

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA

Regular Meeting

MINUTES

April 5, 2016

President Haas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the board room of the FNSBSD Administrative Center at 520 Fifth Avenue. North Pole Middle School's Percussion Ensemble led the Pledge of Allegiance and performed for the school board under the guidance of Vanessa Jackson, band director.

President Haas read the district's mission statement: *"Our mission is to provide an excellent, equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students will succeed and contribute to a diverse and changing society."*

Present:

Heidi Haas, President
Lisa Gentry, Vice President (By Phone)
Michael O'Brien, Clerk
Wendy Dominique, Member
Sue Hull, Member
Richard Cole, Base Representative
Sean Williams, Post Representative
Kobe Rizk, Student Representative

Absent:

Allyson Lambert, Treasurer
Sean Rice, Member

Staff Present:

Dr. Karen Gaborik, Superintendent of Schools
Lisa Pearce, Chief Financial Officer
Sandra Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education
Dan Schmidt, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education
Traci Gatewood, Executive Director of Human Resources
Dave Norum, Executive Director of Facilities Maintenance
Kathie Wassmann, Executive Director of Special Education
Melanie Hadaway, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Tim Larrabee, Director of Technology
Krista Lord, Director of Compliance and Training
Sharice Walker, Director of Public Relations
Helen Clark, Director of Federal Programs
Dan Domke, Director of Career and Technical Education
Heather Rauenhorst, Director of Grants & Strategic Partnerships
Sharon Tuttle, Executive Assistant to the Board

PRELIMINARY ITEMS

Presentation of the 2016 John Kelly Scholarship Recipients [0:06:48]

Chuck Lemke, with the Fairbanks North Star Education Foundation, and assisted by Bill McKenzie, presented the recipients of a \$1,000 John Kelly Scholarship.

Presentation of the 2016 John Kelly Scholarship Recipients (continued)

Austin Edson	Eielson	Billie Brooker	North Pole High
Natalee Fleming	Eielson	Davida Drvenkar	North Pole High
Rebekah Hamilton.....	Eielson	Ayla Forsman	North Pole High
Shelby McCahon.....	Eielson	Samantha Haines	North Pole High
Matthew Beckwith	Hutchison	Samantha Perry.....	North Pole High
Cole Grimes	Hutchison	Leona Sawyer.....	North Pole High
Morgan Huskey.....	Hutchison	Phoenix Tallant.....	North Pole High
Jasmin McCormick.....	Hutchison	Geo Yi.....	North Pole High
Adriana Camacho-Rodriguez.....	Lathrop	Danielle Fausnaugh.....	Star of the North
Ariana Camacho-Rodriguez.....	Lathrop	Brooke Gottmeier.....	West Valley
Kate Clancy.....	Lathrop	Quetzal Luebke Laroque.....	West Valley
Jack Gross.....	Lathrop	Giorgia Michel.....	West Valley
Olivia Jeans.....	Lathrop	Kiara O'Neill.....	West Valley
Cristina Mondelli.....	Lathrop	Teresa Sample.....	West Valley
Enoch Porter.....	Lathrop	Hannah Way.....	West Valley
Holly Taylor	Lathrop		
Jenifer Wolter	Lathrop		

ESP of the Month [0:15:20]

Laura Bush, Denali Elementary RTI tutor, was recognized as the Extra Special Support Staff Person for April 2016. Deborah Hall, Denali Elementary principal, made the presentation.

Spotlight: Special Education Programs [0:18:29]

Kathie Wassmann, executive director of special education, provided a spotlight and overview of special education programs throughout the district. Mrs. Wassmann explained the district's special education program served 2,276 students, ranging from 3-22 years in age, with a full range of approximately 385 special education professionals. The majority of students were served in the general education setting and received resource and/or speech/language support either in the classroom or in a pullout model. Programs encompassed a broad range of offerings such as preschool services for 3-5 year olds, speech language pathology, occupational and physical therapy, deaf and hard of hearing services, intensive resource, extended resource, and the Bridge and Project SEARCH programs which provided students with life skills and employability expertise.

Board Questions/Comments

Board discussion ensued. Item for information only; no action required. Board members were interested in special education's hard-to-fill positions, recruiting efforts, and the Project Search program where students learned and utilized employability skills. Board members appreciated Mrs. Wassmann's very informative and comprehensive spotlight on the district's many special education programs.

AGENDA [0:38:27]

HULL MOVED, O'BRIEN SECONDED, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA WITH CONSENT ITEMS.

The following consent items were moved:

accepted the Monthly Management Reports for February 2016.

approved the minutes from the special meetings on March 21 & 23; the work session on March 21; and the regular meeting on March 22, 2016, as submitted.

