

To whom it may concern:

At the September 2013 meeting, the Juneau Board of Education adopted revisions to Policy #1430 addressing the issue of athletic travel at the middle school level. The adopted revisions will be effective starting with the 2014/2015 school year. Both before and after that meeting, members of the board heard a significant number of concerns from the public on this issue, and have received requests to delay implementation of the new policy while a committee made up of members of the community reviews the issue and develops a proposal for new policy language for the board's consideration.

While the board is not delaying the effective date of the revised policy, the Policy's effective date is far enough in the future that there is time for this issue to be reconsidered if appropriate. At the request of Jon Kurland and others, we are acknowledging the creation of a community committee to review the policy, study the issue, and possibly develop suggested revisions to the policy language that, in their mind, better meets the needs of students while achieving the goals of maximum student participation, equity, cost, and minimal impact to instructional time that were articulated by the board during the September 2013 meeting.

The board agrees that if a revised policy reflecting these goals is drafted and presented to the board by the March 2014 meeting, we will consider that policy as a potential action item for the April and/or May meetings.

In order to adequately reflect the Juneau community's viewpoints on the issue of middle school athletics, the board recommends that the committee have broad representation from the community and that meetings be open to the public.

The Board suggests that the committee (1) become familiar with the athletic programs at both of our large middle schools, the number of students participating, and the strengths and weaknesses of each model; (2) identify the expected cost of any potential travel, including ancillary costs such as substitutes for teacher-coaches and staff time for organizing travel, and the source of funding needed to cover those costs; (3) consider the effects of the absence of teacher-coaches from classrooms during team travel; (4) review the district's Policy #1265 dealing with Equity in the Juneau School District, (5) consider of the impact of the proposal on other middle school programs, and (6) seek a consistent practice between the middle schools with regard to travel for athletics.

Signed,

Sally Saddler, on behalf of the Juneau school board