

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 25, 2004

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, October 25, 2004, at 6:44 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, Tim Steele, presided.

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

Board Members Not Present: Jake Metcalfe (arrived at 7:06 p.m.)

Others Present: Jan Christensen, Enid Hunter, Mike Henry, Patricia McRae, Jerry Sjolander, Eric Tollefsen, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Loretta Nabong, Ray Amsden, Pam Chenier, Stan Syta, Rhonda Gardner, Michelle Egan, Larry Wiget, Brian Griggs, LTC David Jones, William Johnson, Robin Siegfried, the press, and other interested people.

- A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, Tim Steele Presiding
- B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Marks reminded the community that the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention started this week and encouraged all to participate. This is an opportunity to listen and understand how the Alaska native population feels about how education is being addressed as well as how we are closing the gap between the rural and urban divide.

Macon Roberts announced that he attended the Willard L. Bowman celebration on October 18 as a representative of the School Board. Mr. Bowman was the first African American elected to the legislature in Alaska. Mr. Roberts also attended the Alaska Principal Association Convention.

Tim Steele reported that this last Friday he participated in the kickoff of Red Ribbon Week in the town square. Superintendent Comeau received a resolution from Senator Murkowski about Red Ribbon Week and honors the District's and the Superintendent's support of it. It is a week set aside to promote healthy and drug free lifestyles. Carol Comeau added that she is one of the three co-chairs of the Red Ribbon Week activities, along with the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Guard and the State Troopers. They are all trying to do whatever they can to encourage the students and their families to be drug free and to lead healthy lifestyles.

Superintendent, Carol Comeau announced that she attended the Council of Great City Schools with Jan Christensen, Enid Hunter, Bev Thornburg and Rhonda Gardner, who gave a presentation on the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Gail Opalinski and Sherry Ellers also attended and gave a presentation on the middle school summer school program. Both were well received by over 1,000 people of the Council of Great City Schools, which represent the major urban school districts. The 64 largest urban school districts in the United States are in this organization. Ms. Comeau reported that she also went to Washington D.C. with the Chief of Police of the Anchorage Police Department to attend a conference at the Center for Missing and Exploited Children. They invited the chief of police and superintendent from a number of districts (there were about 40 participants) and they went through a number of issues. ASD should be proud of the high quality of its crisis plans. They were talking about how important it is to work collaboratively with the police and fire department and community agencies in making sure that we all have solid crisis plans and know how to implement them. After attending the conference Ms. Comeau and Chief Monegan felt very good about the crisis plans and the school resource officers program.

Ms. Comeau also announced that a candidate forum, sponsored by the Goldenview Middle School and Service High School PTSA, would be held at South Anchorage High School. Ms. Comeau will also attend and discuss the bonds. Tim Steele praised the members of the School Bonds Yes committee for their activities on the bonds.

Tim Steele reported that he also attended the APA luncheon and reception and met many good people there. Mr. Steele added that he is pleased at the caliber of ASD's employees. Whenever people come back from the national conferences he is always proud of how well Anchorage is doing. The Six-Year Instructional Plan and summer school programs are two examples.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by: John Steiner                      that the Agenda be approved as revised.  
seconded by: Jeff Friedman

Revisions were made to Memorandums #65 and #67. ASD Memorandum #58 is removed from tonight's agenda.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

1. CIRI Presentation

Dawn Kimberland, with the community relations department at CIRI presented a check for \$125,000 to the Anchorage School District for the Indian education summer enrichment program. CIRI raises the money every year through the CIRI Golf Classic. This year they were able to raise \$125,000 for different organizations in South Central Alaska. Doreen Brown, Marilyn Balluta and Tim Steele received the award.

2. ASD Memorandum # 59 - 2004 H.U.G.S.S. And Coats for Kids

For the past four years, Catholic Social Services, the Salvation Army and Lutheran Social Services have partnered with numerous agencies and businesses, including the Mountain View Boys & Girls Club and the Anchorage School District, to help children start the school year with proper supplies and coats through H.U.G.S.S. (Helping Us Give School Supplies) and Coats for Kids project.

Jan Christensen read the memorandum while Tim Steele presented the certificates to those representing the participating organizations.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Lorett Nabong stated that the Student Advisory Board held its meeting on Oct 18 at East High School. The meeting included a presentation from the Alaska Railroad Tourism program. Students can take a class while earning credit and preparing for a job in the summer. They also spoke of the increasing rate of withdrawal failures throughout the District. The main topic was the Youth Senatorial Debate held at West High School on Thursday of last week. This forum was a chance for the students to see the political process firsthand and what the candidates stand for. It went well and was attended very well. The ASB recently held the statewide student government forum in Fairbanks. Student governments throughout the state presented resolutions to leaders and they will be brought before the State Board of Education and then

recommended thereon. The Youth Vote will go on soon, which is a mock vote of the election. The week in support of the Mayor's diversity week went very well. During the AFN convention, students who attend have a chance to take tours of the big schools and they are overwhelmed at the size. Recently there was a college fair to help students research prospective colleges and any opportunities after high school. The Bear Necessities campaign is underway, which is for school supplies and winter clothing. Red Ribbon Week is underway and all the schools are taking on activities to support it. Registration to vote for seniors who recently turned 18 is very active throughout the schools.

Mary Marks appreciated Mr. Nabong's report of the Alaska native students' opportunity to tour some of the schools and how overwhelmed they were. Ms. Marks noted that if they are coming from a village a lot of their schools are not as luxurious as the schools in Anchorage and perhaps some of them don't even have a solid foundation. When the students can see such beauty in education and notice that our schools in our district are safe it sends out the message that it is important that we do participate and vote. Our communities need to relay that to our villages, as well as the students, to be involved in voting as they start reaching the age to vote.

2. Military Delegate

LTC Jones reported that the community meeting held at Gruening Middle School on Eagle River High School went well. LTC Jones received good comments and people are very excited about the new high school. LTC Jones announced that he will attend the Alaska Association of School Boards Conference November 5 through 8.

