



SOUTHEAST ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Board Report

September 20, 2017

Staffing

We had an unexpected departure of a teacher from Coffman Cove and are pleased with our replacement. **Alyssa Howell** happened to be living on the island and is a strong elementary teacher focused on academics with a proven record of student success. We are still juggling the schedule while our new teacher completes other commitments in Craig. **Cody Beus, Angela Dunton and Nick Higson** have stepped up to cover.

Student Count

We expect to have between 10 and 19 students who qualify for intensive services. 10 are already approved. There is no guarantee on the 9 new applications, but we expect more than half to qualify. Individual sites are solid. Thorne Bay is expected to exceed 75 students, which generates some additional funding. Hollis is expected to exceed 20 students and generate additional funds as well. Current enrollment in Hollis is 24 students; I believe we can ask for a new school if we reach 25 students. Naukati, Whale Pass and Coffman Cove have solid numbers but not enough to generate additional funding (sites that have between 10 and 20 students don't receive the additional jump in funding).

Kasaan, Hyder and Port Alexander hover at slightly over 10 students and are expected to maintain those numbers. Our smallest schools are always a concern through October. Students are counted daily for 20 school days. Since we have a four-day school week, our count begins next Monday. A student who is enrolled for the full 20 days represents 1 student for count purposes; therefore, that same student represents $1/20^{\text{th}}$ (0.05) of a student for count purposes each day. In a school with 10 students, a student departing on the last day of count would leave the school with 9.95 students and no funding for this school year.

We expect our teachers to be in regular contact with parents, both to ensure that parents understand what the teacher is trying to accomplish and to provide opportunities for parents to share concerns and goals for their children. We have excellent hires this year and I believe parent satisfaction is at an all time high. We do not expect surprises on the last day of count, as we expect teachers and administrators will be attentive to our parents.

Special Education Audit

Janet Stout has worked with the District to successfully complete a number of these regularly-scheduled audits. She is reviewing files with our Special Education teachers and working hard to complete the necessary requirements for a number of new students

who may qualify for intensive funding. I am confident the Special Education audit will proceed successfully.

Phlight Club

We have just completed another successful Phlight Club in Hydaburg. I am thrilled with the participation of our staff. With only seasonal Phlight Club opportunities, student benefit is only possible when the staff members who they interact with understand the language and build their school culture around the principals of the program. Schools that have done this are seeing remarkable changes in student ownership of their own lives and academics. Hollis embraced the concepts when first introduced and the school culture has changed lives and will impress any visitor. As more and more of our staff experience Phlight Club, that culture is spreading through the district. A special thanks to **Amy McDonald** for her commitment to the program.

Hollis Wood-fired Boiler

We are approaching completion of the boiler and greenhouse structure in Hollis. We do not have the funds to complete an aquaponic greenhouse and, for now, it will function as a traditional greenhouse. We have been short-staffed in our maintenance program and **Jonathan Fitzpatrick** is called off of the boiler projects on a regular basis for some other crisis. We appreciate his dedication, skills and patience.

Greenhouses

Cody Beus is working hard to get all of our greenhouses operational. Kasaan's greenhouse is top flight and Thorne Bay's is close to operational. Naukati's greenhouse is almost ready to go, but has been having trouble with fish. Coffman Cove's greenhouse was full of aphids at the end of the 2016-20147 school year and has also been having fish problems. We have confidence in Cody's competence, work ethic and dedication. We also appreciate his willingness to step in to cover for a teacher who left unexpectedly.

Café

The Café has been an interesting endeavor. I had believed that we could make it pencil out financially while providing educational opportunities and a community service. The intent was to promote our greenhouse products and provide opportunities for the sale of products from all of our schools. The Culinary Arts Program at Thorne Bay School was to provide a flow of students and product to the Café.

We generate \$600 to \$1,000 per day during the summer, but appear unable to limit our costs enough to make a profit (winter generates \$300 to \$600 per day). We have tried fundraising nights, but the limited available seating does not allow for enough traffic needed to make enough money to justify the trouble. Fundraising events will only generate enough money if they include take out or delivery, preferably to neighboring communities. Last year, Naukati held a fundraiser at the café and sold 75 pizzas in Naukati and Coffman Cove.

Sale of products created by schools has not gone anywhere. The greenhouses, with the exception of Kasaan, are in a pitiful state. Most students enrolled in Culinary Arts are in middle school and, due to work permit constraints, their age limits their ability to do

much in the Café. Our existing staff who have an aptitude for and interest in the Café are otherwise occupied with the school year.

The City wants \$1,000 per month for rent on the land the Café sits on. Location is everything. That \$12,000 per year is the deal breaker. I can argue that the Café could make it with continued adjustments without the land rent, but there isn't a place on District property where we could move it that would have adequate visibility. We have had interest from individuals who would buy it now or lease it. It was in rough shape when we bought it and it is now a viable operation. A new operator would likely want to get a liquor license, which makes it difficult for us on a lease and impossible to expect continued educational opportunities for our students.

