

**MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 28, 2005**

The Anchorage School Board met in Special Session on Monday, February 28, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President Tim Steele presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE

Board Members Present: Jake Metcalfe, Crystal Kennedy, Mary Marks, Tim Steele, Jeff Friedman, John Steiner, and Macon Roberts

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Jan Christensen, George Vakalis, Mike Henry, Jerry Sjolander, Doreen Brown, Gail Opalinski, Patricia McRae, Jeff Wood, Pam Chenier, Debbie Bogart, Steve Kalmes, Ray Amsden, Janet Stokesbary, Eric Tollefsen, Stan Syta, Mark Mew, Mary Kay Sambo, the press, and other interested people.

B. MUSICAL PRESENTATIONS

The Scenic Park Elementary Choir, under the direction of Carolyn Downie, performed for the School Board and the audience.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Carol Comeau announced that Music In Our Schools Month begins March 1. She encouraged community members to attend the many concerts and presentations that are occurring throughout our schools. Ms. Comeau commented that there is an abundance of talent among our students and the music teachers are doing an outstanding job.

Macon Roberts noted that Black History Month ends today, February 28, 2005 and complimented the schools, staff, and students who did a fantastic job of celebrating Black History Month. He also commended the staff at Channel 14 for broadcasting excellent historical and educational programs on Black history; he has received good feedback from the community regarding this topic.

Jeff Friedman announced the Policy Subcommittee will meet on Thursday, March 3, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 320/Administration Building.

Carol Comeau announced the rescheduling of the work session on obesity issues to Wednesday, April 13, 2005 from 5 to 8 p.m. in the School Board Room/Administration Building.

Ms. Comeau reminded the School Board that the new theater at East High School will be dedicated at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 3, 2005. She encouraged the community to attend and view the new auditorium and the talents of the many students at East High School.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was unanimously approved.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory

Lorett Nabong noted that the last Student Advisory Board meeting was held at South Anchorage High School on February 16, 2005. He commented that it was a very productive meeting and gave them a chance to discuss the many activities occurring throughout the high schools. Students participated in the Model United Nations; Black History Bowl; Engineering Fair at UAA; cross country ski championships and many other events. There is a statewide Science Fair that is scheduled within the next few weeks as well as the Student Government Conference in Barrow that will attract students from across the state. Mr. Nabong also reminded the audience and Board that the High School Graduation Qualifying Exams are coming up and students are studying and preparing for the test. The next SAB meeting is scheduled on March 30 at Dimond High School from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Mr. Nabong extended an invitation to the Superintendent and the School Board.

Superintendent Comeau noted that during the SAB meeting at South Anchorage High School an earthquake occurred and the students conducted themselves admirably. She stated that she was very impressed the students knew exactly what to do in this situation.

2. Military Delegate

LTC David Jones noted on February 17, 2005, Barb Jacobs and counselors from Romig Middle School met at the Family Support Center to discuss programs and services available for military students. LTC Jones also informed the Board that he will be in Juneau next week attending the State Board of Education meeting and if they had items for discussion to please let him know.

3. MECC

William Johnson reported that the MECC met on February 17 and had a very productive and interesting meeting. Barbara Jones from the Anchorage Equal Rights Commission gave a presentation on hate crimes; Debbie Bogart reported on the Multi-cultural Leadership Conference; and Beth Hartley from the ESL program gave insight on the new curriculum being proposed. Mr. Johnson stated that the MECC subcommittee on curriculum will review the High Point Reading curriculum in depth and give the Board an evaluation. The committee also met with Stan Myra, Safe and Drug Free Schools, to discuss a new program called Change of Heart. He commented that he provided excellent information regarding this program. Natalie Burnett, principal at Eagle River High School also gave an update on the new high school. Gail Opalinski presented information on the upcoming discussions on middle school boundary changes for Gruening and Central Middle Schools. Mr. Johnson noted that there is a MECC member participating on the task force. The next MECC meeting is scheduled on Thursday, March 17, 2005 at 12 noon in Room 320/ Administration Building.

Carol Comeau commented that the recent newspaper article explained what the District is trying to do with the pending boundary issues. She noted that a final recommendation will not be made until the District is informed on how many new units will be coming to Fort Richardson. Ms. Comeau cautioned the audience and the Board that the District is in the initial stages of boundary discussions and expects the process to be much longer than originally thought. She also stated that it is important for people to come to the public meetings and give their input. Superintendent Comeau stated that she will not recommend taking students out of Central and overcrowd Gruening, and then allow Central to

increase the number of students in their program. She emphasized that there is a need to reduce the student numbers at Central and move some students closer to their homes on Fort Richardson. Ms. Comeau stated that the article in the newspaper is not entirely accurate.

