy Lujan with the Alaska Association of Business Officials was concerned with the fund balance regulation. She advocated for moving the compensated absences to the reserve section for better planning, saying it should be an allowable reserve.

Bruce Johnson, Executive Director of the Alaska Association of School Administrators, said that they had recently had a fly-in in Juneau and complemented Commissioner Hanley on the amount of time he devoted to the attendees, saying he was enthusiastically received. He also advocated for moving the compensated absences to the reserve section, saying that they needed all the latitude under the law.

Work Session

Commissioner Hanley welcomed Tiarna Fischler to the board as its student advisor-elect, noting that she comes from a distinguished Title I school, Manokotak.

Graduation. Commissioner Hanley introduced Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management. Mr. McCormick said all sophomores take the HSGQE. He indicated that Alaska was going to a new true cohort with a verbal agreement that it can use fifth-year graduation rate soon. In 2010, 8,245 students received a regular diploma; in 2004 there were 7,290. In 2010 there was a 21% increase from 2004 in those students who were Native American/American Indian receiving diplomas. The U.S. Census has changed its coding, so the counts of Native American/American Indian numbers have changed. Tracking is better now with the student management systems that have been put into place. Mr. McCormick reiterated that unless a student has completed schooling in four years, he/she is considered a drop out even though he/she may have completed their work in the fifth year. He said the two calculations for the fourth and fifth years are reported in the Report Card to the Public. Nationally, 28 states use a form of the exit exam. Eighteen states have comprehensive exit exams, and five of the 18 use end-of-course exams. The number of end-of-course exams seems to be different in states and are usually course driven. Mr. McCormick said the department doesn't have any historical data about how the HSGQE has improved student performance. He noted that the university would have the data on how many students have to take remedial courses compared to before the HSQGE was put into place. The board said they'd like to have a discussion during the next retreat. Chair Cox said that she felt that Senator Davis was going to want to hear the board's thoughts on doing away with the HSGQE, SB10. She said they had to be ready with a position. She said she would make the introductions and then all board members will have a chance to talk with the Joint Committee on Education. Chair Cox said by way of history that it was the business community that motivated the issue by complaining about graduates. When the exam was initially instituted, the first sophomore class to take it did so poorly that they reduced the scores in statute to test only essential skills. Geri Benshoof wondered how many students have to retake the test. She also indicated that she felt it was grossly unfair to special education students who may never be able to pass it. Deputy Commissioner Les Morse noted that a high-stakes test needs to be aligned to the state standards. The challenge in using a publisher's test is it can only be adjusted to a degree for accommodations. He said Alaska's tests were driven by the Noon lawsuit in which settlement was based on agreement about what accommodations would be allowed by the state test. The results of that are in the department regulations. The department can pull data on special

education students, how many retake the exam and are able to pass. Holder of certificates of achievement have to meet local credit requirements to receive the certificates. Pat Shier said when he worked at the Department of Labor British Petroleum (BP) told the Workforce Investment Board that they administered the WorkKeys for employment (several years ago). The department looked into it and Workplace Alaska adopted it. Les Morse said there was reluctance in the current administration to give up the accountability without another accountability measure in place. He said that in the next day's session they would be discussing a comprehensive and end-of-course exam approach, which is another way to have accountability. New standards would have to be developed to do this. Mr. McCormick said it was a place to begin and they will be looking at places in-state that already have the exams; for instance, Fairbanks has one for Algebra I. Mr. McCormick confirmed that it would be the board that would make the decision to go to end-of-course exams. The state could design the exam or we could use tests designed by vendors if they aligned to our standards. If the standards were redesigned, it could develop the test for an Alaska focus. Chair Cox said the board would need to establish a timeline for a new plan. The commissioner said there was a timeline in place. The HSGQE is a great accountability measure, and we can't remove this tool for another right now. WorkKeys measures differently, for career and workforce. Standards drive curriculum and are needed for test development. Les Morse said that next March (2012) we will ask for public comment on revised standards, but by this June (2011), the board will have to decide what direction it wants to go – with end-of-course exams or comprehensive tests. That will allow the appropriate time to develop standards. It was noted that the June meeting should have discussion.

