

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 28, 2005

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, March 28, 2005, at 6:35 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, Jake Metcalfe and Macon Roberts.

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 announced that next week the Board members will be in Juneau lobbying legislators. Also, the Administration has pulled the charter schools together for a meeting to listen to their concerns and start a good line of communication.

Tim Steele presented a 30-year ASD pin to Superintendent Carol Comeau. As of the end of last month she is celebrating her service to Anchorage schools for 30 years.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by: John Steiner
seconded by: Jeff Friedman

that the Agenda be approved
with addendum to the Personnel
Report.

The Agenda was unanimously approved.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

1. ASD Memorandum #238 - 2005 Alaska School Psychologist Of The Year

Dr. Mary DuHoux, school psychologist, and employee of the Anchorage School District since 1989, has been named 2005 Alaska School Psychologist of the Year by the Alaska School Psychologists Association.

Jerry Sjolander read the memorandum while Tim Steele presented Dr. DuHoux with a certificate.

2. ASD Memorandum #239 - Alaska VFW Citizenship Education Teacher Award

Each year the Veterans of Foreign War (VFW), Department of Alaska selects three teachers to represent the State of Alaska for selection at the National level for the National Citizenship Education Teacher Award. The VFW annually recognizes the nation's top elementary, junior high/middle school and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote American history and traditions.

Patricia McRae read the memorandum while Tim Steele presented the certificate to Jean Ward. Mitch Tarter and William "TOP" Dill were not present.

3. ASD Memorandum #246 - Alaska Airlines Donation

Many businesses and organizations believe it is their responsibility to make certain that they do everything they can to assist people of all ages obtain a quality education.

Alaska Airlines recently donated 1,250 headphones for students in the district's Title I schools to use with a new supplemental Larson Math computer program. The headphones will be used in computer labs and in individual classrooms so that students can do tutorials and receive auditory feedback as they complete the modules in the program.

Susan Bramstedt from Alaska Airlines received the certificate from Tim Steele while Jan Christensen read the memorandum.

4. Presentation - Middle School High Five Literacy Initiative

Gail Opalinski, Amy Goodman, Middle School Literacy Expert; Tracy Stanley, a seventh grade language arts teacher at Central Middle School and Renata Marmora, a seventh grade student, briefed the Board on the Middle School High Five Literacy Initiative. March is Middle School

Month and the speakers wanted to bring forward an initiative that every single middle school teacher in the district is participating in. Ms. Goodman stated that the High Five is a literacy initiative to improve reading comprehension across the curriculum. It shows the wonderful professionalism of all the teachers who want to help with academic skills in our students, no matter what the subject matter is that they teach. This High Five Literacy Initiative was taught to the faculty of the schools by the department chairs of the English department. Literacy learning takes place most readily when students actively pursue their own learning - when reading, writing, speaking and listening in relationship to authentic, whole texts in which they are personally engaged. High Five Literacy Initiative brought a unity to the teachers that they did not have before. It allows them to plan together and form their strategies. They use a common vocabulary throughout the team. It is a whole learning strategy. The enthusiasm has been throughout the district because it is teachers teaching teachers and the students will use this strategy in the eighth grade as well as the seventh grade.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

No report.

2. Military Delegate

No report.

3. M.E.C.C.

William Johnson reported that the M.E.C.C. held its monthly meeting on March 17 at 12:00 and met with Kay Bennett from the Professional Development who discussed recruiting minorities to the district. The committee passed on ideas to her. Mr. Johnson thanked Superintendent Comeau for attending. They took up the boundaries issue and the committee name change and will bring that recommendation to the Board members soon for their input. The next meeting is 12:00 on April 21. The public is welcome.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Speaker, Paul Swetzof spoke to the Board regarding the possibility of including firearms and weapons training in the curriculum. He asked the principal of Romig Middle School to incorporate firearm safety in the classes and he was

surprised that the answer is no. The NRA gives grants for the Eddie Eagle Program for K-3 students. Mr. Swetzof feels firearm safety is critical. For Middle School students, he would like to teach firearm safety during the health class. The speaker stated that he went to legislators to see if there was support and there was overwhelming bipartisan support for it. The only one who rejected it was Bettye Davis and the legislators were interested in seeing it statewide. The speaker feels most children have access to firearms and feels the district and parents have an obligation to teach the firearm safety to their children.