John Steiner noted that Bridge Builders had a recent meeting which included the presence of individuals from some of the language immersion programs. He suggested that this would be a great opportunity for MECC to participate and distribute information about their committee.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (30 minutes time limit)

Speaker Dan Loring thanked the School Board and Superintendent for allowing him to speak before them tonight. He also thanked Carol Comeau, Julie Jessal, Patricia McRae, Eunice Long, and Julie Ginder for funding a Title I pre-school at Fairview Elementary School for the 2005-2006 school year. Mr. Loring noted that the Fairview community is very excited and pleased about the pre-school program. He stated that he would like to speak to the Board about the current bus policy and the achievement gap. Mr. Loring stated his daughter, who is 13, is afraid to ride the school bus due to the many behavior issues with students. He would like to ride the bus to see if the student behavior on the bus meets his family's standards. He contacted Steve Kalmes and his request was denied. Mr. Loring stated that Mr. Kalmes told him that he would recommend to the Superintendent a policy be implemented preventing parents from riding a school bus with students. He also commented that Mr. Kalmes told him that other parents may be upset if they knew he was on a school bus. Mr. Loring believes this to be unfair and a bad public policy. He asked the School Board and the Superintendent if they were considering changing the current policy. Mr. Loring also commented that he feels the achievement gap is a major issue and asked the Board to take a better look at this. He would like to see a task force developed to hold public hearings and then make a recommendation regarding the achievement gap to the Board.

Jeff Friedman stated that the Board has discussed the achievement gap extensively and share his concerns. He noted that the Six-Year Instructional Plan and School Board goals are aligned with closing that gap. Mr. Friedman thanked him for coming forward and recognizing this important concern.

John Steiner applauded the Fairview Community Council and Dan Loring for their interest in the achievement gap. He encouraged them to bring any ideas forward to the School Board.

Macon Roberts stated that he once drove a school bus for two years and asked Mr. Loring what kind of student behavior is unacceptable to him and asked him to describe this behavior. Mr. Loring responded that he did not actually see the behavior and what he was reporting is the opinion of his daughter. She reported there were fights on bus; students were allowed to swear at the back of the bus, but not in the front area; and students were allowed to play rap music. Mr. Loring also reported that his daughter was almost suspended from school when she pulled a child off another who was being sexually assaulted. He stated that until he can ride the bus or view the tape from the bus video camera, his daughter will not be permitted to ride the bus due to unsafe conditions.

Jake Metcalfe stated that the School Board and Administration is paying a lot of attention to the achievement gap. He also noted that the State House of Representatives is going to talk about education funding on Tuesday, March 1 and if the funding does not come through as high as what is needed, the District will have to cut back on the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Mr. Metcalfe encouraged all PTA, Community Councils, and parents and students to contact their legislator to request they fund education at \$5,120 per student.

Crystal Kennedy asked Mr. Loring what he sees the role of the parent to be if they rode the bus and what the impact of the parent would be on the bus. Mr. Loring responded that he asked his daughter if the video camera on the bus inhibits the student behavior. He reported that his daughter said the kids don't care and most of the time the camera is not on. Mr. Loring also noted that the former principal at Fairview was not able to improve the student behavior on the buses. Mr. Loring suggested that the District have parents submit an application and go through a screening process. Parents would not be allowed any interaction with students on the bus and would be required to sit next to the bus driver. He also suggested that the District use volunteers to serve as monitors on certain routes. These individuals may be given some authority if needed. Mr. Loring suggested that most of the bus problems occur in racially diverse, low economic areas of town. Mr. Loring stated the parents have the right to ride school buses and be an advocate for their children. Crystal Kennedy stated that she attended a school district that required parents to ride the buses and asked Mr. Loring what kind of response he thought he

might get for volunteers. Mr. Loring responded that he has talked with parents and believes that he would have many parents volunteer to ride the buses in the Fairview area; he is not sure about other neighborhoods.