Consent Agenda (continued)

approved Barnette Magnet School's request to send approximately 48 fourth grade students, 2 teachers, and 8 chaperones to Denali National Park on May 16, 2016, where students will participate in the National Park Service White House Initiative: "Every 4th Grader in the Park" program, at no cost to the district.

approved Barnett Magnet School's request to raise funds to send its Future Problem Solving Team, consisting of 27 students in grades four-six, 9 students in grades seven & eight, 1 teacher, and 4 chaperones, to Soldotna, April 17-20, 2016, to participate in the statewide Future Problem Solving Competition, at no cost to the district.

approved Pearl Creek Elementary School's request to raise funds to send approximately 27 sixth grade students, 1 teacher, and approximately 5 chaperones to Kenai and Seward, May 8-12, 2017, where students will explore Alaska habitats and geography, at no cost to the district.

approved the district's request to send approximately 37 students (11 middle school students from Effie Kokrine, Ryan, Randy Smith and North Pole Middle Schools and 26 high school students from Effie Kokrine, Lathrop, North Pole and West Valley), and 9 adults (1 administrator, 6 coaches, and 2 additional chaperones) to Anchorage, April 20-24, 2016, where students will participate in the 2016 Native Youth Olympics (NYO) Games Alaska Tournament.

accepted the gift of \$3,000 from the Fairbanks Public Lands Information Center-NPS to Barnette Magnet School to help cover travel expenses for fourth grade students participating in the National Park Service White House Initiative: "Every 4th Grader in the Park" program.

accepted the gift of \$3,800 from Pogo Mine to Barnette Magnet School to help cover travel expenses for the Future Problem Solving Team's travel to Soldotna to participate in the state competition.

approved the Personnel Action Report for the period March 14-25, 2016.

acknowledged the Personnel Information Report for the period March 11-25, 2016.

acknowledged the Superintendent's Budget Transfer Report for the period March 1-15, 2016.

acknowledged the Board's Reading File.

acknowledged the Coming Events and Meeting Announcements.

ADVISORY VOTES. 3 AYES (COLE, WILLIAMS, RIZK)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE. 5 AYES
(HULL, DOMINIQUE, O'BRIEN, GENTRY, HAAS)

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS [0:42:45]

John Boyarsky, 2265 West Polar Bear Court, Randy Smith Middle School teacher, voiced his displeasure with the district's initial Fairbanks Education Association (FEA) contract proposal. Mr. Boyarsky wasn't certain the board was aware of the district's initial proposal, but when he read it, it felt like a kick in the gut to him. Many of the provisions would have a serious impact on the quality of education. Mr. Boyarsky wondered if the board was giving direction to the district's high-paid negotiator, or if the negotiator was giving direction to the board. He cited many added responsibilities and expectations proposed in the initial contract offer; adding a total of an extra three hours of work, without pay. He asked board members if they would work an extra three hours without pay. He, like many teachers in the district, already often came in early and stayed late, by choice.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

Mr. Boyarsky pointed out the proposal changed a teacher's work week to 40 hours, which was more work for the same pay, which in reality was a pay-cut of 9.5 percent. He recognized the tough budget times and expected an offer with no raises, but did not expect a union busting proposal. Mr. Boyarsky had not expected the district to open 50 items to the association's 19 items. He also did not expect the district to propose a 9.5 percent pay-cut. The proposal felt like he was back in the 1920s, fighting for labor rights. Mr. Boyarsky asked the board if they saw the teachers as professionals or just dumb workers.

Mrs. Hull thanked Mr. Boyarsky for his work and what he did for kids every day. She asked Mr. Boyarsky if he had obtained information on the proposed contract from reading the district's proposal or from an analysis that was done by a teacher, which she believed contained some inaccuracies. Mr. Boyarsky stated he had initially read the summary and then read the actual proposal. Mrs. Hull thought there were some misunderstandings and was hopeful they would have a chance to correct some of it.

Coleen Pickering, PO Box 57141, Anderson Elementary School teacher and FEA member, thanked the board for their work. Ms. Pickering spoke to the new office staff at Anderson Elementary School. The school had a 100 percent turnover in the office this year with the previous principal retiring after 40+ years of service, one secretary moving out of state, and the other secretary receiving a promotion. Ms. Pickering thought the new principal and secretarial office staff had done a fabulous job. She congratulated Colonel Cole on the announcement regarding the relocation of the F-35s to Eielson Air Force, along with the Fairbanks Principals' Association on reaching a tentative contract agreement. Ms. Pickering expressed her heartfelt empathy for the members of the Education Support Staff Association (ESSA) who had already worked nine months with an expired contract. She recalled the year teachers worked with an expired contract.

In regards to the district's initial FEA proposal, Ms. Pickering had read the actual proposal, not the summary and had 10 pages of questions and comments. She would be attending and observing bargaining sessions to see if there were rationales or explanations for the proposed dramatic cuts from the current contract. Ms. Pickering asked for a show of hands from board members who had read the actual district proposal. She had one specific question regarding the proposal's sick leave bank language. Ms. Pickering chaired FEA's sick leave bank, of which 875 teachers were volunteer members. She was a little uncertain and confused regarding the language removed concerning the use of sick leave for family members. She was uncertain how much of the language removed was addressed in the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Ms. Pickering was concerned for teachers who experience medical crises and needed to use the sick leave bank.

Tara DeVaughn, 3368 Chokecherry Court, a 17-year veteran teacher, said she echoed Mr. Boyarsky's concerns regarding the district's initial contract proposal seeking an increased work week and responsibilities for teachers with less pay. Ms. DeVaughn had read the actual proposal and at first glance thought the new pay schedule looked good, but upon closer review, found it wasn't; in actuality, it was a pay cut. Under the new proposal, near the top of the scale, it would take two years to move one step. As a math teacher, Ms. DeVaughn had read the numbers and the numbers did not lie. It appeared the board did not value master teachers; those teachers who had been in the classroom for years and participated in countless hours of professional development perfecting their craft. She felt the proposal was a slap in the face to teachers.