Crystal Kennedy thanked Colonel Jones and Colonel Shutt at Fort Richardson for the kind of support our schools receive from the Air Force Base and Army Post. As an example, when she was at Ursa Minor a comment was made that there had been some road construction there and some crosswalk striping had been lost on the road. The principal had called that in and within an hour and half someone was out there painting the crosswalks. Ms. Kennedy appreciates the cooperation and support.

Tim Steele noted that starting this Monday the Hanshew traffic control flashing lights were up. Carol Comeau added that it started this morning and includes the new stop light at Rives and Lake Otis and the flashing lights for the 20 miles an hour zone between Abbott and O'Malley in front of Hanshew Middle School and Spring Hill Elementary. Ms. Comeau appreciated the city pushing that forward.

3. M.E.C.C.

Mr. William Johnson was not able to attend but provided a written report to the Board. The next meeting will be November 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 in Room 320 of the ASD Administration Building.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Yvonne Gutierrez, Vice Chair of the APC for Village Charter School addressed the school's funding issues. The speaker stated that research has shown that parents who choose charter schools over traditional public schools do so because charter schools offer enhanced learning opportunities through alternative curriculums, smaller classes, high standards, smaller school size and for the overall educational philosophy. Village Charter School is in its seventh year of operation and offers to the Anchorage community such a program from which to choose. The speaker continued stating that Village Charter School has high standards, smaller school size, smaller class size and uses art and music throughout the program. In addition, Village offers the unique opportunity to learn world languages through immersion in German, Norwegian and Spanish. The charter school has retained Susan Green as their new director. The APC is looking forward to working with the ASD Administration. The speaker addressed the concern that the school has lost students after the count period. To address this issue the speaker stated that the APC intends to actively pursue increased student enrollment and continue to leave their doors open after the count period is over. They will conduct informational enrollment interviews as necessary and also conduct exit interviews with those leaving. The speaker added that Village will insure adequate performance by students on test scores through special block classes on Friday in writing and math and with in-house testing to make sure they are on target and involving parents in a parent/teacher partnership in their child's education. The speaker stated that Village will continue to strive to insure its students achieve their highest potential. Village has had a steady growth over the past several years. The school's budget was based on the amount of students enrolled last year. For a

variety of reasons, Village has not met its current funding goal. Under the current funding formula, since the enrollment is lower than 150 students, Village will be funded less money per child than any other charter or traditional public school in Anchorage. The speaker added that the APC seeks a meeting to go over details of the budget with the superintendent or appropriate representative this week or next to insure that Village has adequate funding through the 2004-2005 school year. The speaker also requested that this funding matter be addressed as an agenda item on the School Board meeting on November 8, 2004.

Speaker, Jo Sanders, teaches German at Village Charter School. Ms. Sanders stated that she has found that Village Charter School is unique in the United States. It is the only grade school where children can choose not only a major language but two minor languages to study as well as English. In the speaker's German class, every student speaks three other languages in addition to German and 60 percent of her German class is of a diverse nature. Students are started in kindergarten to speak German. Studies have shown that students who have learned a foreign language before age 10 have bigger brains as adults. Because Village Charter is serving students of Anchorage, the speaker requested the School Board's help in funding.

Speaker, Richard Hermosillo, the chair of the APC for Village Charter School reported to the Board that the APC is requesting a meeting with the ASD Administration and members of the Board to discuss specifics regarding funding and other issues. Mr. Hermosillo commented that a few weeks ago he came to the Board with all of his frustrations about the past. Since that time he has had the opportunity to meet with many of them and he is impressed with the new partnership attitude that he sees between the charter schools and ASD and he is looking forward to bringing the relationship to a partnership effort for the benefit of the students in the charter school's and district's mutual care. The speaker echoed Ms. Gutierrez's comments regarding the new attitude and the new director, Susan Green. The speaker added that he supports Susan Green in her position and in the restructuring of the school to insure that the students are achieving to their highest potential.

Susan Green, director of Village Charter School stated to the Board that since beginning work in September she has had the opportunity to get to know the staff and the children and is impressed with the dedication of the core staff and supporting staff. The parents are the partners in the education of their children and their commitment is noteworthy. Ms. Green appreciates the Academic Policy Committee's support. Ms. Green

added that she is attending the meeting tonight in order to support the Village Charter School's APC's request for funding. The speaker also asked the public to support the school bonds.

Tim Steele stated to Ms. Green that if she and the APC is going to make a proposal he would hope that she would work with the Administration so they have a chance to review it prior to bringing it forward to the Board.

Speaker Diane Casto is the manager of the Prevention and Early Intervention Services within the Department of Health and Social Services Division of Behavioral Health for the State of Alaska. Within that section, programs included are substance abuse and prevention, tobacco enforcement, youth development resiliency, suicide prevention, alcohol information schools, alcohol safety action programs and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. Tonight Ms. Casto spoke to the Board regarding FASD and the continuing need for educational support for individuals and families living with this disability resulting from prenatal exposure to alcohol. Alaska has one of the highest prevalence rates of FASD in the country among states that track this information. Alaska has an excellent diagnostic system and FASD surveillance system giving us an advantage in having early identification of this disability and good data to help better understand this disability and how it impacts our social health and educational systems. The speaker shared some information gathered by a recent knowledge, attitude, beliefs and behavior survey conducted by the State of Alaska. Ms. Casto stated that the survey was sent to 8 provider groups, correctional personnel, substance abuse counselors, physicians, pediatricians, social workers, obstetricians/gynecologists, public health nurses and educators as well as a telephone survey of the general public. The overall response rate was 73 percent with educators having a 79 percent return rate. Ninety-one percent of the educators responded that it was not okay for a woman to have an occasional alcoholic beverage during pregnancy, indicating a solid understanding of the effects of alcohol on the developing fetus. Only 14.7 percent responded that they had never referred a student for FAS screening or diagnosis; 46.5 percent stated that they feel they do not have the appropriate skills and knowledge to deal with students who have FAS and 76.3 percent reported they do not feel they have the skills and knowledge to deal with families of those students who have FAS. Only 32.5 percent indicated they have received training in the past year that was directed specifically at educational strategies for working with students who have FAS yet 87.3 percent of the respondents believe that a teacher can develop successful classroom interventions to help students who have FAS. The survey results indicate that we have a need to better equip our teachers and

school personnel with knowledge to assist them in providing improved services to the student and family population. The full results will be reported on the State's website: [www.hss.state.ak.us/fas](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/fas). The survey will be repeated in late 2005 to see if improvements have been made in the last few years. The speaker also brought flyers of an online FASD training that has been developed by the Department of Education and Early Development in partnership with Health and Social Services that a lot of the teachers are using right now. The Department of Health and Social Services has just completed a new curriculum called FASD201, which will be available very soon.