Concerning diploma types, Mr. McCormick said 11 states have occupational diplomas; 21 states offer an honors diploma; four states have a special education or IEP diploma, which is equivalent to a certificate of achievement; and most states have general diplomas.

Legislation. Commissioner Hanley introduced Marcy Herman, Legislative Liaison, to review education-related legislation that would be covered in the upcoming Joint Education Meeting. She discussed Pre-K and its fiscal note. Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance, discussed how the fiscal note amount was arrived at. Ms. Herman also discussed the compulsory school age bill. Truancy and emancipation were discussed and how demographics and cultures have changed the landscape.

Lorrie Heagy, the Alaska Teacher of the Year and a teacher at Juneau's Glacier Valley School, brought 40 of her violin students to perform for the board. They were enchanting.

Ms. Herman continued her report by going over bills of interest to the department and the board: the Alaska Performance Scholarship, the state board annual report to the legislature, the Pre-K program, the HSGQE, and the graduation rate. They also reviewed board resolutions supporting the scholarship, the LAM project, and the repeal of the 70/30 requirement.

Pre K Pilot Program. Commissioner Hanley introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. She said that in April 2009, the legislature provided the department with \$2M for a pilot Pre-K program that would include six sites. It provided program outcomes based on seven scales of observing classroom environments, activities and interactions. Ms. Curran reviewed the data showing growth to date, saying there was no specific state curricula; each

district selected its own curriculum. Paul Sugar was also present to brief the board. He said this program was different because it starts at the top with a set of standards that are higher than any other system in the state. They were using a collaborative approach by allowing districts to bring other entities into the higher standards and developing more classrooms and finding their own funding, and not using only money from the pilot program. He said they were servicing those with the most need, not necessarily the lowest economic status. He said there would be further gains if the cross section was bigger because some schools are not involved with Head Start. In some communities there was community involvement; it was designed to have it mesh with each individual district. In response to a question about certification, Mr. Sugar said that more Head Start teachers are becoming certified. The cost per student is about \$6,000. EED has advocated for another two years of funding, at which point it would have more accurate data and positive results. It is worrisome that the House has removed the funding before the pilot is finished. Les Morse said if it was in the base we wouldn't have to advocate; one-time increments are harder to deal with because we don't know if the funding will be continued. Geri Benshoof complimented the staff on the work in the program.

Alaska State Literacy Blueprint Birth-Graduation. Commissioner Hanley introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. Ms. Curran said that in preparation for the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant competition, the federal government made funds available to states interested in developing state literacy plans in order to be eligible for the competition. There were specific criteria for the plan: 1) it had to address the literacy needs of children from birth through grade 12, including students who are English learners and students with disabilities; 2) it had to improve alignment and transition between grades; 3) it had to include the use of clear content standards within the areas of pre-literacy, reading and writing; and 4), it had to include a system of screening assessments to inform instruction, guidance on the selection and use of evidence-based reading and writing curricula, and targeted interventions; evidenced- based teacher preparation and professional development aligned with standards ; and a system of data collection, evaluation, and program improvement. The first step for EED was to create a literacy team of members (9 minimum) with expertise in literacy development and education that included representatives from different agencies and organizations, including the SEA, local education agencies, higher education, and research groups. Alaska's state literacy team had 13 people representing urban and rural Alaska. The team had a total representation of 360 years of educational experience in a variety of roles. Eight members had advanced degrees and other members held a variety of advanced certification. The plan incorporated the Early Literacy Plan, which the board previously approved. Ms. Curran reviewed the implementation plan, which included short-term, mid-term and long-term goals.

Ms. Curran said the team worked from November 2010 to February 2011. After the draft was completed, they used a survey for additional input. She said implementation was 1.5 to 3 years out with room to build on the plan short and long term, noting that this was the beginning. Ms. Curran introduced Lexie Domaradzki, Literacy Consultant, to walk the board through the plan. Ms. Domaradzki said that some states used their reviewer to review a plan that the experts wrote. She said that due to the expertise on the Alaska team, they wrote the plan. It is the only plan that spans birth through grade 12. She reviewed the major areas of focus. There were many questions concerning data collection. When asked about a department position, the board was told that the department was currently interviewing for a literacy position. Ms. Curran said the plan could

impact teacher competency, build content areas in all subjects, and be a big part of professional development.