As a parent, Ms. DeVaughn wanted her children's teachers to feel valued as the professionals they were. The proposal did not value teachers. Teachers spent many years and thousands of dollars mastering their craft. She had graduated from Ben Eielson High School and had come back to Fairbanks to teach. She did not feel valued as a teacher. Ms. DeVaughn did not want to leave the area, but would if she felt undervalued as a teacher.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

T. Jerome Baxter, PO Box 750341, Pearl Creek Elementary first grade teacher, was appalled by the initial proposal; having read it, it was nothing to bargain with. Mr. Baxter voiced his concern with many articles of the proposal such as taking away a teacher's ability to use supplemental materials. Teachers needed supplemental materials to teach and connect with students; not all students learned the same way. He questioned how teachers could be held accountable for student achievement when they were mandated and limited on the materials they could use. Teachers were professionals who knew what students needed. Mr. Baxter, as a previous member of the military, had taken an oath to protect America, but the initial proposal was an assault on students, staff, and education; it was a slap in the face to teachers. The district obviously did not care about students or teachers. Mr. Baxter was not angry, he was irritated with the initial proposal and was trying to figure out how to pull the knife out of his back if the proposal stood. He thought the proposal was an indirect attack on students and would cripple education in the community. He would like to see himself proved wrong. The board's mission statement stated teachers would provide an excellent, equitable education in a safe, supportive environment so all students could succeed, and the district was taking away teachers' ability to provide that education.

Sonja Casady, 2871 Bear Avenue, appeared with her job-share partner Jenny [no last name provided] and Jenny's five-day old son. Ms. Casady and Jenny were district teachers and had been job-share partners for the past two years. They were upset to see the ability to job-share eliminated from the proposed contract. Ms. Casady spoke to the many positive aspects of job-sharing for both staff members and students; they got the best of both worlds. As a staff members, job-sharing allowed them to be moms and teachers; students were recipients to re-energized teachers every few days. Having two staff members for one class, Ms. Casady and Jenny were able to respond to parents faster, and they needed fewer substitutes as they could schedule appointments on off times and cover for each other during sick days. The district had a lot of control over who could job-share and it saved on salaries and benefits. Removing the ability to job-share would be a huge change for the district and if it was eliminated, Ms. Casady stated she would have to quit her job. Job-sharing benefited all parties involved.

Hannibal Grubis, 1601 Hans Way, West Valley teacher, thanked the board for their service. Mr. Grubis believed Fairbanks was the best school district in the state and he was proud to teach in the district and have his children excel in the district. He believed the district's FEA proposal should exemplify the realistic expectations of the board. He hoped board members had read the proposal carefully. Mr. Grubis was disappointed with the content, tone, and development of the district's initial proposal. He had recently learned the district's proposal was outsourced to someone with apparently no past experience in the district. He also had the impression that the longer the negotiations took, the more the person would make. The district and FEA had enjoyed good working relations, such as with the Right's, Sick Leave, and Health Care committees. If the proposal was adopted as written, FEA would be more limited and teachers' rights would be open to abuse; all to the disservice of students and teachers.

Mr. Grubis shared some of his specific concerns with the district's proposal, such as the removal of the requirements for the district to cooperate with the association on grievances; making the health care committee advisory only; eliminating language that protected teachers from having to arrange for their own substitutes; and allowing the district to leave information in personnel files, even if the information was proven to be not true. Additional concerns included the elimination of current language on academic freedom; it obfuscated whether or not teachers had the ability to use additional materials to supplement their classroom discussions. Other concerns included teachers going on unpaid leave and having to pay for a substitute if there was an unavoidable travel delay. The proposal eliminated language that no teacher would be reprimanded, transferred, or non-retained without just cause. Mr. Grubis's list was not exhaustive or prioritized. He expected the district proposal to be withdrawn and modified.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

Greg Lutrell, 2931 Whistler Court, Crawford Elementary parent, testified about the out-of-attendance (OAA) policy. Mr. Lutrell and his wife were both in the Air Guard and worked on Eielson Air Force Base. Under the OAA policy, his younger daughter would have to leave Crawford Elementary to go to North Pole Elementary School for the first 10 days of the school year, if not the entire year. He was concerned about before and after school care. Their family utilized the childcare provided by the military during spring break and military exercises; they would lose that benefit if their daughter had to move to North Pole Elementary. Mr. Lutrell did not want to pull his oldest daughter out of Ben Eielson to care for her younger sister. The schools on Eielson Air Force Base had open classrooms; North Pole area schools were already crowded. Mr. Lutrell asked the board to reconsider the policy.

Mr. O'Brien thanked Mr. Lutrell for his testimony. He thought the board was aware of the problem and the good news was the F-35s were coming, but it would exacerbate the OAA issue. Currently, the district had flexibility on out-of-attendance students because the schools on base were not at capacity, but that would change with the arrival of the F-35s. At least there was time to work with the Air Force to solve the problem.

Colonel Cole said he had been working with the assistant superintendent regarding the issue. He felt good about the district's work on the issue.

Mrs. Hull asked if Mr. Lutrell had been working with the building administration and others to help with his situation while the district worked through the issue. Mr. Lutrell stated he had been.