Jake Metcalfe arrived at 7:06 pm.

Cheri Scott introduced her son, Justin to the Board. Justin experiences fetal alcohol syndrome. The speaker asked that as the District, with the new FASD teacher training grant, is starting to work with teachers and staff, that it makes sure that it is going to meet the needs of the children. The speaker asked that the training would be extensive enough to reach all of those who will come in contact with these children. Carol Comeau responded to the speaker that after the last Board meeting she met with Jerry Sjolander and Mary Paige Lucas and talked about what we are doing to get more up to speed on the training with this grant. Jerry Sjolander responded that the District is in the second year with the grant through the Department of Health and Social Services working with the curriculum developed collaboratively between HSS and DEED as the basis for training teachers. The goal is to start with the elementary schools and ensuring that we have at least one teacher has gone through the FASD101 training. It is the most basic training module that has been utilized in the State. ASD had an overwhelming response from teachers requesting to be part of the training. The District is working on developing training for administrators that will hopefully be implemented before the end of this school year. The beginning goal was training one teacher per school and the District is just beginning the second part of the training. The District is also offering parent/teacher institutes on Saturdays and several of those will focus on this issue. Mr. Sjolander added that there are students that have been diagnosed and identified through the Southcentral Foundation's program at the Alaska Native Hospital and the District works closely with them as they identify students that have been through their diagnostic program. There are other students who may have issues related to the suspected FAS/FAE effects that are undiagnosed and we do not have the ability to diagnose. A major focus of the training is identifying behaviors that may be interfering

with the student's progress and addressing those behaviors, even though we may not have a sure diagnosis that it is FAS/FAE related issues.

Mr. Sjolander further stated that this is a two-year grant for \$30,000 this year and again next year. ASD is working closely with the DEED on utilizing the training modules that it already has and then looking at how we can expand it within our district. Most of the training materials that the District had been using in the mandated training have been updated. The District has the strong focus to make sure that we have one teacher trained in each school and then the goal is for it to be more of a trainer-of-trainers model. As we train people in a specific curriculum we will be able to expand and have more people in the District that have training and the background to train others. Ms. Comeau responded that the challenge will be to figure out, school by school, with the large number of staff from high school to elementary, to methodically prioritize where we start. It is important to train our staff to identify the behaviors and learn some strategies but we have to work collaboratively with all of the different agencies in order to broaden the team that can do the training. There is no way, with a small grant such as this and limited resources with substitutes and availability of peoples' time, to be able to do the extensive amount of training for that large population in one way. This will have to be looked at in several different ways. Ms. Comeau mentioned to the speaker that any suggestions on how to train the large number of staff would be welcomed. It will be important to work on this together.

Mary Marks asked if the staff is already trained in recognizing the behaviors of FAS and FAE through special education. Carol Comeau replied that the training of the first year teachers is mandatory training and very basic. A lot of students are not referred through special education because they are not identified as special education students because many have hidden conditions that only come out in behavior issues and not as learning difficulties.

Jerry Sjolander commented that the special education department also works with Margo Bellamy who oversees the 504 accommodation plans. Some students that exhibit these difficulties may qualify for special education and others may qualify for a 504 accommodation plan. That's where we really need to continue to collaborate and coordinate training for the teachers regardless of whether the student qualifies for special education. Another behavioral strategist position was added last year in the psychology department in order to help teams develop behavior plans that were having difficulties whether they were special education students or students who needed a 504 plan. Those behavior strategists are busy

all the time with schools, working with them to help them develop their plans for these students. We've worked with schools that have been through training establishing their school wide positive behavior support programs and this is just one piece of that for schools in helping to develop the individualized plans for certain students.

Ms. Comeau commented that this is not just the Anchorage School District's issue. This is a community issue and a statewide issue. We all have to pull together on this one. We have to teach our young people that this is totally preventable.

Mr. Steiner asked if there was a process where early diagnosis could be made at the kindergarten level. Ms. Comeau replied that each kindergartener and new-to-district first graders have to have a physical. However, if there is any suspicion when the baby is born it is up to the health attendant or doctor to be trained to look for this. We need to make sure that our diagnostic teams look for these symptoms - not to diagnose, but to know to refer to a physician or one of the many community agencies. If a child has never gone to preschool and has not been diagnosed, hopefully at the kindergarten developmental profile interview a parent would talk about their child's behaviors and the teacher would ask the nurse to look at this child more closely. However, it really does come back to the fact that it really needs to be done by the health providers and practitioners to be aware as soon as that child is born and work with the family until the child gets closer to school age.

Mr. Steiner asked if the physician's health review form during enrollment asks whether there is any appearance that there may be a FAS/FAE issue with the child. Diane Casto replied that it has been added to a lot of the forms. It needs to be identified earlier. Right now the average diagnostic age is 11 years old. Ms. Comeau added that is why we are putting the emphasis on the elementary training model. Mr. Steiner suggested that the District also take a look at the forms to see if it could be added to what the doctors are asked to look for.