Jake Metcalfe mentioned that he liked idea, because at an early age, growing up in Alaska, he realized how powerful weapons are and he feels it is a program that deserves some attention. Crystal Kennedy mentioned that the Eddie Eagle Program was brought in to the schools by the PTA years ago and she asked the speaker if they had contacted him. The speaker replied that he has not spoken to anyone from the PTA. The police departments have been teaching this with an NRA grant. There are also other volunteers like the speaker. Mary Marks commented that she has a huge concern with firearms and feels it is important our community is very aware as to what is entailed with firearms and the consequences. The speaker said the program he is speaking about is gun safety - they do not promote guns.

Carol Comeau reported that this issue has been around since 1990, when it was brought forth by Representative Bunde. There are so many excellent instructional programs that every agency wants the district to teach but there is not enough time. The proper procedure would be for the speaker to go through the community resources department. If a teacher wanted a gun safety speaker, the teacher would contact that department. The middle school curriculum is more problematic because of scheduling. Ms. Comeau added that her concern is the encroachment on the instructional day. The Administration does not recommend mandating this. PTAs were sponsoring gun safety nights and programs. The speaker assured Ms. Comeau that he is not suggesting a mandated program.

John Steiner asked the speaker if has statistics that show a reduction in gun accidents and potential violence once these programs have been done. Mr. Swartzof replied that he does not, but will get him the statistics for Mr. Steiner.

Speaker, Elizabeth Patrick, a substitute teacher, spoke to the Board regarding the practice of hiring a substitute teacher for 19 days and then replacing that sub with another teacher. The speaker stated that this practice is not good for the students or educational process.

Jeff Friedman commented that we work hard to keep parents from moving their children during the school year and we should study this since changing teachers is also disruptive.

Ms. Comeau stated that it is her understanding that in order to teach 20 days you have to be a certified teacher in that area. Ms. Comeau hopes we are not moving people after 20 days and the Administration will look into this. Eric Tollefsen responded that he looked at the records and did not find that this was occurring. The speaker commented that there is no teacher or secretary who will tell you that it doesn't happen. They do not ask you if you are certified because they know they will only hire you for 19 days. Ms. Comeau asked the speaker to talk with Eric Tollefsen and bring the people show knows who have specific examples. Our administrative assistants do not ask if the teachers are certified. It is the function of the HR Department to do that. Eric Tollefsen stated that he would get the information and set up a meeting to make sure he understands the problem.

Carol Comeau informed that Board that the federal law states that after 20 days you have to have a certificated teacher. This is a state certification issue. The schools cannot have a teacher teaching in a classroom more than 20 days if not qualified. The principals know that they need to check with the HR Department if they are going to have a long-term sub and they need to be certified.

Theresa Obermeyer stated to the Board that she is blown away by Ms. Patrick's comments and this is probably the most transient state in the United States. Ms. Obermeyer commented that she feels Ms. Patrick will not be able to get a job because she came forward. Ms. Obermeyer made a negative comment against a local newspaper reporter and Mr. Steele asked Dr. Obermeyer to not slander and stick to a topic. Ms. Obermeyer commented on her husband's position and her website. Ms. Obermeyer stated that May 1, 2005 is Law Day.

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 #253 - A Resolution In Support of the Week of the Young Child - April 3-9, 2005

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the attached resolution in support of the Week of the Young Child, April 3-9, 2005.

2. ASD Memorandum #210 - SCHOOL BOARD POLICY REVISION SECTION 725.131(j) PURCHASING/CONTRACTING - EXEMPT (SECOND READING)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt on Second Reading the recommended policy changes for School Board Policy Section 725.131(j): Purchasing/Contracting - Exempt.

3. ASD Memorandum #212 - GRUENING MIDDLE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES (FIRST READING)

It is the recommended that the School Board approve the Superintendent's recommendation to maintain the current boundaries of Gruening Middle School and Central Middle School of Science for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school year for students residing on Fort Richardson. It is further recommended that all middle school boundaries be reviewed during the 2005-2006 school year in order to establish boundaries that balance enrollments throughout the district and taking the new Muldoon area middle school into consideration.

4. ASD Memorandum #213 - CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES RECOMMENDATION: THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board allow The House of the Spirits to remain on the approved list as a choice in the Advanced Placement (AP) Literature course, with the option to offer students who object to reading the book, an alternative selection.