Mary Marks thanked Mr. Loring for coming in and sharing information. She finds it challenging to find parents to ride the school buses when it is so hard to get them into the schools. Mr. Loring challenged the Board to allow him to establish a pilot program that would allow parents to ride school buses. Ms. Marks asked Mr. Loring if he has seen the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Mr. Loring responded yes. Ms. Marks noted that the School Board has held many public hearings to discuss the achievement gap, but would value any suggestions that he may wish to bring forward to the Board.

Superintendent Comeau thanked Mr. Loring for coming forward, but expressed her reservations about parents riding school buses. Ms. Comeau believes it could be a privacy issue. She assured Mr. Loring that she will talk with Steve Kalmes about the video cameras and acknowledged that some buses are overcrowded, which fosters behavior problems. Ms. Comeau noted that some bus drivers are not as skilled in handling behavior problems as others, and perhaps additional training is needed for them in dealing with student behavior. Superintendent Comeau emphasized that bus riding is a privilege and not a right. Ms. Comeau stated that liability may be an issue when a non District employee is with students. She noted that Mr. Loring's issues are very valid and we must continue to work through these issues. Ms. Comeau noted that the School Board and the Administration have spent numerous hours discussing the data concerning the achievement gap. She acknowledged that we have a long way to go with some students, but many are doing very well and believes we are heading in the right direction. Ms. Comeau stated that principals should be able to explain to parents how they are implementing the Six-Year Instructional Plan in their school.

Tim Steele commented that we must educate the bus drivers and offer more training for them regarding student behavior issues. He believes that the school buses are safe and we will not tolerate the student behavior on buses that has been discussed tonight. Mr. Steele also stated that the Board and Administration have been working very hard on the achievement gap and believes much progress has been made. Funding is always an issue, but we are dedicated and the School Board goals are directed at decreasing the gap and increasing student achievement.

Carol Comeau stated that the current practice of the School District is to only allow students, bus drivers, and employees on the bus due to the liability issue. She mentioned that she will discuss this practice with Mr. Kalmes and have the School Board policy subcommittee review the request.

Macon Roberts commented that allowing a parent to ride a school bus is not the answer; students must follow certain behavioral standards in order to be allowed the privilege of riding the bus. Mr. Loring stated that the School Board is blindly asking parents to put their children on the school bus knowing that there are behavior issues. He believes that parents have the parental right to ride the bus which supersedes the School District's rights. Mr. Roberts stated that he believes the District will address the behavior issues on the buses. Mr. Loring does not agree.

Speaker Theresa Obermeyer acknowledged former School Board member Vince Casey in the audience. She stated that she wants to communicate more effectively with the Board. Ms. Obermeyer focused her discussion this evening on judicial selection. She commented that she is not sure the Board is interested in this topic, but noted that she is a court watcher.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda attached. All attachments referred to in memoranda recommendations are on file in the Superintendent's Office.

1. Approval of Minutes

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|----|-----------------|------------------|-----------|
| a. | Special Meeting | January 24, 2005 | 4:30 p.m. |
| b. | Regular Meeting | January 24, 2005 | 6:30 p.m. |
| c. | Special Meeting | January 27, 2005 | 5:00 p.m. |
| d. | Special Meeting | February 2, 2005 | 5:00 p.m. |

2. ASD Memorandum #179 - Award of Contract: Hanshew Middle School Fire & Security Replacement

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board waive Board Policy 725.11(d) (bids shall be advertised in a local newspaper) and approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the Hanshew Middle School Fire Alarm and Security Replacement to the low responsive bidder, Bering Sea Eccotech Inc., for the Base Bid amount of \$190,909.

- 3. ASD Memorandum #194 - Award of Contract: Point of Sale Software (To be rescheduled to Special Meeting of March 7, 2005)
- 4. ASD Memorandum #197 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Cook Inlet Regional Incorporated

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a cash grant in the amount of \$25,000 from Cook Inlet Regional, Inc.

- 5. Prior Approval: Indian Education Continuation Grant Application For 2005-2006

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to submit the Indian Education Formula Grant application for the fourth year of a five year period. The fourth year funding is in the amount of \$1,681,336 for the 2005-2006 school year.

- 6. ASD Memorandum #151 - Personnel Report

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the attached Personnel Report.

The following items were removed from the Consent Agenda: ASD Memorandums # 197 and #198.