Yupiiit Trustee. Commissioner Hanley introduced Deputy Commissioner Morse, who in turn introduced Darrell Sanborn, the Trustee appointed to help with school improvement in Yupiiit School District. He described the area around Bethel and said they had three school sites in villages, with 44 teachers; 29 had a bachelor's degree, and 15 had a master's degree. The attendance rates last year in the villages hovered around 80-82%. The statewide average is 93%. The graduation rate last year was 26.92%. The trustee was instituted last year in July. He reviewed the mid-year evaluation. The board had many questions. They asked if there was a way to move faster with districts before they got into trouble. Mr. Sanborn said districts are constantly changing, and noted that it was time for the elders to step up. In discussing community involvement, he said the district was involved in places that it should not be, like the utility company and with the Troopers; those entities need to step up to the plate and do their job. He also said the school district needs to update its handbook for consistency so that order can occur at all the sites. Deputy Commissioner Morse said there are lead technical coaches who visit, and a team of two math and reading coaches who make regular visits. The science coach visits once a month, and two art coaches who visit serve five districts. There is also one principal coach to work with the three principals and two mentor teachers in place. When asked about in-services, Mr. Sanborn said they had not done a lot of planning for staff development and academic training. Mr. Morse said the trustee will be in place, legally, until the district has made a 2% gain in all three content areas for three years. At that point, the department will not direct the trustee to stay. Discussing the concept of the direct correlation between test scores and attendance, Mr. Sanborn said he believed that the district understood that but attendance is still an issue at all three sites, and they are considering family incentives for attendance. They could also possibly use a tribal court in some places, but curfews are still a big problem. Jim Merriner asked if they used an advisory period. Mr. Sanborn said they are making time for advisory. Mr. Morse said the department continues to stay in touch with the district on a regular basis.

Alaska's Learning Network (ALN). Commissioner Hanley introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. She described the ALN as an outgrowth of the Virtual School working group. An RFA for \$1.2M was released, and it was awarded to a consortium that includes SERRC, Alaska Staff Development Network, and 11 school districts. It will allow students to engage in academic course work and projects through technology with customized courses. It will provide a network of support for teachers and educators, and will provide professional development and coaching on-site and off-site. The professional development piece will include three days of continual sharing, making teachers more comfortable using the technology for instruction. They will use tools like Google Apps and other skills for the web. The first courses will be available in June 2011. Student courses will include Spanish, algebra II, Alaska studies, biology and English composition I. Steve Pine, Director of AKLN, gave a demonstration.

Audited District Waivers. Commissioner Hanley introduced Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance. The board was being asked to approve five school districts' requests for waiver of the requirement that they show a minimum expenditure of 70% for instruction in the fiscal year 2010 audited financial statements. The five districts were: Kashunamiut, which came in at

65%; Klawock, which came in at 69%; Yakutat, which came in at 66%; Yukon-Koyukuk, which came in at 68%; and Yupiit, which came in at 65%. Ms. Nudelman said that all district try very hard to get to the 70% level and EED encourages them to get there. Districts cited fuel and transportation costs, contractual obligations, and communication expenses that contributed to the shortfall. She noted that two of the districts had less than a \$3M budget. Phil Schneider noted that the board had done two resolutions about discontinuing the practice. He said they always grant the waivers, and wondered what would happen if they were denied. He said he might vote against it just on principle. Ms. Nudelman said funding would be withheld.

Joint Meeting with House and Senate. The board discussed likely topics that would come up, and they volunteered to be the spokes person for each topic.

The meeting was recessed by unanimous consent.

March 18, 2011 - Work Session Continued

Note: Board members attended a joint meeting of the House and Senate Education Committees at 8:00 a.m.