Deborah Bennett, 6.3 Mile Farmers Loop Road, Barnette Magnet School teacher, was pretty disheartened after reading the district's initial proposal and felt she needed to say something. She asked the board to keep in mind that Juneau teachers received a two percent cost of living increase and Anchorage teachers received one percent with a \$1,000 bonus. In light of the current budget situation, Ms. Bennett thought teachers were willing to share some of the burden, but questioned whether it was realistic to have teachers take a hit in all areas. The current FEA contract was a mature contract that had served both the teachers and school district well. The contract had undergone numerous reviews through previous contract negotiations. The hardcore stance the district's negotiator had taken was not warranted by the budget crisis or by the abuse case against the district. Teachers loved their job and their students.

Ms. Bennett said teachers understood there was a budget crunch, however if teachers' earning ability was flat-funded, it would seem the district would consider making a non-monetary concession rather than attacking other parts of the contract. The stance the district had taken was not something Ms. Bennett had experienced in past negotiations. The district's proposal was so far to one side, she could not even imagine the two sides could begin to bargain. Attacks on the very premise of progressive discipline, union representation, and privacy had been put forward. The proposed gouge in salaries could very well impact students and teachers. It would be more than several years for teachers to climb back to the salaries they were making at the current time, thus sending many seasoned teachers into early retirement and taking their institutional knowledge with them. Cuts in teacher prep time, changes in stipends, and the elimination of compensatory time were equivalent to cuts in salary and they would markedly reduce the quality of student learning. Ms. Bennett hoped the board would consider the collaborative spirit between the association and the district and offer realistic language to their valued employees.

Bobby LaSalle, PO Box 57175, North Pole Elementary speech-language therapy assistant and proud member of the Education Support Staff Association (ESSA), testified regarding contract negotiations. Ms. LaSalle worked hard to get her degree while working full-time and raising her family. She had worked in almost every school in the district through her tenure with the school

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

district. She started with the district as a substitute custodian and special education aide. She realized times were tough and there were many financial uncertainties in the state, however the proposals given to both FEA and ESSA, attacking them, were unacceptable. The associations had mature contracts that had served both the associations and district well.

Ms. LaSalle noted the district had hired a negotiator who came with poor recommendations and no community ties. Not only did he not have any community ties, he had no incentive to work expediently because he was being paid a ridiculous amount of money per hour. Association members were community members who lived, worked, and volunteered in the community and schools. They often went above and beyond the call of duty. The term, "Other Duties as Assigned" was no stranger to association members. The proposed contracts were examples of members being asked to do more for less. The proposed contract sought more hours for less money.

As parents, Ms. LaSalle explained how difficult it was to find people trusted enough to care for children. ESSA and FEA members were the people the community trusted to care for their children and teach them to become productive members of society. Association members were the future of children and children were the future of association members and the community. The board and district owed it to the community and students to support the needs of students and staff. The district needed to continue to be a place where students wanted to come to learn and staff to work.

Ms. LaSalle pointed out the ESSA proposal removed 15 work days, took away sick leave, and proposed other incredulous changes. She noted the negotiator was being paid hourly and thought a lot of the proposal was ludicrous stuff brought forward so more time would be spent bargaining.

Nancy Duez, PO Box 58643, current FEA president, had worked for many years as a 5th and 6th grade teacher at Woodriver Elementary School. Ms. Duez pointed out many of the proposed contract changes were not good for students, such as increasing the number of staff meetings from two per month to two per week; it reduced a teacher's availability to students. Currently, teachers were not available to students 6 out of 20 days; with the new proposal, that would increase to 12 out of 20 days. Over half of the teacher's available time would be spent in meetings, not counting IEP, SST, and other as-needed meetings that occurred after school. Ms. Duez also pointed out that many of the elementary after school programs were taught by teachers. Those programs would no longer be available to students. At the secondary level, teachers would not be available for one-on-one assistance and tutoring. Teacher support helped ensure student success as they worked to meet their current credit requirements for graduation. These supports would be removed through the proposed contract.

Ms. Duez noted a reduction of prep time across the board would impact the quality of lessons a teacher might deliver. Taking away an employee's ability to use leave to care for a sick child or family member was unconscionable; so much for the family friendly workplace. Further reducing a teacher's use of personal leave was unnecessary. Teachers already could not use leave during parent-teacher conferences, professional development days, or testing days. Adding an encumbrance on the first two weeks and last two weeks of the school year further damaged family life – no moose hunting in the fall and no going to a child's college graduation after all the years of hard work and support invested.

Ms. Duez asked how the proposals supported the board's strategic plan. According to the strategic plan goals of Organizational Support, it was the district's objective to, "Create an environment that supports the needs of staff to enable a school and organizational climate where students thrive" and under Culture, "Strengthen employee relations to support the mission and instill a culture of continuous improvement." The initial proposal did nothing to strengthen employee relations.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

Ms. Duez noted, that according to FEA's records, they had received notice of 28 certified retirees and 22 resignations – 5.4 percent of the certified staff – had already given notice of their intent not to return in the fall. She wondered how many more might come in before the June 30 deadline. She also noted Mrs. Wassmann, during her special education spotlight, made the point the district's salary was no longer as competitive or attractive as it used to be. Salaries were in the Lower 48 range, but with a higher cost of living in Fairbanks. With further reductions in compensation, no defined retirement benefit, and no social security benefits, Ms. Duez wondered how much more difficult it would be to recruit and retain teachers of quality. She thanked the board for their time.