ACTION:

<p>Moved by Jeff Friedman Seconded by Mary Marks</p>	<p>to approve Minutes from the Special Meeting of January 24, 2005; Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 24, 2005; Minutes from the Special Meeting of January 27, 2005; Minutes from the Special Meeting of February 2, 2005; Memorandum #179; Memorandum #194; and Memorandum #191.</p>
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VOTE:

Ayes: Metcalfe, Kennedy, Marks, Steele,
Friedman, Steiner, Roberts

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #197 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Cook Inlet Regional Incorporated

It is the Administration’s recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a cash grant in the amount of \$25,000 from Cook Inlet Regional, Inc.

ACTION:

Moved by Mary Marks Seconded by Macon Roberts	to approve Memorandum #197.
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Doreen Brown stated that the enrichment summer camp will be held in the fall to prevent “summer fall off” and will help gear students up to re-enter school. The camp will host approximately 200 students in grades 1-8. The intention of the camp is to provide a positive structured learning environment that focuses on academic achievement, wellness and cultural awareness. Staff training will be conducted each day before students arrive and experts in reading, mathematics, writing, and cultural standards will present best practices for Indian Education staff to learn and apply in the field. This model is effective and creates systemic change at school sites and will ultimately assist in closing the achievement gap. Applications will be sent to all native students K-8 and will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. Transportation will not be provided.

Mary Marks asked if this grant was in alignment with the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Doreen responded yes. Ms. Marks asked if there were other opportunities for matching grants. Ms. Brown responded no.

Macon Roberts noticed that the participants in the program will be using the Plato Program, which will be a big advantage for students. Ms. Brown agreed and commented that parents will be able to use the program as well.

Mary Marks asked if this program will give opportunities to students in the gifted area or those who are excelling. Doreen Brown responded that the program is open to everyone and will not just address remediation efforts.

Carol Comeau asked what kind of evaluation will be completed regarding this enrichment summer camp. Ms. Brown responded that a survey has

been done in the past, but she will work with Gail Opalinski and Patricia McRae to develop some kind of assessment that is more academically aligned. She noted that the goal of the camp is to get the kids geared up and ready for school. Carol Comeau noted the importance of this, but also urged her to make sure any strategies that they see are working are relayed back to the student's home school. She suggested to Ms. Brown that she contact the Assessment and Evaluation office for help.

VOTE:

Ayes: Metcalfe, Kennedy, Marks, Steele
Friedman, Steiner, Roberts

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Memorandum #198 - Prior Approval: Indian Education Continuation Grant Application For 2005-2006

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to submit the Indian Education Formula Grant application for the fourth year of a five year period. The fourth year funding is in the amount of \$1,681,336 for the 2005-2006 school year.

ACTION:

Moved by Mary Marks Seconded by Jeff Friedman	to approve Memorandum #198.
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Doreen Brown stated that the grant is about \$80,000 more for 2005-2006. She indicated that public forums were held to gain input from the staff, community, and students; comments were also solicited on the web site on what was working well. This information was presented to the Native Advisory Board before the grant was written.

Superintendent Comeau stated that we have more students that could benefit from the program than what has been funded. The grant targets those students that need the most help. Not all students receive the same level of service, which is similar to the Bilingual program. Ms. Comeau expressed her concern with the reduction in federal funding, but noted that the District does supplement where we can.

Mary Marks asked if this grant is aligned with the Six-Year Instruction Plan. Ms. Brown responded yes. Ms. Marks asked if the data tells the measurements of where students are for both weaknesses and strengths

and where it will help students move up levels in academics. Ms. Brown responded that she is looking forward to the grant changing because it currently does not address the needs of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. She mentioned that she wants to target those students that are not proficient in the TerraNova and Benchmark assessments and make sure those students falling through the cracks receive services. Ms. Brown also commented that she wants the tutors to hear the language the teachers are using so they can better assist the students.

Mary Marks asked Ms. Brown about the Multi-Cultural Conference and what the expectations are for students who are given permission to attend. Ms. Brown responded that the students may be required to produce a writing component that would tie their attendance to the academic standards. She mentioned that these students who attend the conference also need to share with those who were not able to attend. Carol Comeau stated that it is not just an Indian Education responsibility; middle or high school students who attend this function must meet the expectations set forth to receive credit.

Mary Marks asked Ms. Brown if the Native Education Advisory Committee has access to the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Doreen Brown responded yes. Carol Comeau commented that Dr. Enid Hunter would be happy to show the Board how the suggestions from the advisory committee were incorporated into the Six-Year Plan.