Barbara Nagengast, principal of Spring Hill Elementary and president of the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals, reported on the very successful statewide conference that was held last weekend. The principals heard nationally recognized speakers and were inspired by their messages. Ms. Nagengast thanked Tim Steele and Macon Roberts for attending the presidential reception held Monday evening and thanked Carol Comeau for her continued support of the state conference. Anchorage principals hold both elected and appointed offices, and

leadership positions in both the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals as well as the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals. Anchorage school principals sit on the board of the Alaska Council of School Administrators and are members of the ACSA joint resolutions committee that has worked together to draft dozens of resolutions to address public schools issues. They joined with business leaders as well as the superintendent to address educational issues statewide. Anchorage principals led the way several years ago in going to Juneau to promote the needs of the Anchorage School District and statewide to the legislators and now the two statewide principals organizations have followed their lead and are working together to educate the legislators about statewide K-12 educational issues. Last summer three principals took that message to Washington D.C. as well. A number of Anchorage principals serve on statewide DEED committees and one principal was recently appointed to a national principal taskforce on NCLB. Anchorage principals are actively at work beyond their schools and are viewed as leaders in the state of Alaska and the nation. Ms. Nagengast appreciates the hard work of the principals for the students and their support for statewide education for all of Alaska.

Guy Okada, president of the Anchorage Principals Association stated to the Board that a quarter of the work year has passed and they are still without a contract. Within the next week, APA and ASD will jointly select an arbitrator for the next step in this process. The speaker asked the Board to make an investment in its principals and assistant principals by tendering an acceptable contract. Mr. Okada thanked the Board for their time and he also thanked the principals and assistant principals who have joined him at the meetings.

Theresa Obermeyer stated to the Board that we learn a lot from the people that come forward to speak. Ms. Obermeyer added that she has not seen the PTA come for many years and they are having an event tomorrow night at South Anchorage High School. She would like Anchorage to have great schools and employees that are paid very well. Ms. Obermeyer stated that she has not been allowed a letter to the editor even when she was running for U.S. Senate. Ms. Obermeyer commented that we live in a 45-year old frontier and she is supposed to be some crackpot. Ms. Obermeyer does not enjoy it but must do it because she cares very deeply about children. Ms. Obermeyer knows the law as a college administrator, who has worked in three colleges in the Lower 48, and is always focused on the law.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda is attached. **All attachments referred to in memoranda Recommendations are on file in the Superintendent's office.**

1. ASD Memorandum #92 – New Eagle River High School Name

It is recommended that the School Board approve the Superintendent's recommendation to name the new high school in Eagle River the Eagle River High School.

2. ASD Memorandum #65 – School Board Goals FY 2004-2005

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the Anchorage School District Mission Statement and Goals as shown on Attachment A. For comparison purposes, the Goals for 2003-2004 are shown on Attachment B.

3. ASD Memorandum #67 – 2005 Legislative Priorities

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the 2005 Anchorage School District Legislative Priorities. (Attachment A).

4. ASD Memorandum #58 – Approval of Change Order: Airport Heights Elementary School Windows and Siding Project

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize an increase in the scope of work for the Airport Heights Elementary School Window and Siding Project and approve a change order for this work in the amount of \$363,657 to Christensen Builders.

5. ASD Memorandum #43 – Award of Contract: Type C Diesel School Buses

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award contracts to purchase Type C Diesel School Buses to Alaska Truck Center and Quality Equipment in the amounts of \$159,000 and \$598,500 respectively for a total award of \$757,500.

6. ASD Memorandum #89 – Approval of Change Order: Bartlett High

School Renewal Phase 2

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize change orders in an amount not to exceed \$700,000 to the Alaska Mechanical, Inc. contract for the Bartlett High School Renewal Phase 2B, Theater Addition and Music Rooms Renovations, to address the removal of additional asbestos fire proofing.

7. ASD Memorandum #91 – Acceptance of Continuation Grant Award: Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a continuation grant from Reading is Fundamental, Inc., in the amount of \$17,488. Funds will be used to provide books to students.

8. ASD Memorandum #93 – Acceptance of Grant Award: Interlibrary Cooperation Grant for West High School

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept grant funds from the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums, in the amount of \$13,750. Funds will be used to support the Minority Literacy Project at West-Romig Library, which will provide reading materials of various levels in their first language to student who speak Russian, Tagalog, Samoan and Hmong.

9. ASD Memorandum #74 – Personnel Report

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

The following memoranda were removed from the Agenda: Memorandum #92, #65, and #67. Memorandum #58 was earlier removed from the Agenda.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner  
seconded by: Jeff Friedman

to approve ASD Memorandum #43;  
Memorandum #89;  
Memorandum #91;

Memorandum #93; and  
Memorandum #74

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #92 – New Eagle River High School Name

It is recommended that the School Board approve the Superintendent's recommendation to name the new high school in Eagle River the Eagle River High School.

MOTION:

Moved by: Macon Roberts to approve ASD Memorandum #92 .

seconded by: Crystal Kennedy

Carol Comeau thanked Mike Henry, Natalie Burnett and the committee for their work on the naming of this school. There were 139 proposed names. There were seven recommendations that did not make the criteria. Ms Comeau is very comfortable with naming the school Eagle River High School. It clearly has the strong support of the community.

John Steiner commented that there is a board policy that speaks to no two schools having the same name and wondered if there is a need for a waiver approval from the Board due to having the Eagle River Elementary and Eagle River High School. Carol Comeau responded that she does not believe it is needed. Chugiak High School and Chugiak Elementary School also have the same names.

Jake Metcalfe called the question and Jeff Friedman seconded the motion with no objection from the Board.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

John Steiner noted for the record that Chugiak Elementary and Chugiak High School is a geographic locator and that is why he is comfortable with this. Mr. Steiner further commented that he would be concerned if it was named after a person. Because it is geographic he does not have a problem with it.

Ms. Comeau suggested that the policy committee might want to look at that in the future and make a clarification with the exception of geographic locations.

ASD Memorandum #65 - School Board Goals FY 2004-2005 - REVISED

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the Anchorage School District Mission Statement and Goals as shown on Attachment A. For comparison purposes, the Goals for 2003-2004 are shown on Attachment B.