Chrya Sanderson, PO Box 55935, North Pole High School Alaska Native Education (ANE) tutor, found herself weary after 32 years with the school district and many years of negotiations. Ms. Sanderson thought they had reached the place in the relationship between the associations and the district where the certified, support, and administrative staffs did something very unique – they negotiated, talked, and became a team to settle the contracts. Now, there was a person who was doing all that.

In looking around the room, Ms. Sanderson pointed out the professional staff present, along with those staff members who had received special recognition such as the ESP of the Year and Nationally Board Certified Teachers. She pointed out the degrees, certificates, and training of ESSA staff were not considered in the same manner as FEA members. Through the years, Ms. Sanderson had attended many conferences and collaborated with other support staff across the nation. At one conference she spoke before 14,000 attendees about education in Alaska. The district had achieved a level of professionalism not easily attained.

As a parent, Ms. Sanderson had raised three children in the district. One was now a certified teacher in California, where they faced three times the issues the Fairbanks district currently faced. She pointed out the successes of other students from the district. The successes and achievements of students were evident throughout the community.

Ms. Sanderson thought the district needed to get back to a place where the district could be showcased across the nation. Other districts did not have what Fairbanks had. She was proud and would continue to be proud to share the accomplishments and relationships that were part of the Fairbanks school district. She did not want to see that lost. Ms. Sanderson hoped the board would seriously look at what was happening. It felt like the board wanted long-time staff members to walk-out the door and replace them with new people. Ms. Sanderson could not have that happen to her students. She was passionate about educating and supporting academic success and she commended her certified staff for standing strong with ESSA; they stood shoulder to shoulder and no one could take that away from them.

Jon Rogers, 3924 Lyle Avenue, North Pole High School teacher, spoke to his heavy heart. Mr. Rogers had only seen the proposed contract a couple of days earlier. It felt like teachers were doing nothing but losing. He thought if there were challenges to be met, let everyone come together to meet them. When people came together, there were no challenges that could not be overcome. With the passion in the room, he was inspired.

Mr. Rogers said research showed it took ordinary wisdom to be successful in both your personal life and academic life. The top three traits were resilience, persistence, and teamwork. As a teacher, he believed he had to set an example of resilience and persistence; he did not give up when he could have. How could he teach students to be resilient and persistent if he was not? Mr. Rogers, like other teachers, was passionate about his job. It was so fun to see kids learn.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

Mr. Rogers was also before the board to advocate for Richard Henert, North Pole High School head football coach. He also recognized David DeVaughn. They both understood the power of football and what it meant to kids. Mr. Rogers noted the important influence football had for him when he was in school; he was now Mr. Henert's assistant coach.

As a teacher, Mr. Rogers said it was a teacher's job to build an environment students wanted to be part of. The national percentage of football participation one worked to achieve was 10 percent; he noted North Pole High School was well over that – where 1 in 3 boys played football. Football was a place students wanted to be. Mr. Henert had made it that way for students. Mr. Rogers invited board members to come watch the team play to see what a “diverse and changing society” really looked like. Everyone played because when they faced a challenge; they faced it together.

Sharon McCool, 1713 Southern Road, spoke to the out-of-attendance issue. Ms. McCool was active duty with the 168th on Eielson Air Force Base. As parents who worked on Eielson, but lived in Fairbanks, the commute was approximately 70 miles roundtrip every day. Parents had to leave to pick up their children if they were sick, had doctor's appointments, early dismissal, etc. It could end up being two to three trips a day, if parents had to return to work. It could easily add up to 210 miles a day, accounting for approximately three to four hours of time. Ms. McCool noted the huge benefit to families having their children attend Eielson schools. Her family, like many families in her Air Guard unit, were community members with strong ties – they volunteered, they owned homes, paid taxes, etc. She noted it was difficult to volunteer in schools and attend parent-teacher conferences when you had to drive 35 miles each direction. Ms. McCool echoed the comments of the previous Guard member regarding the availability of after and before school care available for them on Eielson which allowed them to participate in military exercises, work 24-hour shifts, and go above and beyond for their job.

Ken Gieser, 227 Slater Drive, Ryan teacher, had lived in Fairbanks for 25 years. Mr. Gieser shared about his day. He had just arrived to the board meeting from a volleyball game, for which he coached. He woke up at 4:30 a.m. so he could make volleyball practice on time at 7:00 a.m. Practice didn't start until 7:30 a.m., but parents had contacted him about dropping off their students early because they had to be at work by 7:30 a.m. He agreed, no problem at all. Everyone had a great practice.

At 9:15 a.m., Mr. Gieser changed clothes and ran to his classroom to meet his social studies students. In the social studies class they learned about Josiah Henson, for whom Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was based on. Without bringing his own materials into class, Mr. Gieser's students would have never known about who that great book was based on. After the social studies class, came his English class. Changing gears, he taught his English class. They were doing an interesting unit on aging and what they could expect as their parents aged. Next was Mr. Gieser's lunch. It was the first time since 5:00 a.m. that morning, he had a chance to eat something. But on the way to lunch, he ran into a student in the hallway who was having a hard time. Mr. Gieser took the student to the office and made certain she got a lunch, but by now, his lunch was over, with no time for him to eat.

