

Seward Schools Site-Based Council Meeting

March 20, 2014 Minutes

Seward Elementary, Seward Middle, Seward High

Call to Order: 6:31 PM

Present: Mica Van Buskirk, Leigh Ray, David Kingsland, Alan Nickell, Linda Ferkinhoff, Myla Liljemark, Kelli Moore, Laura Hensley, Raylynn Zweifel, Von Terry, Stephanie Cronin, Jason Bickling, Stephanie Mullaly, Amy Hankins, Celeste Lemme, Reuben Miranda, Mike Moriarty, Trevan Walker, Maille Moriarty, Wolfgang Kurtz, Katy J. Scrivo, Lisa Miller

Excused: Maya Moriarty, Lori Wolfe

Approval of Minutes: Approved

Additions to Agenda: None

Public Comments: Lisa Miller, Title I teacher at Seward Elementary School, reported that she works with 31 students in grades K-4. She mentioned some of the programs she uses with her students for reading interventions, such as Sonday. Recently, she hosted a family night, and 45 people attended.

Seward Middle School Report

by Maille Moriarty

- Athletics have been going well, with the girls' volleyball team taking second place in the tournament.
- On February 22 in Anchorage, several of our students participated in a Quest Debate and did well.
- On the 28th, we'll be hosting a debate clinic with other schools.
- SBA testing is coming up!
- An early release day is coming up on April 16th.
- There is no school on April 18th.
- Our principal has been recognized as the 2014 Region III Principal of the Year for going above and beyond the call of duty to best meet the needs of students.

Seward High School Report: *none*

Old Business

Site Council goal discussion on business partnerships. The SSSBC has a goal to enhance business partnerships between the schools and local businesses. The following points were discussed:

- David Kingsland listed many partnerships that already exist between local businesses and the elementary school such as with the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the dog pound, the SeaLife Center, Schoolyard Habitat, Kenai Fjords National Parks rangers, Jammin' Salmon events, and so on. He mentions that many have to be turned away due to time constraints, pointing out that teachers have to

balance guest speakers and presenters with their need to teach mandated curriculum.

- Leigh Ray mentions that teachers are trained in “[place-based education](#),” which encourages education to occur in the community in meaningful ways, but points out the need for teachers to be selective when choosing partners—carefully matching up opportunities with topics being taught in the classroom, guided by the Alaska State Standards. Teachers solicit what they need, when they need it.
- Myla Liljemark suggested that the Council create a committee to discuss this topic, and to create a database that teachers can look at to match teaching needs to local opportunities (local experts at local businesses).
- Trevan Walker stated that principals are already required to list business partnerships annually, and this information is available on the KPBSD website. [Also see page two of the [KPBSD 2012-2017 Strategic Plan](#), where it states the following: “3.3 *Business Partnerships*: Develop business partnerships (both site and district based) to explore career pathways and promote education within the community.”] Additionally, the [WorkKeys](#) program and the hybrid model of schooling both include working with the community. Currently, Cindy Ecklund solicits business partnerships for high school students. These can be part of independent studies, internships, work-studies, or credit recovery classes.
- Von Terry asked how the middle school students can fit into this picture. Perhaps the high school students could talk to the middle school students about work-studies they’ve done.
- Mica Van Buskirk said that in 2002, the National Park Service (Ocean Science Learning Center) used to offer an oceanography class and other classroom programs and wishes to be more involved in the future. She also said the Kenai Peninsula College should be encouraged to bring more college classes and professors to Seward. She spoke with Assistant City Manager Ron Long (who is on the KPC Board of Directors), and he was supportive of this effort.
- Finally, council members agreed to form a committee to create a list of resources matched to State Standards that teachers could reference when they wanted to connect with someone in the business community. Myla Liljemark, Leigh Ray, and Mica Van Buskirk agreed to be on the committee.

New Business

District Attendance Policies

KPBSD Superintendent Steve Atwater asked Site Council to review the policies. Currently, the policies are vague and inconsistent. There is a district-level committee working on the policies. David Kingsland illustrated the problems with the policies with the *tardy* versus *morning absent* ambiguity, stating that schools across the district treat morning lateness differently. Mica Van Buskirk asked about students vacationing with their families for more than 10 days and supposedly being unenrolled. Trevan Walker replied that it relates to the dropout count at the high school level. If a student is not re-enrolled in another high school within 10 days after leaving SHS, he or she counts as a dropout on SHS’s roll. Other discussion revolved around the high school’s automated calling system that alerts parents to student tardies and absences. PowerSchool access is another way parents can check to see if their child arrived at school. The SSSBC recommendations are that the district committee make matching policies across all district schools, and that we would like to stay informed as these policies are changed.

