

Seward Schools Site-Based Council
Meeting Minutes | Sept. 13, 2012 | 6:30 PM
Seward High School, Seward Middle School, Seward Elementary



Present: Hayden Beard, Mica Van Buskirk, Trevan Walker, Jason Bickling, David Kingsland, Leigh Ray, Julie Lindquist, Martha Fleming, Myla Liljemark, Alan Nickell, Amy Haddow

Meeting called to order: 6:35 PM

Welcome: Welcome to everyone present!

Minutes: Approved without changes.

Additions to the Agenda: none

Public comment: none

Middle School Student Report: none

High School Student Report:

Given by Hayden Beard

- Student council is up and running. These are the class representatives:
 - Freshmen – Jevahnta Weddington, Maddy Rae
 - Sophomores – Robin McKnight, Maria Jackson
 - Juniors – Bailey Lespron, Kiesha Lynch
 - Seniors – Jeff Buchanan, Savannah Fackler
- Student council members will be attending a district-wide meeting on September 26th to collaborate and learn leadership skills. The school board student representative will be elected at this meeting, as well other representatives for various curriculum committees.
- The loitering problems of the upper deck (above the commons) has been solved, making the commons area more comfortable.
- Sports are going well and looking strong.
- Debate Team has begun with Terri McKnight as the interim coach.
- Drama has selected a play to begin working on.

Old Business:

New High School Signs. The new signs, which were to be placed by fall, are not up. The goal is to have them up next spring. Julie Lindquist gave this update.

New Business:

The three school principals address their site development plans. This is required by the District. It is based on scores from SBAs. Each principal met in June with a team to discuss the plan and align it with District goals.

Seward Elementary School Site Development Plan

David Kingsland, Principal

- SBA scores were in the 400 to 600 range, with just 5 students in a subgroup scoring low enough to prevent school from meeting AYP.
- Noted that most resources from District go toward helping students in the lower quartile.
- The higher performing students need to be focused on. Their scores hold steady or flat line instead of rise.
- Data will be looked at to discover possible correlation between drop-out rate in high school and attendance rate in elementary school.
- Scheduling of specials in blocks is allowing for grade-alike teacher collaboration time during the school day.
- Other notable goals: improving writing, increasing parent involvement, and defining action plans.

David invited comment from council members.

Seward Middle School Site Development Plan

Jason Bickling, Principal

- Attendance issues are paramount. Staff will work to create an environment that draws kids in and makes them want to be at school. Students need internal motivation and ownership of schooling. Some ideas include a student leadership team and community outreach/service.
- Tied in with this is increasing parent contact by 25%.
- To create a place that students want to come to, staff will make school predictable and consistent. For example, all classrooms will have the same rules.
- So far, there have been two staff meetings focused on the development plan.

Seward High School Site Development Plan

Treva Walker, Principal

- Strong scores included math, language arts, and SPED.
- Concerns included 10th grade math scores, attendance, and graduation rate.
- SHS is a blended school of traditional and alternative education, with more than 50 students taking alternative classes during the school year.
- Yet, the traditional model of school is imposed throughout. This should change because SHS is a blended school. Treva suggests that there needs to be a paradigm shift.

- Goal is to embrace the blended school model and management techniques inherent with non-traditional credit acquisition (online and independent studies).
- The shift in thinking includes creating Individualized Learning Plans for every student. Jennifer Swander will coordinate or manage this in the beginning.
- Credit opportunities will be expanded.
- Noteworthy: all but four teachers have their curriculum on a blog, which facilitates independent study. Students have expanded opportunities.
- Part of this shift includes a re-imagining of the commons area into an instructional area (modeled after college student unions). In the future, it will undergo a radical facelift that facilitates studiousness, with a second floor added to create another study area with study carousels.
- It leads to a re-imagined school day, from 7:50 a.m. to 7:50 p.m., and 60% of students in the building at a time. This allows for flexibility so that students can work too. Sports schedules will need to be considered.
- Hallway traffic problems discussed last year are being addressed this year by only allowing one student at a time out of the classroom for bathroom breaks.