MOTION:

Moved by: Mary Marks                      to approve ASD Memorandum #65 -  
seconded by: Jeff Friedman              Revised.

Superintendent Comeau wanted to clarify that for something as important as these goals, next year the Administration would like to schedule a work session on them so that they can focus strictly on the goals and everyone has an opportunity to weigh in on them. After the last meeting Jan Christensen and some of her staff worked on revising the goals and Ms. Comeau believes the revision clarifies clearly what Mr. Steiner and the other Board members were referring to. One word changed in Item 6 - add the word "complete" AP courses instead of "take" AP courses.

John Steiner thanked the superintendent and staff for the new language and it responds to the concern he has to make sure we are targeting the areas where we need the greatest improvement to catch up and bring the gap down. Mr. Steiner appreciated the examples. It makes it clear as to how the goal works and what the Board had in mind and why Board members decided it needed to be a goal.

VOTE:

Ayes:     Metcalfe, Kennedy, Marks,  
           Steele, Friedman, Roberts  
           Steiner  
Nays:     None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #67 – 2005 Legislative Priorities

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the 2005 Anchorage School District Legislative Priorities. (Attachment A).

MOTION:

Moved by: Crystal Kennedy                      to approve ASD Memorandum #67 .  
seconded by: Mary Marks

Jeff Friedman asked the committee's intent as to how it will focus on these different priorities. We are adding two more issues in addition to funding and Mr. Friedman asked, "Are we intending to say to legislators that they are all equal?" Crystal Kennedy replied that the committee does not want to prioritize them. They will pick up speed according to what is going on with the legislature. If the Board wants to prioritize them we can go back and do that. In the past the majority of what the Board has been focusing on has been funding. Larry Wiget responded that funding will be the priority, but the issue of vandalism and assault on staff has also been raised and legislation will be introduced this session and the committee wanted to formalize its position on those two issues. Funding will be the primary focus.

Carol Comeau stated that it is important that we be able to speak from a position that the Board has voted on some of these critical issues. There will be legislation drafted on the vandalism issue and there is great interest in the whole issue of assaulting school employees and having consequences for that. The other three issues are tied to funding. The PERS/TRS issue hits us with \$13 million off the top, which is definitely an impact on the rest of our programs and funding. The debt reimbursement is critical for us. We still have a long way to go with all of our various construction projects.

John Steiner agreed that it is not necessary to prioritize. The emphasis is on funding because we need the funding to run the schools. Mr. Steiner noted that in the liability for vandalism there is some definitely well considered comments by legislators when they were asked if they supported the district being able to collect the full cost of the vandalism damage from the parents of the vandals who are minors. There are some concerns about some situations in which a parent might legitimately not have any influence over a child or when to assess a family full cost would take away all their ability to take care of their livelihood – although there

are protections in the system. One of the things the committee put into the text was the assurance that it was not the goal to bankrupt families in order to accomplish this but within the realms of proper judicial protections, not to cut off our ability when the resources are there. If the resources are there within the family and the family does have a responsibility that a judge would recognize in the judicial process it seems appropriate to go with the cost causer rather than the taxpayer. Mr. Steiner wanted to clarify that we have some flexibility and are not trying to be abusive to families who should not be required to pay.

Jake Metcalfe commented that the Board needs to be thinking about programs and examples of why we need the money. With the surplus of money from the oil prices it would be wise for the Board to go to Juneau with specific information as to why the funding would improve achievement. Carol Comeau agreed and commented that the District will talk to three different forums in the community, to the MECC and to the student advisory board to hear from the students what their priorities are. The discussion will begin on November 8 with the work session as well as the forums as to where our priorities will be.

The Board recessed at 8:25 and returned at 8:43.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

ASD Memorandum #77 - Conflict of Interest: First Quarter Report FY 2004-2005

The attached listing of employee Conflict of Interest Waiver and Disclosure actions is forwarded in accordance with School Board Policy Section 725.44. This information is provided as the first quarter report for the FY 2004-2005 school year.

ASD Memorandum #78 - Facility Change Order Report and Completed Projects for the Month of September 2004

The monthly Facility Change Order Report for the month of September is attached. There are no exceptions to report this month. There are no completed projects for this month.

ASD Memorandum #79 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of October 1, 2004 through October 15, 2004.

ASD Memorandum #80 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap September 30, 2004

The attached report consists of three parts: the Graphic Overview, the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Recap. The Graphic Overview is presented on a quarterly basis and the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Recap are presented on a monthly basis. The Treasurer's report and Financial Recap are year-to-date information as of September 30, 2004.

ASD Memorandum #81 - Operating Budget Transfers - September Monthly Report FY 2004-2005

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of July, August, and September 2004 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.

ASD Memorandum #82 - Out-of-District Travel - First Quarter Report FY 2004-2005

The attached Travel Report summarizes the travel taken by District employees and School Board members during the first quarter of FY 2004-2005 for both in-state and out-of-state travel. This report complies with the travel procedures established with the revision to School Board policy Sections 156, Board Member Travel, and 526, Staff Travel.

ASD Memorandum #60 - Bartlett High School Phase II One Percent For Art

Chapter 7.40 of the Anchorage Municipal Code defines the process for selection and acquisition of art to be displayed in public places, including

public school buildings. This code authorizes the Municipality to select the artist and the artwork, with a review of the proposed artwork by the school district only as to its safety and maintenance factors. The artwork has been reviewed and approved by the District's Risk Management Department and Anchorage Fire Department. The artist has agreed to their safety recommendations, which will be addressed in the artist's contract.

ASD Memorandum #61 - Wendler Middle School Renovation One Percent For Art

Chapter 7.40 of the Anchorage Municipal Code defines the process for selection and acquisition of art to be displayed in public places, including public school buildings. This code authorizes the Municipality to select the artist and the artwork, with a review of the proposed artwork by the school district only as to its safety and maintenance factors. The artwork has been reviewed and approved by the District's Risk Management Department and Anchorage Fire Department. The artist has agreed to their safety recommendations, which will be addressed in the artist's contract.

