

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
July 30, 2014
Teleconference originating in Juneau, AK

Chair Esther Cox called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. James Fields was not present. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. No member declared a conflict of interest. The board approved the agenda unanimously. There was no public comment at this time.

Agenda item 5A. Internet speed.

Linda Thibodeau, Director of Libraries, Archives & Museums, said the proposed regulation had been revised a little based on written public comment.

Barbara Thompson asked that the wording in 4 AAC 33.665(b) be changed from “shall” to “may.” She asked if it was practicable for districts to return unexpended funds by the July 30 deadline in 4 AAC 33.670. Board members discussed allowing 120 days from the end of the fiscal year or allowing an August 30 deadline.

In response to a question, Assistant Attorney General Luann Weyhrauch clarified that the improved Internet service must be accessible to students, but the proposed regulation does not restrict others from having access.

Valerie Oliver, Alaska’s E-rate coordinator, said she expects 80 to 90 schools to be eligible currently for increased Internet service.

Barbara Thompson moved and Sue Hull seconded a motion to approve the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 33 Article 6, to include changing “shall” to “may” in 4 AAC 33.665(b) and changing “July 30” to “August 30” in 4 AAC 33.670. The board approved the motion unanimously in a roll call vote.

Public comment

Dr. Mary Wegner, superintendent of the Sitka School District, spoke in support of the University of Alaska Southeast’s proposed superintendent endorsement program. Dr. Wegner said there are 11 new superintendents in Southeast Alaska and the average tenure of Alaska superintendents is less than three years. The program would help existing and new superintendents.

Dr. Lisa Parady, executive director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators, supported the proposed UAS program. She said high-quality sustained leadership by superintendents has a direct impact on student achievement.

Agenda item 6. UAS superintendent endorsement program.

Barbara Thompson said that the program’s course ED S613 should focus more on federal and state law or that those topics be the subject of a separate course.

Dr. Martin Laster, director of the proposed superintendent endorsement program at UAS, said the course would be redesigned with that issue in mind.

Board members asked why admission to the endorsement program required three years of teaching experience. Department staff explained that a superintendent's endorsement is attached to a Type B (administrator) certificate, and Type B certificates require three years of teaching experience.

Board members discussed whether a person without teaching experience could participate in the endorsement program and not receive an endorsement. Dr. Laster said UAS would want a written understanding with such a student that he or she would not receive an endorsement.

Board member Kobe Rizk said the proposed curriculum did not include student relations. Dr. Laster said students will be added to the list of constituents in the community building course.

Esther Cox said she wants more emphasis on negotiation techniques in the curriculum. Dr. Laster said students role-play in case studies and are encouraged to sit in on negotiations, if they are available.

Esther Cox said the curriculum does not include current issues such as Alaska's standards and teacher evaluations. Dr. Deborah Lo, dean of the UAS School of Education, said the program will be responsive to current issues.

Esther Cox said course ED S667 should dedicate time to boardmanship. She thanked UAS for meeting the state's need to have a superintendent endorsement program.

In response to a question, Dr. Laster said 11 students may enroll in the program this fall.

Barbara Thompson moved and Jim Merriner seconded a motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the superintendent endorsement program at the University of Alaska Southeast. In a roll call vote, the board approved the motion unanimously.

Board comments

Kathleen Yarr said the requirements for entry into the UAS superintendent endorsement program are confusing.

Barbara Thompson said superintendents were pleased with the department's presentations at the recent superintendent fly-in.

Esther Cox asked for dates of the board's meeting with the University of Alaska Board of Regents and for a current list of superintendents.

The board adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:45 a.m.