Mary Marks noted on page 4 where it talks about resources being available to high school classes and asked for an explanation. Ms. Brown stated that Indian Education has an outdoor education program in conjunction with Migrant Education, offers two Native languages courses, dance class, cultural and academic support, community counselors, bus tokens, and the staff at Service High School will begin tutoring in the near future.

Ms. Marks asked if the evening classes are only available at North Star Elementary twice per week. Ms. Brown responded yes. Ms. Marks asked if she found this to be effective and why. Ms. Brown commented that it is a true community center where families can participate in a variety of activities. The main focus is on wellness, but language classes are offered, arts and crafts, three dance groups practice at the school, etc. It has been well received by the community and is growing in popularity. Ms. Brown did note that transportation is always an issue, but car pools are available as well as bus tokens.

John Steiner noted on page 3 where it speaks about the two exemplary high school programs (Elitnaurvik-Within-East and West High's Kanakngaq Program). He stated that he attended the program at West in the evening and was impressed with the family participation. Mr. Steiner asked if the District receives much support from CITC (Cook Inlet Tribal Council). Ms. Brown responded yes, they often fund special activities. There is a huge collaborative effort which adds to the current programs. Carol Comeau stated that CITC has a large federal grant and they hire and supervise their own staff; these individuals work well with the high school staff.

John Steiner asked if the reporting information is based on assessment or on teacher views. Ms. Brown responded that the teacher assess the student and determines if the student is progressing in K-3; grades are reviewed for students above the fourth grade. Carol Comeau reminded the Board that the Benchmark scores are not available to be included in this grant so information in the grant is related to only teacher assessment.

John Steiner asked if they might be a typographical error on page 2, third line. The correct statement should read: In mathematics, ~~five~~ 50 % of the Indian Education students receiving academic support either maintained or increased his/her letter grade by .5 or higher. Ms. Brown will make this correction.

Jake Metcalfe asked if Title XII is part of President Bush' proposed cuts to education funding and if there is a possibility that the District will not get the amount of money requested in the grant. Carol Comeau responded yes, this could be a problem. Ms. Brown stated the grant is funded at \$292 per student, which is the same as last year. If it is flat funded at \$1.6 million, substantial cuts to the program will have to be made.

Jake Metcalfe commented that the nation is going to be faced with significant federal cuts due to the war. The legislature is not funding the needs of education under the requirements of NCLB. Mr. Metcalfe stated that it is important to lobby both the federal and state delegation for the needed educational funding.

Mary Marks thanked Doreen Brown for the wonderful job she is doing as Supervisor for the Indian Education Program. She commended her efforts and those of her staff.

VOTE:

Ayes: Metcalfe, Kennedy, Marks, Steele
Friedman, Steiner, Roberts

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum #185 - Operating Budget Transfers - January Monthly Report FY 2004-2005

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of January 2005 that were processed in the Integrated Financial Accounting System (IFAS) includes the following:

Attachment A: Report of Budget Transfers Over \$5,000 –
Report for individual transfers of more than \$5,000, which includes summarized justifications.

The schedule of monthly budget transfers processed for the month of January 2005 and related information are available in the Budget Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Jake Metcalfe reminded the Board and Administration that the funding bill comes before the legislature on Tuesday, March 2. He encouraged everyone to contact their legislators to encourage them to increase the student allocation. Mr. Metcalfe emphasized if the funding proposal goes through, class sizes will have to be increased.

Tim Steele commented that the School Board spent a lot of time lobbying for our needs in Juneau in early February. He stated that it is disappointing that the funding bill is moving through the house so quickly when the amount is not sufficient. Mr. Steele shared Mr. Metcalfe's concerns that if we do not get the additional funding at the state level, the federal funds will also be decreased. He encouraged the community to contact their legislators and other members of the Anchorage delegation and let them know that we are concerned with

their funding level of \$4,919; we need \$5,027 to balance our budget. The School Board has lobbied for \$5,120 so we can made additional growth.

Jeff Friedman stated that the House will meet at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 1 and encouraged those students in the audience to send an email to the legislature.

Mary Marks commented that she has heard from the legislature that they are not hearing from students and families; it is very important for the community to get involved and contact their legislators.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION - (PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATION)

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Meeting of February 28, 2005 was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:15 p.m.

Tim Steele, President

Jeff Friedman, Clerk

Mary Kay Sambo, Recording Secretary

Date