High School Staffing

Even though the PTR increased, the high school is up .5 FTE for the 2014-2015 school year due to higher projected enrollment, which creates new opportunities. For example, Trevan Walker has received backing from Human Resources to extend the school day beyond 2:20 PM, and the teacher’s union is engaged in the

conversation too. The goal is to place a teacher in a ½-time position with the sole purpose of managing student graduation plans that will no longer be dictated by the bell schedule. Instead, student needs are at the helm, such as providing opportunities after school for taking classes, especially for students with a Personal Learning & Career Plan (PLCP). This is the next move toward the hybrid school model. School would be open until 5 PM, providing a blended instructional model that included face-to-face and digital learning opportunities. With this model, distance delivery and independent studies that already occur during the traditional school day could be extended beyond 2:20 PM. Amy Hankins asked if this is based on other models, and Trevan replied that he believes that SHS would be the only hybrid model in the state. Mica Van Buskirk asked why the .5 FTE isn't fit into the regular school day so that students who don't have enough classes to take have another opportunity (such as English AP). It was also noted that a teacher who was contracted until 5 PM would likely be alone and not have support staff or back up if needed.

Community Member Nominations

Amy Hankins is now a parent representative since Nadene Brown resigned, and this opens up a community representative seat. The following people were suggested and will be contacted by Mica Van Buskirk as possible nominees: Ken Carr, Barb Sterling, Mark Ganser, Dave Dieckgraeff, Maggie Wilkins, Jennilee Regis, and Lisa Bildeaux. Please contact Mica by April 2nd with any further nominations.

Staggered Seats for MS/HS Site Council Representatives

To stagger seats, the following council members' terms end as follows: Michael Moriarty, 2014; Alan Nickell, 2014; Von Terry, 2015; Reuben Miranda, 2015.

Reports from Administrators

Elementary School Report

by David Kingsland

- Intramural volleyball is wrapping up, with its last day on March 25th.
- Sea Week happened at our school this week, with all students attending an educational session with staff from the SeaLife Center.
- Last week, we hosted a cultural Family Night and Book Fair, which was well attended.
- SBA testing is coming up.
- The district has allocated another teaching position for our school for the 2014-2015 school year.

Middle School Report

by Jason Bickling

- To fill the two open teaching positions next year for the sixth grade, Bob Barnwell, a tenured teacher, was granted one position. Katy Scrivo, a non-tenured teacher, was granted the other position a few days ago, but it isn't official until approved by the School Board at its April meeting when they will vote on her contract. Both teachers currently hold positions at Seward Elementary School.

High School Report

by Trevan Walker

- Girls took third in regions. Then they lost in their first round at State to ACS.
- Boys took sixth in regions.
- Debate Team took 2nd overall -- #1 in Drama. The first-ever plaque will go up on the new Wall of Champions.
- Track & Field will be coached by Travis Price and Sami King.

- Soccer is getting underway.
- We had the youngest team ever attend the National Ocean & Science Bowl this year (all first-timers).
- Biographer Walter Stahr, author of "Seward: Lincoln's Indispensable Man," will be visiting SHS on March 28th along with UAA Professor of Political Science Jim Muller.
- Our school's accreditation visit is April 9-10.
- Prom is on April 12th.
- April 23rd, the Seward Prevention Coalition is bringing "[The Winter Bear](#)" to SHS. The Winter Bear is an uplifting play about a young Alaska Native who rises above his past to become a hero. It includes the topic of suicide. Middle School students will also be attending.
- Winter Formal keywords: "Face to Face, Leave Some Space!" Shawn Williams did a great job being DJ!

School Board Report:

by Mica Van Buskirk (in Lynn Hohl's absence)

- Key Performance Indicators were mailed to Debbie Tressler (the superintendent's secretary).
- The 6-year capital improvement plan got approved, including the creation of a new front door and office for SHS, and a new field and track at the high school. A new office window for the elementary school is on the "minor project list."

PTA Report: none

Roundtable:

Council members agreed that roundtable is a time for closing comments from each member, but not for discussion of those comments.

Raylynn Zwiefel shared that the debate and drama teams at the high school hosted a prom gown fashion show.

Mica Van Buskirk stated that at the next meeting of the SSSBC, we will form an election committee.

Next Meeting: April 10, 2014, 6:30 - 8 PM in the professional development room of the Seward Middle School

Adjourned: 8:24 PM