Myla Liljemark commented that this plan differentiates delivery. Dan Marshall, Martha Fleming, and Trevan Walker brainstormed this re-imagining, and the staff is excited about it.

Other new business.

- Julie Lindquist brought up the revision of the Site Council Blue Book. Members need to read it and comment on it so it can be revised. After members collaborate on changes, the draft goes to the school board for approval. Go to <http://bit.ly/NJUfTd> .
- Dr. Atwater will be coming to the next Seward Schools Site-Based Council meeting. This is a *Site Council and Parent Group Meeting* and includes training on setting parent group priorities. This event will be in the library at Seward Elementary School from 8 to 9 p.m. on October 11th. Go to <http://bit.ly/VqYt2J> for the agenda.
- Site council elections will be held during parent conferences on November 1-2, 2012. This will be advertised on Seward City News, The Seward Journal, The Seward Phoenix Log, Site Council's Facebook page and school newsletters.
- The Alaska Association of School Boards has asked site council members to review the recommended policy on student nutrition and comment on it by November 9th. Council members should be prepared to discuss it at the next site council meeting on October 11th. Download it at <http://bit.ly/SQwdTe>

Elementary School Report

Given by David Kingsland

- We have a bumper crop of 343 students this year, compared to 285 last year!
- There are 63 kindergarten students (three full classrooms).

- New teachers hired include Andrew Scrivo (1st grade), Carrie Lunardi (Kindergarten), and Alexis Kaferstein (pre-k).
- Other new hires include a psychologist, a speech therapist, an occupational therapist, a music teacher, and an aide.
- We're still seeking two more new hires: a full-time custodian (swing shift) and a kitchen cashier.
- Our school won the *Bronze Level USDA Healthier US Schools Challenge* for our school's nutrition and physical education programs. We offer more P.E. than any other school in the district.
- Microsoft selected teacher Leigh Ray to be part of the *Microsoft Partners in Learning 2012 US Forum* in Redmond, Washington, this past August. She was the only teacher selected from Alaska. Only 100 teachers were selected nationwide. The selection was based upon demonstrating the use of 21st century technologies in the classroom in a highly effective way that greatly impacted student learning. See the press release at <http://bit.ly/KMX4Mv>.
- Pamuya visited our school and gave a wonderful concert in the gym for all the students.
- We'll be having a reptile assembly coming up, thanks to the Library Association!
- The PTSA provided our school with a huge movie screen that is mounted in the gymnasium and remote controlled. It will be a great asset during events such as the Math Bowl.
- The Student Leadership Team is being led by Leigh Ray and Kathy Sandoval this year.
- Lunch is eaten in classrooms this year, allowing for all classes to have P.E.
- New hallway rules bring peace and quiet to school hallways and prevent the disruption of classrooms as students file by.

Middle School Report:

Given by Jason Bickling

- Two new employees this year: Jill Herbert (special education) and a SPED aide.
- We're the only middle school in the district to meet AYP this year.
- Next week will be the first meeting of the Student Leadership Team.
- Soccer and cross country are going but the teams are too small.
- During the November site council meeting, we'd like to discuss moving the 6th grade up to the middle school. (Requests that this be added to the agenda.)

High School Report

Given by Trevan Walker

- Stephanie Cronin was awarded the very prestigious *Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics & Science Teaching*! Read about it at <http://bit.ly/RL1xZh>. She received her award in the nation's capital this summer.
- Monday night at 7:30, the high school will be hosting the US Army Field Band – Jazz Ambassadors Concert! Students will be able to see the concert during school on Tuesday.

- Several new staff were hired, including Sami King, Jennifer Swander, Al Plan, and Breighley Sexton.
- In November, there will be a debate tournament with Nikiski.

KPBSD School Board Report: none

PTSA Report: none

Roundtable:

- Julie Lindquist would like to relinquish her chair.
- David Kingsland will be hiring two long-term substitute teachers because two teachers will be going out on maternity leave this school year.
- Hayden Beard adds that Ms. Nichols is “pushing for technology” and allows cell phones to be used for information.

Meeting adjourned at: 8:35 PM

Next meeting: October 11, 2012, at 7:00 PM at the Elementary School in the library.