ASD Memorandum #90 - Assessment Calendar For 2004-2005 School Year

The 2004-2005 Districtwide schedule of assessments and surveys managed through the Assessment and Evaluation Department includes the following test and surveys.

Superintendent Comeau reported that this schedule is becoming more extensive due to state and federal mandates. There is field testing going on this week for the new standards-based assessment test for all fourth through tenth grade students. No results are given back. These are strictly testing the items so they can go through the process of deciding which questions will be on the assessment itself. There are no makeup opportunities for the HSGQE. If they miss the first day they do not get to retake it until the next scheduled testing opportunity. All the other tests do have makeup opportunities within a window throughout the year.

John Steiner commented that if you total the number of instructional days now devoted to assessment days there is a tradeoff when you are trying to do accountability - especially when you are trying to create new tests and doing field testing. There is a tradeoff in the amount of instructional time lost due to testing. Mr. Steiner is gratified that other than for these field tests, we are also getting reports that not only tell us just a score that says

Susie or Billy are getting points but it is reporting back to us the things that they are missing. It is used as a diagnostic tool as well. Ms. Comeau responded that Mr. Steiner is correct - they are assessed against the standards and when the reporting comes back the profiles show which standards the students are advanced, proficient or needing improvement. One thing learned at the conference last week is the need for ongoing assessment that is informal and part of curriculum instruction. The elementary has been doing DRA and other reading assessments for years and the middle schools and high schools have been developing some assessments through Plato or other software programs and other ways to assess as students are learning. Where Districts are making the largest increases in closing the achievement gap is where they are doing more frequent, informal assessments that are imbedded into the instructional program and if students start slipping behind they are doing immediate interventions rather than waiting until these assessments. We will continue to look at this over the year.

Jeff Friedman commented that there was discussion earlier tonight about teachers losing time in the classroom for training and now we are talking about students losing time for learning and Mr. Friedman supports both concepts and feels they are vital and needed, but sometime, when the State gets a handle on its finances and fiscal situation we may have to look at making up for these lost days through either a longer teacher contract or a longer school year or both. The superintendent agreed and stated that it is coming up in other districts. John Steiner commented that it is something to consider when we look at what to use the additional funding for. It is one way to possibly respond to some of the mandates that are coming down from the state and federal government. Mr. Steiner asked if we have any idea when we will have the schedule of assessment dates for the following year. Ed McLain replied that each year the state goes through a process where they confer with various organizations throughout the state in terms of what are the critical events and activities and they will put out some drafts. The superintendent will be informed as those dates develop. No one is talking about radical changes from this year other than the various field tests will not be repeated. Tim Steele mentioned the problem with the April 5 testing date being the municipality election day. Ms. Comeau responded that the municipality cannot change the voting date because it is in the charter. Ms. Comeau has submitted her request to the state to change the date and assured the Board that she would try one more time and ask the state to avoid that date next year.

ASD Memorandum #35 – Six Year Instructional Plan Update

The Anchorage School Board adopted the Six-Year Instructional Plan at their meeting on May 10, 2004. Even though the plan was not formally adopted until May 2004, the twenty-five instructionally related departments began implementation of their delineated objectives and initiatives in the fall of 2003.

Superintendent Comeau applauded Jan Christensen and her staff for the great job they did representing the Anchorage School District at the conference in Las Vegas last week. Several people at the conference commented to Ms. Comeau and Mr. Metcalfe about the quality of the Six-Year Instructional Plan. It is a wonderful outgrowth of the curriculum audit. There were a number of districts that went through the audits but none have come out with a plan that is this comprehensive. Many were very impressed with how we have taken the audit and recommendations and moved to the next level.

Jan Christensen reported that this is the first evaluation of the progress of the Six-Year Instructional Plan. Even though the plan wasn't adopted by the Board until May of 2004, all of the departments were striving toward fulfilling the goals that they had set forth in that plan. They have devised the report in the same type of template that was used in the plan to allow to see what the goal was, what measurement was used and whether that goal was met. Ms. Christensen mentioned that they have three additional plans that they would like to bring forward in January – one on cooperative learning, Title I and library education. This came from people who came forward and said they wanted to be part of the plan. Ms. Christensen added that they are asking each of the chapter originators to look at their plan for 05/06 since we know that budget discussions are coming, and see if there are specific things in their plans that they believe would not be covered in their regular budget that has been received in the past.

The Board also was given a CD that is a draft of the communications CD. It is a method that could be given to all employees in the District to let them know about the plan and how they can find out more information about it.

Enid Hunter commented that they have received a lot of good feedback from the principals. This is a formative tool. Nothing is irreversible and it is a great tool to guide instructional decisions. It is a good way to read what is happening in another department and piggyback off of that.

Tim Steele commented that if a particular segment is identified as not being able to make the progress that was hoped the plan would have to be adjusted. Mr. Steele wondered how that plan could be changed without affecting another plan. Jan Christensen replied that any change to a plan would be brought before the Board first.

Superintendent Comeau commented that as we learn more about how to use data, IT and the infrastructure is going to be more critical. That is why we are working to get to the point where we have a data warehouse. There is a number of issues where technology is going to have to give more support and IT is going to have to increase. It's going to be critical for this district to move forward. There will also be a greater need for the hardware to make sure that every teacher and support staff member who delivers instructional support has access to a computer. There are many more needs than we are going to be able to afford and it is a matter of prioritizing and this plan will put some frame behind it and give us some structure. This will guide a lot of that.