After lunch, Mr. Gieser was back in his classroom and getting ready for his drama class. There were a bunch of students in his class who were experiencing drama for the first time. He was doing a lot of crazy things to get them interested. They were making recycled costumes and more. After drama, he had two more classes and a lesson plan to write before he could leave with his volleyball team so the substitute teacher could take over his remaining two classes for him. After writing the lesson plan he headed to the bus with his volleyball team and headed to Randy Smith Middle School. The volleyball team played and finished at 7:00 p.m., which then brought him before the board.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NONAGENDA ITEMS (continued)

Mr. Gieser noted he was not alone out there, there were many teachers and principals all doing the same thing for free. He noted the many things staff already did for free, including for him the talent show, the speech contest, and the hours and hours of tutoring. He asked the board not to make him do anything more for free.

Rebecca Baxter, PO Box 57288, North Pole Elementary teacher, thanked the board for the opportunity to speak. Ms. Baxter appreciated the fantastic area of Fairbanks and the ability to institute change. She felt it was a privilege to have been able to work on the district's evaluation committee for almost four years. The experience had taught her a lot. It taught her the school district trusted her. The district recognized teachers were intelligent, capable people who wanted nothing but the best for students.

Ms. Baxter believed the settlement of the principals' contract showed the district was willing to work with its employees. However, in looking at the district's initial offer to FEA, it was a hack job. The district had taken a fantastic contract and tore it apart – that was not a sign of working together. What it indicated to her was the strategy to negotiate over as many items as possible so teachers would be satisfied with a zero percent raise. Ms. Baxter was not going to discuss money, but the district needed to keep long-term teachers. Experienced teachers were quitting and retiring. Tier 1 and Tier 2 teachers were leaving because they were being treated poorly. They were being told they were respected, but were going to be made to work more hours, with less pay, along with taking more time away from students. Ms. Baxter figured it would take 90 minutes a week for elementary teachers to teach eight preps – 18 minutes a day, 5 days a week. She asked how healthy children would be with 18 minutes of PE. What about music or library for 18 minutes? She said her class couldn't check out a book in 18 minutes.

Ms. Baxter wanted the board to know teachers were there because they cared about their students. The proposed contract was taking things away from students and staff. It was not a good way to attract new talented teachers to the district.

On behalf of the entire board, President Haas thanked everyone who had testified. The board was very aware of the process and proposal. They believed the negotiation teams were working through each of the proposals.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT [1:39:08]

Core Value/Goal: Effective Communication: Establish transparent and consistent communication to increase student, parent, staff, and community connectedness with the district.

Superintendent Dr. Gaborik provided a superintendent report. Dr. Gaborik asked Heather Rauenhorst, grants director, to update the board regarding the district's grant program. Ms. Rauenhorst provided an overview of the district's grant application and review processes. Although there were many grants available, there were limitations on what grants the district could apply for, as there were many consideration factors such as time, oversight, matching funds requirements, and more. The district was on track of receiving approximately \$2 million in competitive grant awards.

Dr. Gaborik provided an update on the district's recent award of the DODEA grant. The district received approximately \$1.5 million. Over the course of five years, the grant would provide extensive professional development to five military-connected schools for the development of a one-to-one iPad program in grades 1-3. Dr. Gaborik provided a brief overview of the grant activities to date. During the fourth quarter, focus would be on reading and language arts connections. Progress was being made with pilot classrooms in literacy and mathematics. The district was also exploring additional grants in the same area.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT (continued)

Dr. Gaborik announced Daniel Domke, career technical education director, was elected to the Alaska Postsecondary Access and Completion Network. It would be great for the district to have Mr. Domke serve in that position. One of his goals was to advance CTE work statewide to provide multiple graduation pathways.

Dr. Gaborik announced the district was about ready to launch texting capability on Blackboard Connect. The launch date was scheduled for April 18. Dr. Gaborik also announced that in an effort to reduce costs, the Administrative Center would be utilizing a four-day workweek from June 13 to July 24. All staff would still be working their full hours Monday through Thursday, with the Administrative Center being closed on Fridays. Supervisors had been working with their staff to iron out the details. The new schedule would mean a four-day work week except during holiday weeks, when it would be a three-day work week.

Dr. Gaborik spoke briefly about the budget and possible reductions in certificated staff that could affect tenured teachers. With final funding still unknown, the administration planned to provide notice of doubtful status to all non-tenured teachers, except special education teachers and librarians, unless funding was known before May 1. Notice was required by May 1. The notice of non-retention was due at the end of May.

Board Questions/Comments

Board discussion ensued. Report for information only; no action required. Board members were pleased to see the DODEA grant included literacy and math. A concern was voiced regarding the four-day workweek in the Administrative Center and departments' ability to catch up over the summer. It was clarified staff would still work their full-hours, so the same amount of work should be able to be accomplished Monday-Thursday.

OLD BUSINESS

Included in the Consent Agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

K-12 Science Curriculum Adoption [1:55:27]

At the March 22, 2016 board meeting, the revised *K-12 Science Curriculum* was presented and a copy of the document was provided. The administration recommended the board adopt the proposed *K-12 Science Curriculum*. The Board Curriculum Advisory Committee, at their March 3, 2016 meeting, voted to recommend the *K-12 Science Curriculum*.

Core Value/Goal: Student-Centered: Center everything we do on the student and student learning.

DOMINIQUE MOVED, HULL SECONDED, TO ADOPT THE REVISED *K-12 SCIENCE CURRICULUM*.