The meeting was called back to order by Chair Cox at 10:00 a.m., after the board had met with the Joint House and Senate Committee. All members were present except Col Sullivan, who had been excused. The board was still in work session.

Budget Report. Commissioner introduced Anna Kim, Director of Education Support Services. She discussed where the budget process was at that time and showed a flow chart of how the action had occurred to date and discussed some of the notable actions.

Board members asked several questions of Ms. Kim. Pat Shier asked what percent of the budget was federal vs. general funds. Ms. Kim said about 5% is general funds. Discussing cuts to the budget, she said that conference committee would decide about any cuts made to the budget. She noted that items could be reduced in conference committee, but they could not add any money. Phil Schneider suggested that because the commissioner lacked rural experience that perhaps the board needed to reduce its travel so he could have funds to get out into the rural areas. He suggested using videoconferencing at least once a year.

Capital Improvement List (CIP). Commissioner Hanley introduced Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance. She said that on September first each year the school districts turn in their applications for the grant list for major maintenance and school construction. They are reviewed and rated by the school facilities manager and staff. Ms. Nudelman said that statute dictates what can be put on the list. She noted that the first project on the construction list was in the Governor's budget as well as the first 14 projects on the major maintenance list. The board generally reviewed the list and asked that the topic of facility planning to added to a future agenda.

Note: The meeting was briefly recessed to enable board members to attend the swearing in of Commissioner Hanley at the Governor's cabinet meeting.

The meeting was called back to order by Chair Cox.

Tongass Charter School. Commissioner Hanley introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. Ms. Curran said the board was being asked to consider a 10-year renewal of a charter school. The school serves 165 students in K-6. They have a 25:1 student/teacher ratio. She indicated that the school had made assessment changes to include the AIMS web assessment tool offering a universal screening three times a year, and a tool for weekly progress monitoring. They also have a new standards-based report card.

Regulation Review. Commissioner Hanley once again introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. Ms. Curran said the project sought to see if the burden of regulations could be lifted from the districts. Two independent contractors were initially hired to review the regulations and make suggestions. Then the directors reviewed the work by determining if the regulation was necessary because of statute, if any could be eliminated because of non-enforcement or if any could be otherwise amended. During the process, questions were asked of the Department of Law. The board saw the initial product in September 2010 and was asked to make comment. It was determined that not as many regulations could be taken off the books as had originally been hoped. The assessment regulation coming before the board today is a product of this project. Deputy Commissioner Les Morse introduced contractor Rhonda Gardner from the audience. She said that she and the other contractor, Barbara Thompson, met with superintendents initially and received feedback. Several board members indicated that they hear comments about the number of regulations the department has. In some cases, Mr. Morse said not all regulation projects are new regulations; some regulation projects are simply an attempt to make an existing regulation clearer or less complicated. When asked if Senate Bill 1 (Annual Report to the Legislature by the State Board of Education) would require regulation, Mr. Morse said he didn't know. The department would have to wait until it saw the final version, and make a decision.

Regulations to go out for public comment

Teacher Certification Supplemental Notice. Director of Teaching & Learning Support Cyndy Curran was present to brief the board. She said the board had originally sent this regulation out for public comment in September 2010. Because of the transition and being edited further in response to public comment, it did not come back to the board for adoption and now needed a second period of comment. Bruce Johnson, Executive Director of the Alaska Association of School Administrators, said the department needed to be more proactive in getting regulation information out to the public. He offered his organization's publication as an additional vehicle.

Teacher Certification. Director of Teaching & Learning Support Cyndy Curran was present to brief the board. She said this regulation came directly out of the teacher quality working group, which had made several suggestions to tighten it up. It clarifies the requirements for the Type A, B, C & F certification, and changes the name for vocational education to career and technical education. Some discussion followed about the process in changing from Initial to Professional certification, and what satisfactory employment meant.

Assessment. Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management, was present to brief the board. He said this regulation project was a direct result of the regulation review and it actually was 14 regulations rolled into one big project. Much of it was “housekeeping” or cleaning up language to bring the regulation current or add consistency language to reflect federal and state data collection guidelines, amending to include new references, new terms that are current, and adopting new versions of the English Language Proficiency Standards and 2011 Participation Guidelines.