5. ASD Memorandum #245 - Acceptance Of Grant Award: State Of Alaska Department Of Education And Early Development Youth Risk Behavior Survey Implementation Grant

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a continuation grant in the amount of \$16,000 from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. The grant will fund the implementation of the 2005 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS).

6. ASD Memorandum #178 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Abbott Loop Elementary School Learn and Serve Grant

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept the Abbott Loop Elementary School Learn and Serve Grant in the amount of \$9,000 for FY 2004-2005. Funds will be used for facilitating the Two-Way Inclusion Model for Disability Awareness at the school.

7. ASD Memorandum #196 - Award Of Contract: Service High School Renewal Project Phase 2B

It is the Administration's recommendation the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for Service High School Renewal Project Phase 2B to Roger Hickel Contracting, Inc., for the Base Bid, Allowance and all Alternates 1 through 7, in the amount of \$13,761,438.

8. ASD Memorandum #205 - Award Of Contract: Bayshore Site Improvements

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the Bayshore Site Improvements project to the low responsive bidder Seacoast Construction Company, Inc., for the Base Bid in the amount of \$94,723 and accept Alternate #1 in the amount of \$35,152 for a total award of \$129,875. It is also recommended that Unit Prices 1, 2 and 3 be accepted.

9. ASD Memorandum #206 - Award Of Contract: Ursa Major Elementary School Window Replacement

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the Ursa Major Elementary School Window Replacement project to the low responsive bidder, CYS Management Services, Inc., for the Base Bid in the amount of \$673,222 and accept Alternates #1 and #2 in the amount of \$216,444 for a total award of \$889,666.

10. ASD Memorandum #207 - Award Of Contract: College Gate Elementary School Mechanical Upgrade

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the College Gate Elementary Mechanical Upgrade Project to CYS

Management Services, Inc. for the Base Bid amount of \$661,222, plus Assignments of \$129,831 for a total award amount of \$791,053.

11. ASD Memorandum #214 - Award Of Contract: East High School And Chinook Elementary School Hockey Rinks Installation

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the East High School and Chinook Elementary School Hockey Rinks Installation project to Central Environmental, Inc., for the Base Bid amount of \$317,340.

12. ASD Memorandum #215 - Award Of Contract: West High School Power And Data Upgrades

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the West High School Power and Data Upgrade project to Redi Electric, Inc., for the Base Bid in the amount of \$752,000 and to accept Additive Alternate #2 in the amount of \$21,500 and Additive Alternate #3 in the amount of \$28,000, for a total award of \$801,500.

13. ASD Memorandum #216 - Award Of Contract: Bayshore Elementary School Lighting And Sprinkler Upgrades

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the Bayshore Elementary School Lighting and Sprinkler Upgrade project to the low responsive bidder, Christensen Builders, Inc., for the Base Bid in the amount of \$918,000, and accept Additive Alternates #1-4 in the amount of \$81,300 for a total award of \$999,300.

14. ASD Memorandum #202 - Award Of Contract: Service High School Fume Hood Modifications

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for Service High School Fume Hood Modifications to Consolidated Contracting & Engineering for the Base Bid and Allowance in the amount of \$106,558.

15. ASD Memorandum #228 - Renewal Of Contract: Independent Audit Of School District's Financial Records

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to renew the contract with Mikunda, Cottrell, & Company for the independent audit of the School District's financial records for a one-year period in the amount of \$56,050. The audit service will be for fiscal year ending June 30, 2005.

16. ASD Memorandum #209 - 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: Memoranda #212 and #213.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
seconded by: Jeff Friedman

to approve ASD Memorandum#253;
Memorandum #210;
Memorandum #245;
Memorandum #178;
Memorandum #196;
Memorandum #205;
Memorandum #206;
Memorandum #207;
Memorandum #214;
Memorandum #215;
Memorandum #216;
Memorandum #202;
Memorandum #228;
Memorandum #228; and
Memorandum #209.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #212 - GRUENING MIDDLE SCHOOL BOUNDARIES
(FIRST READING)

Gail Opalinski introduced the members of the committee: Dale Normandin, Mary Johnson, Michelle Robertson, Johanna Naylor, Lisa Shutt, Barbara Reeves, Diane Herd, Brian Griggs, Ophelia Dargan-Steed and Linda Schwald.