John Steiner commented on Page 5 of the plan, which mentions the inservice provided for principals. Mr. Steiner asked if the trainers were able to reach all principals and in doing that did they review just the elementary education portion or all of the subject matter as well. Patricia McRae replied that the elementary education department has been doing analysis of data with the principals for the past four years. They look at our district assessment data from reading, the state benchmark assessment data in reading, writing and math, as well as the Alaska Performance Index, and provide it in an easily understandable graph form so that the teachers can spend time analyzing what it means and designing interventions, changes or recognizing the strengths of what they are doing. They focus on the performance standards and reading assessment data. The principals were also trained on all of the other subject areas in the administrative advance training. They also spent an afternoon on individual sessions on sheltered instruction, training that is offered, the reading initiatives, the support of learning environment, and the anti-bullying curriculum.

John Steiner commented that funding is highly relevant to what is needed to achieve. It is wonderful to have this document. Just to look at the profiles and say here are our statistics of our performance does not really tell anything about why it may be that way or give ideas of what can be done to fix it. This document gives a better handle for the Board and the

community to know what we are doing to resolve some of the issues or to make improvements.

Mr. Steiner mentioned the limited English proficient and not proficient scores on Pages 6 and 7 and noted that it appears that in 2002 and 2003 scores increased and then fell back slightly from 2003 to 2004. Mr. Steiner stated that limited English proficient is really a challenging area because the characteristic of being limited English proficient necessarily means it is going to be more of a challenge to score well because you cannot understand things as well. If you graduate out of that category because now you understand, rather than staying in that category and bringing the scores up you graduate out of it. The people who are left in it are even less proficient than before and if you have new people come in from outside the District, new immigrants who are even less proficient than those who have been here it brings it down. Mr. Steiner wondered whether there is any information about those things happening that can give us any idea whether it has to do with the instruction or whether it has to do with the demographics of our population that causes these scores to do what they are doing. Patricia McRae replied that the curriculum department, the elementary education and bilingual department have put forth a great deal of effort over the past four years to develop a training for teachers to help them understand the basis of language acquisition that limited English proficient students experience in schools and instructional strategies that they can use to open up learning opportunities for those students. Ms. McRae added that to her, these scores are good. These are different groups of kids but in most cases, even though some of the scores declined, we saw increases that we held or continued to achieve. So, in our own little piece of this one little training we are making the observation that we think we are assisting English language learners to increase achievement when we use sheltered instructional strategies in classroom instruction. It is very powerful and over one thousand teachers have been trained and we have an excellent training that we've aligned to culturally responsive practices, cross-cultural communications and sheltered instructional strategies. We focus on math and science. The bilingual department is doing a lot to work with these students also. Ms. McRae commented that anytime you see a pattern of increasing achievement that is a cause for celebration. Maxine Hill emphasized what Ms. McRae stated and added that many of these students are new students and all students are being tested, regardless of how long they have been in U.S. schools. We have been faced with that dilemma over the past four years, and particularly this year. In the past we have been able to exempt students and to provide accommodations to those who really needed accommodations. Now, State law has changed and all students

who have at anytime been identified as limited English proficient are eligible to receive accommodations. That means that we have gone from maybe 500 students receiving accommodations to 6,000 students being eligible to receive accommodations. It makes it a pretty awesome task for a small department. We have an English language proficiency test, which is a standard test on the state level. We implemented the field test for that in October and the spring of 2005 will be the first year that we will be administering that. There is a lot that we will have to look at and diagnose to make sure that we are on the right track. Ms. Hill believes that we are trying to broaden the perspective of all teachers in the District because limited English proficient students are not the students just for the bilingual program. They are in all classes and all teachers must adapt their strategies to meet their needs.

Rhonda Gardner spoke about the changes for this category of students for NCLB. There are a couple of changes for determining adequate yearly progress. First-year immigrants no longer need be counted under the achievement portion for determining AYP and if they take the proficiency test that Ms. Hill mentioned they count for having participated. In addition we are also allowed to include students in the LEP category who have exited the program for two years beyond their exit date, so that we can keep those kids in that category, because by definition, limited English proficient students have a difficult time meeting adequately yearly progress. So for two years we can continue to monitor them and keep them in that category.

Jeff Friedman commented that when he looks at the numbers on Page 7 and sees the percent of proficient in math grade 3 going from 44 to 63 it is actually a 43 percent increase as well as 19-point gain. That looks meaningful to him, but if he looks at the writing scores and reading scores, they are much smaller gains and it isn't obvious to him that they are anything more than random variations. Mr. Friedman wondered if we are looking at that to see if those are statistically significant increases or are we just saying, "Well they've gone up a little, so that's good." Ed McLain responded that one of the issues with the LEP is that these kids are by definition all across a very broad range, so you have a variety of impacts happening. You have both the issues of new kids coming in and kids going out. The two-year allowance is appreciated, however it still is only two years and you still have the nature of the population. It is very difficult to get very excited in terms of trends given this type of a population without seeing more than just one year to one year. Dr. McLain would be more comfortable if he could see the kind of 19 point gain for three to five years than just one year. Although, as Ms. McRae

pointed out, anytime he sees a gain there is a cause for celebration. Ms. Comeau commented that these are also different groups of kids. It is much better if you can look at grade 3, grade 4 the next year, and grade 5 the following year and hold on to those same kids. Mr. Friedman asked if these numbers are telling us anything useful. Dr. McLain stated that he would not say that these numbers are not telling you anything. These are very real numbers but you have to take them in context. They are what they are. They are a different group of kids. The number is relatively small. Anytime when we do a third grade from one year and a third grade the next year it is a different group of kids. The number is so large that the individual differences fall out. With this population you have the combination of a smaller number and the unique nature of these kids. That piece makes Dr. McLain get a little bit hesitant to make it more than what it is. Dr. McLain added that he does not want to leave the Board with the impression that there is nothing there. There is something there - there is a very real achievement that is noted and given the population he would be very excited. Dr. McLain added that he would be a lot more excited when he sees this trend continue over some more years.

