



SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 19569, 1010 Sandy Beach Road Thorne Bay, Alaska 99919

(907) 828-8254 Fax: (907) 828-8257 E-mail: sisd@sisd.org

Board Report May 2018

Archery

John and James Stevens have agreed to take a team to World competition in Kentucky this summer. The expectation is that the student athletes, school, ASC, or sponsors will make a modest contribution towards this cost and that the district will support the bulk of the cost. Student athletes who are selected to attend this event will be required continue to practice on a set schedule and improve their skills. The District will only support those who exhibit a serious effort. If the coaches determine that a minimum team of about eight students is not committed to meeting these requirements, the trip will be cancelled. One limiting factor is whether a competitive team can be pulled together with student work obligations and summer travel plans. Potential participants and their parents have been contacted.

Café

We are finalizing a lease agreement with Roxy and Brian Wilson of Coffman Cove. Once the lease is ready for approval, a special board meeting will be scheduled. The café should be open in the near future.

School Funding and Budget

The legislature has concluded their work on the budget. As we found a few years ago, the Governor can still veto any aspect of school funding in June. I believe we can anticipate funding at the level approved by the legislature. **Lucienne Smith** will elaborate on what we expect during the budget workshop that will take place at 5:00 PM at the Howard Valentine School.

We have not completed all of our hires for the coming year and a couple of issues have been left hanging until we knew what funding to expect. Budget approval will need to be resolved at an additional Board meeting in June.

Site Stability

Hyder and Kasaan are both projected to make count. They both hover right at ten students and it is easy to imagine events that could derail our funding. We will follow events closely.

Greenhouses

I am quite excited to see the innovation and student involvement proposed for the Whale Pass School greenhouse. **Andy Cook** has some brilliant ideas and I will ask him to share those tonight or at the next Board meeting he can attend.

The Howard Valentine Coffman Cove School greenhouse is coming along. They just had a big plant sale that was a great success. They sold a large number of hanging baskets for \$25.00 each. I hope to have a report on that event tonight at the Board meeting. The Barry Craig Stewart Kasaan School and the Naukati School greenhouses are doing well.

The Thorne Bay School greenhouse is still struggling. It is currently empty and being overheated in an attempt to kill aphids. The fish have been moved to Kasaan. The difficulties with operation this year coincide with the change in the school schedule and class scheduling for the greenhouse. We have had many discussions and we expect to adjust the basic model and how the greenhouse is set up.

Aquaponic greenhouse systems are organic in every sense. This is a problem for us without far more labor with aphid control. This type of greenhouse system can work and has done so in Kasaan due to the additional efforts of a volunteer who goes above and beyond to stay on top of the problem. This can only work if labor costs do not exceed production.

When fish are out of the equation, aphid control is easier and less labor intensive. Thorne Bay and Howard Valentine are moving away from using the aquaponic system with fish. If you are attending the Board meeting tonight in Coffman Cove, include a brief tour of the greenhouse to see what we are talking about.

Thorne Bay, Coffman Cove and Kasaan greenhouses are heated year-round; they should be viable and have been at times. The common factor for each when they have been successful is that someone at the school has been committed and dedicated to making it work. We will post positions at 10 hours per week at each of these sites for an individual to carry out these responsibilities. This individual will be directly responsible to our greenhouse manager. Teachers will still be expected to include the greenhouse in their curriculum and to be full participants in greenhouse operation.

Our intent had been for students to have some financial benefit from greenhouse production. Students working in the greenhouse should have an incentive to promote success. One issue has been a lack of sales, either to our own food program or to individuals. Another issue is that the return on investment is in value-added products such as hanging baskets and bedding plants. We would like to see our most invested and dedicated students rewarded for their efforts.

Grants

First Bank, Ketchikan- Angela Dunton, AmeriCorps volunteer at Coffman Cove School, and Priscilla Goulding collaborated to write a grant for gardening and chicken supplies for Whale Pass, Naukati and Howard Valentine Coffman Cove Schools. The grant was for \$2,800 and was awarded in April. Nice work Angela for finding this local source!

Carl Perkins Leadership grant - Priscilla and Nick Higson worked together to apply for this grant from the state Career Technical Education (CTE) department. The purpose is to increase teacher skills and knowledge for delivering CTE classes. Our proposal was to send teachers to training for SCUBA, Coding, and Raspberry Pi, a computer students can program to run motors while requiring high level thinking skills. Another focus is to 'articulate' some of our CTE classes with University of Alaska Fairbanks' Career Technical College, allowing us to offer SISD courses with both high school and College credit at the same time. The district was awarded \$16,278 and, though less than what we asked for, this award will boost teacher capabilities in teaching CTE.

Staffing

Bud and Teri Willard have resigned. **Terri Kohn** has been hired to fill the position vacated by Teri Willard. Ms. Kohn is working very hard to get up to speed in short notice. We are interviewing for the maintenance replacement and have several good candidates. **Jonathan Fitzpatrick** will be working in Hydaburg on their wood-fired boiler for much of the next year. We will need to hire someone to complete his duties during this time and we are looking at several maintenance positions for our construction and electrical needs. **Cody Beus** has resigned as greenhouse manager. We will post that opening soon and hope to have that position filled before he departs at the end of June. Port Alexander is now settled for the year with the addition of **Anna Mekki** as an elementary teacher.