Crystal Kennedy thanked the task force. Ms. Kennedy reported that she attended one of the public hearings and appreciated the fact that the district was asking what would be best for the Fort Richardson students and if there was an advantage to having the continuity of moving from the same middle school to high school. Ms. Kennedy clarified that this was never a question of asking how to get more kids out of Central so we can opt in those who were more interested in the optional program. All middle school, students can take advanced math and science at all middle schools.

Ms. Comeau announced that this work is a very good beginning. We know what the issues are now. Once we get our numbers in after the 30th of September we will have better statistics.

Tim Steele commented there is nothing that we do that is more traumatic to families than boundary changes. Mr. Steele applauded the committee on the hard work and appreciated Ms. Comeau's recommendation.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

The Board recessed at 8:10 p.m. and reconvened at 8:20 p.m.

ASD Memorandum #213 - CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES RECOMMENDATION:
THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board allow The House of the Spirits to remain on the approved list as a choice in the Advanced Placement (AP) Literature course, with the option to offer students who object to reading the book, an alternative selection.

MOTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman to approve ASD Memorandum #213.
seconded by: Jake Metcalfe

Speaker, Michelle Soper, asked the Board to keep the book, House of the Spirits, on the approved list. One issue mentioned is the author's use of magical uses. The speaker mentioned that the book, To Kill a Mockingbird also has offensive lines and passages. Ms. Soper asked the Board to keep in mind that this is 17 and 18 year old seniors who are more than old enough to discuss man's inhumanity to man.

Macon Roberts asked the speaker what advantages students would get from this work. Ms. Soper replied that it broadens their mind to another place and another time. It is important to learn about the atrocities that have taken place.

Mary Cook, a parent and member of the Controversial Issues Committee, stated to the Board that she voted against the retention of the book. The speaker stated that her comments represent her view only. The speaker clarified that this book is to be remaining on the AP curriculum. However, the book has also been used in the Honors 11 class, and the Spanish Immersion Class at Chugiak High School. Ms. Cook believes that those who choose an alternative can feel odd, segregated and out of the mainstream. If the book is suitable it should be suitable for everyone. Ms. Cook urged the Board to not retain the book on the approved list.

Jake Metcalfe asked the speaker if her concern is that if there is an option someone might be ridiculed over picking a different book. Ms. Cook replied yes and it has happened. Mr. Metcalfe commented that this material is us and available in our day-to-day life on TV and at the newsstands. It seems we would want to teach them about it and let them be exposed to it before they go to college. Ms. Cook replied that the committee discussed that and the fact that this is English literature and there can be standards for English or AP literature. Macon Roberts asked the speaker if she feels there are things that would cause the readers harm if they read it. Ms. Cook replied yes - there are people with sensitivities. If there is one student that speaks out there are most likely others who feel the same way and don't speak out. Mr. Roberts asked the speaker if she felt it would it be more productive to honor the wishes of that one student than give that one student the opportunity to opt out of the book and give the other students the opportunity to read it. Ms. Cook replied yes and she feels there are a long list of books that would fill the requirement which would not have the potential for offensiveness that this book does.

John Steiner stated that he found comments thoughtful, articulate and compelling. One argument in favor of the book is that although there are things that are revolting they are not honored but are in a negative light, and at least there is a teacher guiding them through it. Something otherwise offensive might also be teachable. It was not glamorized in the classroom.

James Gudaitis, his son Daniel Gudaitis, and Chad Armstrong (students) spoke to the Board. Mr. Gudaitis stated that Ms. Cook did a good job airing the same concerns he has. The teacher gave the book as an assignment during spring break. The teacher said she offered another book to read. When Mr. Gudaitis' son, Daniel, left the class during discussion she said he needed to grow up.

Crystal Kennedy asked Mr. Gudaitis if he thinks it is acceptable to keep the book on a recommended list and keep it as a supplemental. Mr. Gudaitis replied that he is in favor of that and does not want it banned. It was made into a movie and was rated R. Ms. Kennedy asked the students to comment on their response to the book. Daniel and Chad stated their thoughts regarding the book and added that the book puts unpleasant images inside their head.

Mary Marks asked Daniel if, since he was given an opportunity to leave the classroom when the discussion of the book was going on, was he given the ability to discuss the book he had chosen to read with the teacher. Daniel Gudaitis replied that he was given a test, and there was not much discussion.