Alaska Performance Scholarship Grace Period. Education Policy Coordinator Eddy Jeans was present to brief the board. He said these amendments would allow a student to be eligible for the scholarship during a grace period. While the student is in the grace period, if the student decides to go back to high school, the high school can claim him or her for foundation funding by ¼ FTE for each class.

Museum Fees. Director of Libraries, Archives & Museums Linda Thibodeau was present to brief the board. This regulation increased the fees for museum entrances. The action is necessary because tourism has been dropping and there is not enough general fund dollars to offset labor and operating costs.

Regulations to Adopt

WorkKeys. Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management, was present to brief the board. Mr. McCormick said this regulation sets out the requirements of the administration of WorkKeys. He indicated that all students in the 11th grade take the WorkKeys. The regulation would allow 12th graders take the test in addition to the 11th graders, at no cost to them, and extend the test window.

Fund Balance. Director of School Finance Elizabeth Nudelman was present to brief the board. Ms. Nudelman said the five items that were removed were not spendable items, and indicated that compensated absences were long-term liabilities and do not meet the same definition as in the regulation (like annual leave). She said four districts with compensated absences were close to the 10%.

This was the end of the work session.

Business Meeting, continuation of March 18, 2011

Chair Cox called the business meeting to order. Roll call was taken. All members were present except Janel Keplinger and Col Sullivan, who were excused. The chair asked if anyone had any disclosures. Donald Handeland said he was a student at Mt. Edgecumbe High School. The chair ruled that he could participate. There were no objections. The chair asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Carol Schaeffer asked that agenda item 25H, the Mt. Edgecumbe High School graduation requirement change, be removed from the agenda. She indicated that she was absent from the advisory meeting because of the flu, and two or three other advisory members were absent from the advisory board meeting and wanted to discuss it further, and there was some confusion regarding whether it needed a first and second reading. She asked that the board

remove it from the consent agenda. Chair Cox verified that it was being removed for that day and would appear on the June agenda again. Mr. Slotnick confirmed that the motion before the board was voting to remove the item from the agenda, and thereby voting to amend the agenda of March 18. The amended agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote with a motion made by Jim Merriner and seconded by Phil Schneider.

Regulations to go out for public comment

Carol Schaeffer moved and Jim Merriner seconded the following motion: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a supplemental period of public comment on amendments to 4 AAC 18.005, Application for employment in a certificated position; 4 AAC 19.015, Evaluation form to be available to the public; and 4 AAC 12.405, Renewal of certificates.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Pat Shier 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 12.305, Teacher certificate (initial, professional, master); 4 AAC 12.345, Administrative certificate (Type B); provisional certificate (provisional type B); 4 AAC 12.347 Special Education Administrator (Type F); 4 AAC 12.355. Special services certificate (Type C); provisional certificate (Type C); and 4 AAC 12.385. Vocational education personnel qualifications.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Jim Merriner moved and Geri Benshoof seconded the following motion: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on changes to 4 AAC 04.155, English language proficiency standards; 4 AAC 05.070, Program planning and evaluation; 4 AAC 06.710, Statewide student assessment system; 4 AAC 06.738, Standards-based test results; 4 AAC 06.750 Student questionnaire; 4 AAC 06.755 High school graduation qualifying examination; 06.758 High school graduation qualifying examination results; 06.761 Test administration; 06.765 Test security; consequences of breach; 06.771 High school graduation qualifying examination reexamination; 4 AAC 06.775, Statewide assessment program for students with disabilities; 4 AAC 06.776, Assessment of a student with limited English proficiency; 4 AAC 06.805, Adequate yearly progress; 4 AAC 06.830, Subgroups.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Geri Benshoof moved and Pat Shier seconded the following motion: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to 4 AAC 43.035, Grace period for curriculum requirements.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Carol Schaeffer 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 4AAC 58.010, Fees.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Regulations to Adopt

Carol Schaeffer moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 06.717, Work ready/college ready transitional skills assessment.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Phil Schneider moved and Jim Merriner seconded the following motion: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 09.160, regarding the Fund Balance.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

