

**Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**October 29, 2014**  
**Tele/videoconference based in Juneau**

First Vice Chair James Fields called the meeting to order at noon via tele/videoconference. Esther Cox, Kenny Gallahorn, and Kobe Rzik were absent. Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Fields cited a conflict of interest with the Copper River School District's request for a waiver from the board. Mr. Fields is a member of the district's school board. Mr. Fields said the district's request should be handled as a separate agenda item from that of the other 22 districts requesting a waiver. Mr. Fields said he would not participate in the discussion of, or vote on, the Copper River agenda item. The board approved the agenda.

There was no public comment.

***Business meeting***

**Agenda Item 5. School District Budget Waiver Requests.** Commissioner Hanley introduced the topic and said the department works with districts to increase the percentage of their budget that goes toward instruction.

Sue Hull asked if the same seven school districts with budgets under \$3 million apply for waivers each year. Elizabeth Nudelman, the department's director of School Finance, said they are, citing a lack of economies of scale. The board packet contains a chart of districts' operating funds budgeted for instruction covering the past 10 years.

Sue Hull asked why \$3 million is a significant threshold. Elizabeth Nudelman said that historical data since the law took effect 16 years ago supports the department's conclusion that districts with budgets under \$3 million find it hard to budget 70 percent of their operating funds for instruction.

Sue Hull said it is important for the department to review the budgets of districts seeking a waiver because some districts have moved closer to the 70 percent target. James Fields said the board's action on waivers is not a rubber stamp, given the department's efforts with affected districts.

James Fields pulled Copper River from the agenda item.

Barbara Thompson moved: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the district waiver requests for 70% minimum expenditure for instruction requirement for Fiscal Year 2015 for the following school districts: Alaska Gateway, Aleutian Region, Bristol Bay Borough, Chatham, Hoonah City, Hydaburg City, Iditarod Area, Kake City, Kashunamiut,

Kuspuk, Lake and Peninsula, Nome, North Slope Borough, Northwest Arctic Borough, Pelican City, Pribilof, Saint Mary's, Skagway, Tanana City, Wrangell, Yukon Flats, and Yupiit.

Sue Hull seconded. The board members present approved the motion unanimously.

Barbara Thompson moved: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the district waiver requests for 70% minimum expenditure for instruction requirement for Fiscal Year 2015 for the Copper River School District. Sue Hull seconded. The board members present approved the motion unanimously.

***Board comments***

Barbara Thompson said she will report in December on the department's assessment technical advisory committee.

Jim Merriner asked attendees to keep Esther Cox, who is under the weather, in their thoughts.

Sue Hull said she was told that a state regulation forbids local school boards from influencing ballot measures (such as through resolutions). She asked the department to confirm this and, if true, to explain the rationale.

James Fields said Esther Cox is in his thoughts and he thanked the department staff.

The board adjourned at 12:25 p.m.