Melanie Hadaway, executive director of curriculum and instruction, noted she had presented the curriculum report at the last meeting, but was available to answer any questions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mrs. Dominique thanked the Board Curriculum Advisory Committee members and curriculum staff for their work on the curriculum revision.

K-12 Science Curriculum Adoption (continued)

ADVISORY VOTES. 3 AYES (WILLIAMS, RIZK, COLE)
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY ROLL CALL VOTE. 5 AYES
(GENTRY, HULL, DOMINIQUE, O'BRIEN, HAAS)

Report & IFB 16-R0003: Pupil Transportation Services [1:57:57]

Competitive proposals for the purchase of student transportation services were received in the purchasing department on September 29, 2015, at 4:30 p.m. The purchasing department evaluated the proposals received and recommended award to the offer that provided the best value to the school district. After the administration updated the school board on the transportation contract, the board was asked to approve the awarding of the contract to First Student, Inc. for \$12,435,911.40, based on first-year usage for the initial period of the contract, July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. The abstract of bids and complete bid file was available for review in the purchasing department.

Core Value/Goal: Effective Communication: Establish transparent and consistent communication to increase student, parent, staff, and community connectedness with the district.

HULL MOVED, DOMINIQUE SECONDED, TO AWARD IFB 16-R0003: PUPIL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES TO FIRST STUDENT, INC. FOR \$12,435,911.40, BASED ON FIRST-YEAR USAGE FOR THE INITIAL PERIOD OF THE CONTRACT, JULY 1, 2016 – JUNE 30, 2017.

Lisa Pearce, Renee Tonne, Bart Grahek, provided an update on the transportation contract. Ms. Tonne, transportation coordinator, updated the board on bus routes, on-time statistics, and driver recruitment, staffing and wages. Mr. Grahek, purchasing director, spoke to the timeline and specifics of the transportation contract and bid process. First Student was the sole bidder. Ms. Pearce, chief financial officer, explained the financial consequences of the contract and the transportation subsidy.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

BOARD QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Board discussion ensued. Board members acknowledged the administration's hard work on negotiating the contract. Given the difficult financial times and monopoly of the market, board members were pleased with some of the terms of the contract the administration had been able to negotiate, such as the ability to terminate the contract and if terminated, the option to purchase the buses.

Mr. O'Brien voiced his opposition to the contract due to the poor service First Student had provided through the year and the poor working conditions reported by employees. He struggled to find anything good about the company, although he noted his son's bus driver was good; it wasn't the drivers' fault, it was the company.

ADVISORY VOTES. 3 AYES (COLE, WILLIAMS, RIZK)
MOTION CARRIED BY ROLL CALL VOTE.
4 AYES: GENTRY, HULL, DOMINIQUE, HAAS
1 NAY: O'BRIEN

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

Health Care Committee Report [2:12:56]

Lisa Pearce, chief financial officer; Robin Mullins, director of business services and chairman of the Joint Committee on Health Benefits; Colleen Savoie of Parker Smith & Feek, plan consultant; Melody Douglas of Douglas Business Management Services, facilitator; and Krista Lord, director of compliance and the superintendent's appointee to the committee; presented a summary of adopted plan design changes to the district's health care plan. Changes were scheduled to go into effect in January of 2017.

Core Value/Goal: Effective Communication: Establish transparent and consistent communication to increase student, parent, staff, and community connectedness with the district.

The committee was tasked to determine health care benefits, while containing costs. The Affordable Care Act had not made the committee's work easy. While implementation of the health care tax was postponed, the committee continued to move forward with their work regarding changes to the program that would help maintain the long-term sustainability of the program.

The district was self-insured. While being self-insured was an economical cost-saving way to provide insurance, the district's benefit package was very expensive; approximately 28 percent of the budget, of which health care was approximately 16 percent. With the rising costs of health care, the district had to make changes to its health plans. The committee was passionate in their work to contain costs and sustain the program. The committee recommended plan changes that would take effect in 2017. Many of the changes provided staff members with avenues to be active participants in their health care.

Some of the committee's recommended changes included the revision of the current Plan A and Plan B, with the addition of a new Plan C. Other changes included the addition of generic prescription copays, increased deductibles, elimination of the deductible carry-over, increased penalty for ER visits for non-emergency care, and limiting the number of chiropractic and acupuncture visits covered per year. New to the plan would be the addition of the Telemedicine program which offered 24 hour accessibility to a physician by phone and the Bridge Health program, which provided cost-saving options for non-emergency care outside of the area. The health care plan changes allowed the unbundling of benefits, affording employees the opportunity to select individual dental, vision, and health options.

The district's health plan was well managed. The district's current Plan A option was considered a very generous plan, better than many other school districts. While both the current Plans A & B, and the new Plan C, would have higher deductibles, all the plans provided good coverage for catastrophic illnesses. The recommended changes were projected to provide approximately \$1.7 million in savings in 2017, with similar savings projected in 2018. The savings could be higher if more staff enrolled in the higher deductible programs.

It was important the new plans were rolled out successfully. The committee would continue their work on the roll-out and communication plans. The committee believed the changes would have an overall positive effect on the long-term success of the district's health care plan.

BOARD QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Board discussion ensued. Item for information only; no action required. Board members appreciated the work of the committee; the issues they dealt with were very complex. The recommendations should help to reduce the district's health care costs.

BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS [2:36:42]

On behalf of the entire board, President Haas thanked the North Pole Middle School Percussion Ensemble for their great performance. She congratulated the John Kelly Scholarship recipients and Ms. Bush as the ESP for April. President Haas also thanked Mrs. Wassmann for the very informative spotlight on the district's special education programs.

President Haas announced the Legislative Committee meeting scheduled for April 11 was cancelled. The district was scheduled to present its 2016-17 Recommended Budget to the Borough Finance Committee on Thursday, April 7 at 5:30 p.m. in assembly chambers. President Haas announced she would be out of town for the April 18 and 19 board meetings.

Colonel Williams congratulated Colonel Cole and the Air Force regarding the announcement of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighters coming to Eielson. He thanked the North Pole Middle School Percussion Ensemble for their great performance. Colonel Williams recognized the day as Gold Star Spouses Day, honoring spouses and families of fallen members of the U.S. Armed Forces. He was also pleased to hear the district was looking for additional grants. Colonel Williams shared his appreciation for the Golden Heart VFW Post and the number of awards they were offering students in grades 6-12, including the \$30,000 Voice of Democracy award. Fort Wainwright would be hosting an Earth Day Celebration on Tuesday, April 26 from 9:00-11:30 a.m. with students from Tanana Middle School and Arctic Light and Ladd Elementary Schools

Colonel Cole appreciated Mrs. Wassmann's special education report; it was amazing to see how much teachers cared. He thanked everyone who had testified and hoped the district would be able to work with them. He had found through his work in the Air Force, that when cuts were made, it often eroded trust and once it was gone, it was difficult to get back.

Mrs. Hull thought the F-35s coming to Eielson Air Force would be good for the community. She appreciated the evening's testimony and thanked the teachers who testified. The negotiation process was just beginning and she had confidence in the process. She hoped people would not jump to too many conclusions. There seemed to be many misunderstandings about the offer and hoped there would be information provided clarifying some items had not been eliminated, but rather moved to another section. Mrs. Hull believed the board and the unions were both working in good faith. She appreciated district staff and their work and dedication to students.

In regards to a report on the State Board meeting, Mrs. Hull noted the minutes were distributed by email to the board. She believed the cancellation of AMP testing was the appropriate decision. Mrs. Hull reported the Parent Engagement Committee was scheduled to meet on April 21. The committee continued their work and she was excited about the recommendations that would be coming forward. Mrs. Hull spoke about a great book she had read, *Blended: Using Disruptive Innovation to Improve Schools*, which spoke to implementing personalized learning and blended learning techniques. It was one of the best things she had read and highly recommended it to everyone. Mrs. Hull was headed to the National School Boards Association convention, so she would be unable to attend the district's budget presentation to the borough on Thursday.

Mr. O'Brien thanked the North Pole Middle School Percussion Ensemble for their great performance. Like other board members, he was excited about the F-35 announcement and how it would affect schools. Mr. O'Brien appreciated the testimony and passion voiced, although the downside was the feeling of being insulted; it was not the board's intent. If everyone loved the initial offers, there would be no need to negotiate. Mr. O'Brien hoped some of the misunderstandings about the offer could be cleared up and others worked out. He thanked Mrs. Wassmann for her spotlight on the district's special education program. It was very informative and interesting to hear about the program and some of its challenges. Mr. O'Brien thanked Ms. Downing for inviting him to her second grade classroom at Anne Wien Elementary to help with a project where every student was running for president. He had a great time and enjoyed the visit.

BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS & COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

At 9:53 p.m.:

DOMINIQUE MOVED, HULL SECONDED, TO SUSPEND THE RULES AND CONTINUE THE MEETING TO 10:15 P.M.

Asking for and hearing no objection, President Haas continued the meeting.

Mrs. Dominique echoed the sentiments and excitement of other board members regarding the announcement regarding the F-35s. She also thanked Mrs. Wassmann for her special education spotlight. She encouraged parents to check out the different programs available for students. Mrs. Dominique thought the Health Care Committee was an important committee and it worked hard to sustain the district's health care plans. She appreciated the testimony regarding negotiations and understood how people could be upset. Everyone would need to work together to reach an agreement. Mrs. Dominique announced the Board Curriculum Advisory Committee was scheduled to meet at 5:30 p.m. on April 7.

Mr. Rizk congratulated the John Kelly scholarship recipients and thanked Mrs. Wassmann for her special education spotlight. He announced district students would be traveling the next day to the Alaska Association of Student Governments (AASG) conference in Kodiak.

Superintendent Dr. Gaborik announced she had been accepted to the National Cohort of Superintendents as part of a National Cohort on Personalized Learning. It was a great experience to collaborate and network with other superintendents and learn about what other districts were doing. She thanked Mrs. Hull for encouraging her to get involved.

Dr. Gaborik and John Ringstad, BP representative, had the privilege to visit schools to surprise and award the Fairbanks BP Teachers of Excellence:

- Elizabeth Beks, North Pole High School
- Wendi Graham, West Valley High School
- Elizabeth Hilker, Chinook Montessori Charter School
- Lynn Johnson, Barnette Magnet School
- Thad Keener, Denali Elementary School
- Moira O'Malley, Watershed Charter School
- Mary Reece, Anne Wien Elementary School

Dr. Gaborik congratulated all the awardees. The BP award banquet, where the BP Teacher of the Year would be announced, was scheduled for April 21.

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Submitted by Sharon Tuttle, executive assistant to the Board of Education.