School Improvement Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Deputy Commissioner Les Morse. Mr. Morse said there was an appropriation of up to \$7,000,000, from the Public School Trust Fund for issues regarding the state v. Moore case. He also described contractor activities to survey districts to determine if the intervention districts address the non-tested content standards either as courses or by integrating those topics in the instruction of related content. Mr. Morse spoke about upcoming events: 1) a literacy professional development conference for the four intervention districts will be held at UAA at the end of May; and 2), the third annual Alaska School leadership institute involving 13-15 districts will be held at the Captain Cook Hotel in early June. He noted that there were grants available for the work on the literacy professional development plan for the intervention districts. In response to a question about participation in the webinars, Mr. Morse said there were different levels of participation, and it was mutually agreed to have them on Saturdays.

Teaching & Learning Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support. In addition to the materials in the packet, Ms. Curran reported on two new hires in the division. Patty Owen was hired as the new Health & Safety Coordinator and Don Enoch was hired as the new special education coordinator. She said the Head Start Conference was held last month in Juneau. She indicated that they were close, after a long time, to having an online application process for teacher certification renewal. Ms. Curran also said the Early Childhood Learning Council was in its last steps of organization, and Commissioners Hanley and Streur would facilitate an organizational meeting in early May.

Assessment, Accountability & Information Management Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management. Mr. McCormick reviewed the spring testing dates and briefed the board on the status of the standards revision process. He also noted that the board needed to be ready in June to discuss end-of-course exams vs. comprehensive exams. He said he would put some research together about what other states were doing, courses and curriculum, and how the standards would be met.

Mt. Edgecumbe High School Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Randy Hawk, Director of Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS). Mr. Hawk said they had ended the semester with 394 students; they had invited 14 students to join; and the current enrollment was 365. The loss was mainly due to homesickness and those who “burned their last bridge.” He said the long-

standing IBM partnership was going very well. This year IBM sent a Boeing systems engineer who audited all things technical with the MEHS systems. They had an in-service in January that focused on aligning policy and current practice. The fire alarm system has been upgraded, and the heating project will move forward as Phase I – it will complete the design phase so when money is available, they will be ready to act. Two students scored very well by placing fifth at the AK Marine Science Symposium in Anchorage with research on bowhead whales. This was a major success because most of the projects presented were done so by students who were in master's and Ph.D. programs. He noted that the MEHS website was being updated. Mr. Hawk also discussed NW accreditation, saying that MEHS had never been accredited. He said they need to get better data so they could participate in the STEPP Program, which is data-driven. STEPP requires no visitation and could be done by EED.

Libraries, Archives & Museums Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Linda Thibodeau, Director of Libraries, Archives & Museums. Ms. Thibodeau introduced Dean Dawson, the state archivist, who was appointed last July. Ms. Thibodeau also gave a brief update on the SLAM building project. She said the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) problems appeared to be solved and they could tear down the old museum building. They will do an interpretive display about the building and write a book about it to satisfy the historical issues surrounding the building brought up by DNR. She also indicated that Alaska Electric Light and Power, which owns the land for the new building, had given some additional land to the project. She thanked Superintendent Hawk for his help with maintenance in the LAM acquisition of the Stratton Library in Sitka. Mr. Dawson explained that the archives permanently preserve state documents and recordings in the areas of courts, government, the Department of Law, and the offices of state commissioners. He said there were lots of requests for research regarding public and state agencies, and electronic records were their biggest challenge.

Rural Education Director Report. Commissioner Hanley introduced Phyllis Carlson, Director of Rural Education. She congratulated Tiarna Fischler on having been selected as the student advisor elect, and being from a rural community. Ms. Carlson said she was working on the cultural standards with Education Northwest in conjunction with the work of the State System of Support (SSOS) work. She said she had attended a meeting with the Yupiit School District where they worked on the strategic plan. They had a lot of community involvement and they were holding “feet to the fire” to make sure the plan was followed. She said they talked a lot about including culture in their curriculum, they wanted more career opportunities, and discussed attendance as having a great impact on education and academic outcomes. Chair Cox thanked Ms. Carlson for all her work in this area.