John Steiner commented that he respected the speakers for their willingness to come forward with their convictions. Mr. Steiner asked if it would be acceptable to him if the book was part of a discussion but not all students had to read it. Mr. Gudaitis replied yes - it would be hard to have a discussion if a third of them read the other book, but he has no objection to them discussing it so that they were somewhat familiar with it later. Mr. Gudaitis added that he is in favor of a list of two or three books. John Steiner asked Daniel Gudaitis and Chad Armstrong if would it offend them if they were in the discussion but did not read a book. Daniel Gudaitis replied that it would be okay. Chad Armstrong asked why should an AP class have to discuss the issue of rape, etc.

Victoria Berge stated to the Board that this book is one of her favorite books and should remain a teaching novel for the students. The generational story is unique to South America. It is different from traditional literature. The story is surreal and the women and men are strong characters. The speaker does not think a child should be shunned for reading a different novel and suggested that the student could give an oral report of the other novel. The speaker also feels the teacher should not force the student to leave while discussing the book.

Kelsey Chapple, a student at West High School, has been studying the book in her IB English class for the past few weeks. Ms. Chappel came tonight to defend the book and had an amazing experience reading it. It taught her things that other books hadn't in a way that was personal with the characters. It did

not occur to the speaker, while reading the book that the things that had been taken out were inappropriate to the story and she found these things necessary for what the author was trying to portray and did not find them offensive. Ms. Chappel commented that she can see how someone would but did not find them distasteful and not suited for any class she is taking. This book is for students that are in an upper level English class. It takes place in a nameless country so she had an interest to all of South America. The speaker added that she would not have exposure to this book or the discussions if not in school. It gave her a lot of literary knowledge as well.

Kathryn Berkowitz, teacher of an AP Literature class at Bartlett High School, asked that the book be retained on the curriculum. Ms. Berkowitz stated that the AP classes are for able students who want to be challenged and who want to challenge themselves to have the opportunity to read, respond to and write about books on a college level. The national tests that are given in May are very difficult and sophisticated and a gratifying percentage of her students pass this test and earn credits to take with them to college. This book is written by a strong female author born in Chile and the speaker feels that taking this book away could negatively affect the particular goal of the school board, which is to increase minority presence in AP classes in the district. More and more minority literature has been added to the list of books on the test and the particular genre of this book, the magical realism, has been put forth as one of the genres that the teachers are expected to teach. There are four main books that are used across the country to fulfill the magical realism slot. They are Hundred Years of Solitude, Bless Me, Ultima and the last one is Beloved. Ms. Berkowitz has only taught House of Spirits and one of the reasons was that she felt that Hundred Years of Solitude and Beloved were much stronger in the things that have been talked about tonight such as the violence and sexuality. The speaker feels the House of Spirits is easier to read and her students, for the most part have enjoyed the book and gotten a lot out of it. This is a challenging book and is based on truth. Ms. Berkowitz described the characters in this book. Mr. Metcalfe asked the speaker how she teaches two books at the same time. Ms. Berkowitz stated that she stays late and sees students during her prep period and they can talk about the book that they are reading.

Crystal Kennedy asked Ms. Berkowitz if there are specific questions on the AP exams to this book or a relevance to the genre. Ms. Berkowitz replied that there is an hour of multiple choice questions and two hours, during which time they answer three essay questions. One of them will be on a poem the students are given. The next will be a prose passage from a piece. The third question is called the open question. It will ask, for example, "Think of a novel with a scene of violence in it and discuss how that scene fits into the book aesthetically, etc." After that they will list suggested books that might fit that

category or they say or choose another book of equal literary value. House of Spirits, Hundred Years of Solitude, Bless Me, Ultima and Beloved show up on those lists.

Mr. Steiner asked the teacher if it would be overly burdensome for her to teach two books in the class and would it dilute her teaching too much. Ms. Berkowitz stated that it would dilute it too much. If she had two major novels going simultaneously it would take away from the power of the novel since she has very little time.

Carol Comeau suggested changing the recommendation to limit it to AP. In researching this further today it's been on the board-approved list since 1988 for 11 and 12 grade courses. Ms. Comeau reminded the Board that Ms. Chapple testified that she is taking it as a junior in the West High School IB program, (International Baccalaureate program) and part of the book has been used in the senior high Spanish immersion program. Ms. Comeau does not want to limit those options if the Board's vote is to support keeping this in the curriculum. Ms. Comeau thinks the committee did an excellent job and she appreciates the thoroughness of Mr. Gudiatis' and Ms. Cook's letters as well as the letter of Mr. Armstrong. The Board has a lot of information here as well as what has been provided by email also. The questioning and discussion has been very helpful.