Mr. Steele commented that the thing that really means something is what we would like to look at for everyone and that is individual growth, and for a teacher to look at it and see improvement of that individual is what is important. Superintendent Comeau added that she thinks these also show that there are more 6<sup>th</sup> graders proficient than two years ago. Ms. Comeau attributes that to more training of the teachers and changes in some of the approaches in the instructional program, so there are more kids at that grade level that are proficient or advanced than there were before. That's why it is meaningful. Maxine Hill mentioned that on Page 69 under the bilingual portion of the Six-Year Plan you can see how many students from non English proficient to limited English proficient and how many of those limited English proficient students went to fluent English proficient and consequently from fluent proficiency to exiting the program, so we can track the individual growth of the students.

Macon Roberts asked if lack of attendance is more noticeable in the language challenged students than those that do not have a language problem. Patricia McRae replied that we have not correlated attendance to achievement. Maxine Hill replied that the transiency is high. Carol Comeau informed Mr. Roberts that the attendance information is kept at each individual school.

Jake Metcalfe referred to Page 86. Mr. Metcalfe recalled that when the curriculum audit was done, Dr. English stated that the numbers of

minority students in the gifted program ought to reflect their percentage of the general population. Mr. Metcalfe noted in the report that we are meeting some of the goals and exceeding in some categories, but questioned if we are at a point to where the numbers of minority students are reflective of their percentage in the overall population. MerriKae Vanderpleog replied that she believes the gifted program is reflecting what you see in the regular classrooms. Mr. Metcalfe asked if we are measuring it to see if we are increasing. Ms. Vanderpleog replied that we are measuring it.

Jake Metcalfe commented that during the curriculum audit there was the suggestion that the District try to increase the hiring of minorities in both the teaching and administrative positions. Mr. Metcalfe questioned how we are doing in light of that suggestion. Eric Tollfesen replied that the District is working on increasing a diverse workforce. One problem is funding. In order to be able to recruit a diverse workforce you need to be able to go out and offer intents and we have not been able to do that. You can't find enough of a diverse workforce in this market that we have here. You can't necessarily say that you will go out and hire minority teachers because they are not here. Without knowing what the funding is in time, you can't go out and offer intents because they get picked up because they are in demand all over. Ms. Comeau added that during the work session in November to review the diversity recruitment plan, Margo Bellamy will have the statistics of each of the categories and talk about what we've done with the limited recruitment funds we have had and what we've done both locally, statewide and having to recruit outside, also. We always try to do local hire. Everyone is challenged in the state with finding any large number of available teachers and administrators who are minorities because everyone is looking in the same pool and a lot of the minority folks are not going into education.

Crystal Kennedy commented that she is very pleased with what this document does for the District. Data is so important in terms of helping us make a decision that we know we need to make. Ms. Kennedy added that we can see that there are definitely kids who are not getting what they need and we want to make sure that we can target those kids and give them what they do need. Ms. Kennedy wondered at what point are we going to change the way we do business or think about education. Ms. Kennedy has been looking at a couple of the schools who are spending so much time trying to target those kids who aren't proficient in math and English and so much of their day has become math and language arts and they are not getting science and they are not getting social studies. We are getting to the point where we are going to have science standards soon

and we are going to have another test that we will test these kids with. Ms. Kennedy questions if we are going to start extending the day for the kids who need more time in a day – are we going to extend the school year so we can really target those kids and at what point do you start to retain those kids at grade level for a while? How do we really make this work for those kids that we know need more time, effort and funding? Dr. Hunter replied part of the beauty of this plan as well as NCLB is it allows you to focus. The sub groups make it hard to ignore the sub groups anymore. No longer does the kid fit the program – the program needs to fit the kid. Jan Christensen commented that now that we have the assessment reporting system they can look at which students are having difficulty and they can organize students that are having problems with a particular indicator and we are asking principals and teachers to look at that data. There are philosophical questions that go with that because when looking at teacher data across the district it is clear that some teachers have more students that haven't met proficiency than other teachers in other schools do, so there's issues of resources, or do we extend the day. Those are all questions that the Administration is talking about also and how do we help those students achieve. Carol Comeau responded that we will need to start driving toward reprioritizing our budget process. We will need to look at all of our training money and look at our goals and achievement and take training dollars and put into a cohesive program. This plan will help with that but the bigger issue is you are looking at kids in school and if you are seeing students that need to be challenged and pushed harder, we need to be sure we are training our teachers well enough so more can teach AP courses or honors courses. And if we have a lot of struggling students we need to do what some of the schools are already doing, which is to offer after school tutorials or Saturday school. We need to look at that and not spend so much money purchasing materials but to really coordinate our training opportunities. That is going to be a challenge and will not happen overnight. It will take two to three years. That is what was talked about at the conference. That is what big urban districts are doing – because they've got a clear focus on what they are doing. We are going to coordinate our training. The teachers like the databases and now they need to be able to get together and collaborate and talk about it and say this is working well at our school and let's see what we are doing.

Mary Marks referred to Page 79 on Indian education. At the top in the measure it mentions based on Benchmark Terra Nova and talks about the objective that was not attained. We are no longer going to be using the Terra Nova. Ms. Marks asked if we are going to have it consistent throughout the goals and six-year plan? Jan Christensen replied that we

will change what the measure is to fit whatever the assessment is. One of the concerns with the new testing is that how will this year's data match with next year's data. Ms. Marks asked if the goals were attained what is next? Dr. Hunter stated that she thinks the whole thing is ongoing and you build on that.

Tim Steele referred to Page 110 and the adequate tracking system. Mr. Steele asked if this means that all applicants will be in digital form in a database. Eric Tollfesen replied that the certified side applicant tracking system will be up and running by the second semester of this school year. The classified side will be more difficult to accomplish since classified employees have the opportunity to complete more than one application. That should feed into the IFAS system.

Mr. Steele commented that we are doing neat stuff and it does all interconnect. It is exciting about what we are doing and how we are doing it. It is coming together very professionally and the right way.

- I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS
- J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS
- K. EXECUTIVE SESSION-  
(PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATION)
- L. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Meeting of October 25, 2004, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:10 p.m.

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Tim Steele, President

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Jeff Friedman, Clerk

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Robin Siegfried, Recording Secretary

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Date Minutes Approved