Reference Letters

Currently we do not write letters for teachers during the school year. We offer to do so when they have completed their assignment and duties. This creates a hardship for teachers as they seek other work as we say we are only available by phone.

We started this policy after multiple events of teachers not completing their duties satisfactorily and in many cases not completing the duties associated with the end of the school year. Our intent was to use this tool to get people to do their jobs. This is the typical policy directed at the actions of a few that then harms the staff that would do their duties to the best of their ability no matter what. We have written glowing reference letters in the past and immediately faced declining performance.

The problem is compounded by my insistence that teachers that are not going to be retained should be notified early while there are still attractive jobs open in Alaska. This means informing teachers in January. We do not have to notify teachers until about the first of May. Obviously the potential for punishing behaviors is higher with so much notice but I feel strongly that we should do everything we can to assist our teachers with their next assignment. Our Principals are anxious to return to writing letters when asked rather than declining until early June.

9. B. 3rd Reading FY 2019 Proposed Budget

We can consider this a balanced budget, but we still have decisions to make with funding. **I recommend moving this to a 4th reading.** We still have several staffing decisions to make and funding will determine which projects we can afford to proceed with. For instance, about half of the \$50,000 allocated to curriculum is spent on subscriptions or fees for online services. Unless this can be absorbed in the technology budget, we will need to allocate another \$25,000 to the curriculum budget. The potential need to hire one additional teaching position, adjustments to maintenance personnel, and needed projects may still impact the budget.

9. C. 3rd Reading BP 5144, Discipline

The changes to this policy identify that we would provide alternative placement for a disruptive student who was unresponsive to regular discipline procedures. This is a situation we have not encountered in the past, however it is something we would have done anyway. **I recommend approval.**

9. D. 3rd Reading AR 5144.1, Suspension and Expulsion

Review the section on **Authority to Expel**. **I recommend moving this item to a 4th reading** and I am open to suggestions on how to better clarify this section. I would also support approval of the current wording.

9. E. 3rd Reading, Violent and Aggressive Conduct

This is easier to adopt. Unlike the issue suggested above, this will be an event on campus with our own witness. It will allow us to conduct our own investigation and we can resolve an issue quickly should such an event ever occur. **I recommend approval.**

9. F. 2nd Reading, Board Policy 5113, Absences and Excuses

This policy includes clarification that school-sponsored field trips, sports trips, and activity trips are considered in-session school days and defines truancy. **I recommend approval.**

10. A. District-wide School Calendar

This has been widely discussed at each site and the majority of sites and individuals have endorsed this proposal. **I recommend approval.**

10. B. Approval of Phone System for Thorne Bay School and the District Office

If you have attended many board meetings, you have likely witnessed firsthand some of the issues with our current phone system. The system is many years beyond its life expectancy. I was being pushed to replace the system when I started as Superintendent in about 2007. It is way past time to upgrade the system and this bid seems quite reasonable. **I recommend approval.**

10. C. Capital Improvement Project Priority List

There will still be little money for these projects. A couple of ours are getting pretty high on the list. There is an expense to resubmit the list every year. It is more expensive to add new projects. I recommend the following list:

District Priority	Location and Description
1	Thorne Bay K-12 Fire Suppression System
2	Hollis K-12 School Replacement
3	Thorne Bay Maintenance Building Roof Replacement
4	Thorne Bay K-12 School UST Replacement
5	Thorne Bay K-12 Mechanical Upgrades
6	Thorne Bay Multi-purpose Building Hot Water Heater Replacement
7	Thorne Bay K-12 School Playground Upgrades
8	Kasaan School Covered Play Area Construction
9	Roof Replacement, 2 Schools (Port Alexander and Thorne Bay)

I recommend approving this list.

10. D. FY19-20 Professional Services Contract with Alaska Education and Business Services (Contract #2018-1003)

This contract is for the services of Lucienne Smith and her company. **I recommend approval.**

10. E. Inter-school Student Transportation for Classes (Discussion Item)

Currently we provide a vehicle if an adult wishes to volunteer to transport a student who is attending a SISD school other than the school in their community. This has worked the best for the district when an employee is already commuting to that school, although difficulties arise when the student(s) being transported are involved in after-school activities.

For instance, a number of Naukati students wanted to attend school in Thorne Bay this year. It worked for much of the year. We no longer have volunteers willing to drive and we are faced with requiring students to return to their home school on short notice or paying someone to drive so that students can finish the year.

The proposal is to only provide transportation between schools for the Thursday elective opportunities at sites on the road system. A vehicle would also be made available for a volunteer to transport students participating in after school sports at another school. My concern is that this will increase the slippage of students to other schools on the island.

10. F. FY19 Superintendent Contract

A copy of the current 2017-2018 contract is provided for review. Not every Board member had anticipated being able to attend the meeting tonight. It seems like all should be involved. We can table this item until the next meeting if that is the preference. An alternative would be to designate a Board representative to review the document with the Superintendent or to move to an executive session to discuss.

Next Board Meeting

We are little unsettled on housing needs, maintenance contracts and summer work. I will have suggested final budget approval in June. I am available on the 1st of June or the mornings of June 12th and 23rd.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lauren Burch".

Lauren Burch
Superintendent