Attorney General Report. Assistant Attorney General Neil Slotnick was present to brief the board. He spoke about the Kasayulie case, saying that a settlement proposal had been received from the plaintiffs, and he would be working on that and would be prepared to inform the board in June. He also noted that in a hearing the state presented the work of the SSOS team to the judge in the Moore case, and she suggested a new trial. He said he was continuing to work on this case also and more would be known by June.

Commissioner's Report. Commissioner Hanley was present to brief the board. Commissioner Hanley indicated that he had been on the job for six weeks and felt he had a tremendous team to

work with. He said he didn't have all the answers and wanted people to not be afraid to disagree with him and wanted to be held accountable for his leadership. He said he appreciated the board being at his swearing in. He said the education system was working, it was not broken, but it needs work and data will help in knowing where to go. Commissioner Hanley discussed the Alaska Performance Scholarship, saying that it was designed to give students incentive to meet higher standards. Three or five districts said they would have a struggle to put it in place, but could do it, just not maybe by 2013. He said that preschool and early intervention were important. He said much of the problem was families who were not prepared to parent, working two jobs, and generally not involved as much as they should be. He said fees need to be attached to the various plans that are out there. Commissioner said he appreciates the start he's been given and he feels empowered and he's looking forward to the challenge.

Meeting Date. It was agreed by mutual consent that the board should have a special meeting on April 25, 2011, at noon, for the purpose of consideration of adopting a regulation.

Consent Agenda. The consent agenda was presented minus 25H, the MEHS graduation requirements. The following motion was made by Geri Benshoof and seconded by Jim Merriner: *I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of: Approval of the Audited Financial Waivers for Kashunamiut School District, Klawock School District, Yakutat School District, Yukon-Koyukuk School District, Yupiit School District; Approval of December 2 & 3, 2010, Minutes; Approval of January 24, 2011, Minutes; Approval of the FY 2012 CIP List; Approval of Birth-Graduation Literacy Blueprint and Approval of the Tongass School of Arts & Sciences Charter School Renewal for 10 years.* The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Board Comments

Phil Schneider said he was sending condolences to the people of Japan, and that the earthquake hits close to home. He thought the board could reduce its travel budget by using video conferencing, which would give the commissioner more dollars to visit rural sites where he hasn't been before.

Pat Shier thanked the board for welcoming him back to the board for his second term. He welcomed the commissioner to his first board meeting.

Jim Merriner thanked the department staff for their work. He said he was very encouraged by the new WorkKeys results in which 24% were bronze recipients. He too welcomed the commissioner and said he appreciated Commissioner Hanley's comments.

Geri Benshoof complimented Darrell Sanborn in his trustee position saying she felt he was perfect for the job. She said it was exciting to see the swearing-in of the commissioner. She said she would like to hear a comprehensive report in June regarding special education. She felt that youngsters not prepared for school was a reflection of society and schools can't solve all the problems. She would like to see real vision in education for Alaska.

Tiarna Fischler said being on the board is a great experience for her and thanked everyone for the warm welcome and invited the commissioner to go to Manokotak.

Donald Handeland noted that the June meeting will be his last meeting. He said he wanted to make sure that all parties were consulted about the graduation requirement change before it was approved. He thanked the staff.

Carol Schaeffer congratulated Tiarna on her first meeting, the commissioner on his first meeting, and Pat Shier on being reappointed to the board. She noted again that there were procedural questions regarding the MEHS graduation requirement change. Deputy Commissioner Morse indicated that Superintendent Hawk had worked with Assistant Attorney General Hattan and that the MEHS manual sets out the procedures.

Esther Cox said that Representative Seaton had mentioned a video from St. Mary's on theme projects and wondered if the department had seen it. She thanked those who organized the swearing in of the commissioner and thanked the staff for its work. She said she had attended many events on behalf of the board in the past few weeks. She reminded the board that at its June meeting the board will select meeting dates. She said she wanted everyone to come prepared with their calendars and to know when their individual spring breaks were. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.