As a business, the café has not paid for itself. As an educational tool, it has been wonderful. I find some cost to operate reasonable if we are educating students and providing skill training. I hesitate to sell the building. We will not recover our cost and I would like to keep the educational opportunity. If we lease it, there will be wear and tear on our equipment and the building will decrease in value. Another concern is that if we can't make it with \$12,000 per year in rent, exactly how much a month could we expect to lease it for?

I would like to continue Friday and Saturday operation. I would also like to continue and even expand fundraising opportunities and either sell school products at the extra building or lease that building to someone for a business.

I would like to continue summer operation. I am troubled that we could not break even during this past summer. We did not have many bulk orders, instead we purchased most items as needed through the grocery store, which added to our costs. Lacking my commitment to keep the café open for more than a month at a time, it was impossible to get ahead on ordering. Nick worked all summer for free and that certainly balanced out the additional food costs. **Ginger Thomas** did an exceptional job with the Café this summer.

If the Board expects it to pay for itself, Lucienne Smith would advise selling it today.

One-Week Music Program

Dancing with the Spirit (www.dancingwiththespirit.org) is the music program we offered at Hollis this past year. The team comes for one week and engages the entire school. I wish to expand the program to include all of our schools. **Lisa Cates** has been striving to secure funding. She is also working endless hours to keep her school operating and prepare for a Special Education audit.

I wish to commit to the program before their time is reserved by others. Hyder and Port Alexander will be the most complicated to schedule due to weather considerations. If I can estimate a cost before the board meeting tonight, I will request a commitment for funding during Action on Administrative Reports. If Lisa can secure funding for some portion of the commitment, we will use it. I don't think we can count on that today.

Academic Testing

The past several years have seen considerable turmoil regarding what statewide testing system would be used. They tried one system that failed miserably and then had to rush to adopt a replacement in a hurry. Our students had been performing well by previous standards. With the new system, we are judged to be below average. I think it early to wring our hands and get too excited. We have a strong staff and Nick Higson is a strong academic leader. We continually make academic adjustments and, with small schools, every student is essentially on an individual academic plan. We continue to have amazing student:teacher ratios. Our excellent staff are reviewing the individual test results and will continue to work with individual students to improve performance regardless of how many times the State changes tests. **Nick Higson** will speak to testing results.

9. A. Action on Administrative Report

I expect to have a proposal for funding the one-week Dancing with the Spirit music programs for all district schools.

9. B. 2nd Reading, Board Policy 6142.1, Family Life/Sex Education

DEED has recommended policy that lines up with Alaska State Statute allowing for parents to opt out of this curriculum. I do not necessarily agree, but **recommend approval**.

9. C. 2nd Reading Energy Management Plan

Teachers reviewed the proposed plan during inservice. With the busy-ness and some unexpected events at the beginning of this school year, the results from the staff review are still being compiled. Once this information is available, we will make necessary adjustments to the proposed plan. **I recommend moving this item to a third reading.**

9. D. AASB Resolutions

I have no recommendations. If Board review since the last Board meeting has generated some ideas, we can make those official tonight.

10. A. Student Board Representative

We have three excellent candidates. **I recommend approval of one or more.** I do not see a reason not to have two representatives, especially if they represent different sites. Should we determine to take a representative to the legislature or AASB training we will have to discuss funding at that time. It is not uncommon for sports or other commitments to interfere with representative attendance and having two students might allow for those issues.

10. B. 1st Reading Unpaid Meals Policy

This is one of those federal expectations with no connection to our reality. We are a non-pricing district and provide meals to all students for free. Chris Page Haufe has made adjustments to the recommended policy with language that allows for our use of the policy if we should ever change to a system that charges for meals. **I recommend approval of this policy.**

10. C. 1st Reading Classified Handbook Update

Our legal advisor suggested a few changes and we have included deadlines for getting highly qualified. **I recommend moving this item to a second reading to allow time for Board review.**

10. D. 1st Reading, 2017 Policy Updates Recommended by AASB

There are a number to review. Most are easy to approve, but several are optional and deserve more attention. I do not believe we have ever not approved the normal updates. That is what we buy the service to accomplish. The optional ones are more complicated. **I recommend moving this item to a second reading to allow the Board to review the optional recommendations.**

10. E. BP/AR 6181, Charter Schools

The Legislature, in their infinite wisdom, continue to generate mandates that we are expected to honor. This does not seem to have much implication for our small school district but we are expected to have the policy in place. We could approve tonight but **I recommend moving this item to a second reading.**

10. F. Approval of Expenditure exceeding \$10,000.00

This is a grant-funded boiler for Whale Pass. **I recommend approval.**

Sincerely,



Lauren Burch
Superintendent