Dr. Enid Hunter reported that she spoke to Sara Jenson, the Spanish Immersion teacher at Chugiak and they limit their reading of the book to the last chapter because it is very difficult in Spanish. Dr. Hunter also spoke to Sonnet Farrell who is the Honors English 11 teacher at Chugiak and she responded that in her fifth year of teaching that book she has not had anyone complain about it or object to reading it. Dr. Hunter added that this book was used in a workshop that the college board put on to teach how to create a syllabi for the AP literature class as part of their teacher training.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by: Crystal Kennedy
seconded by: John Steiner

to remove the book entitled House of the Spirits from the list of core books used in ASD courses and move it to the list of supplemental reading choices. Further move that the book be accompanied with an appropriate warning to students and parents of its explicit and graphic nature.

Ms. Kennedy stated that there is much to be said about sensitivity and she would hope that we don't get to the point to where we rule out someone's

personal sensitivity to something. Ms. Kennedy does not agree that you have to read something like this with the graphic sexual violence content to it to understand that those kinds of things happen. Ms. Kennedy feels that there is no real alternative to people who want to opt out of this. If you decide to opt out you are excluding yourself from class discussion and are probably excluding yourself from the ability for the teacher to have some meaningful interaction with you. Ms. Kennedy would error on the side of being reserved and sensitive rather than to ignore those kinds of sensibilities. The book is not being banned - we are just saying there are other alternatives that are just as good. Ms. Kennedy feels this book can be an option instead of trying to find other options that fit the same bill.

Mr. Metcalfe stated that he would vote against the amendment. The book has been approved by the college board and has been on the ASD list since 1988. It has considerable positive impact when it leaves an image in your mind about how gruesome and brutal violence towards women can be. We are doomed to repeat history if we do not educate the public about it.

Mary Marks stated that when she read the book it caused her to look at history in a different way and that this really does go on. It made her think about her own culture and the similarities. It kept pulling her further into the book. Ms. Marks will not support the amendment because she thinks it is important that we have discussions that are really valuable. We do know that these things are happening around the world. We wouldn't be doing justice if we pulled this book off the shelf. Ms. Marks agrees with the alternative of having the students have the opportunity to choose another book.

Mr. Friedman wondered if we could effectively offer choices for the students who want to opt out of this in a way that doesn't single them out. If we were not able to offer it as a real choice then an alternative would be some sort of an advanced warning of the syllabus. As it is now, students don't have enough time to make that decision before they find out what the book is about. Carol Comeau commented that this is a very important question. Ms. Comeau asked if it is conceivable that if there were a group of students who wanted to opt out and there was a core group, you could have a third class, but you would have to have a substantial number. It is easier to teach groups in those kinds of things in elementary and middle school. In high school, in order to get the in-depth discussion, it would be very difficult unless you have teachers who are willing to burn themselves out. Ms. Comeau stated that another option in the district for AP courses is the online course. It would be very difficult to have a good option and a meaningful group discussion since the power is in the discussion.

Jeff Friedman asked if there is a way to let the students know what the books will be before they sign up for the course. Ms. Comeau stated that it is possible.

Mr. Steiner stated that if you can do an option effectively that would be acceptable to him. His understanding now is that a discussion of two books probably does not work very well. But you can split into two discussion groups and the teacher can deal with two discussion groups even discussing at the same time with the teacher going back and forth between the two. It is harder for the teacher, obviously, but his impression is that some teachers do it and it can be done. Mr. Steiner thinks the main motion does that. Mr. Steiner wondered that if we pass this, which provides or an option, does it effectively work. Ms. Comeau stated that it varies by teacher. Some teachers would be able to have classrooms that can have parallel discussions with more than one piece of literature and some teachers' style can accommodate that but it can't be a mandate for each teacher. There is different ways you deal with groups of students. It depends on the number of students, the background of what else they've read and it would vary by class and teacher. You cannot assume that every teacher could teach two groups in a very effective way that is going to meet the standard for the AP. Ms. Comeau added that another option could be an online AP Literature course, it could be a summer school course, etc. Ms. Comeau stated that she cannot prescribe something for every school in the ASD that teaches AP Literature tonight. There has been a lot of discussion tonight that we have to think about.

Jake Metcalfe stated that he heard from Ms. Berkowitz that she can do it and he has not heard that teachers can't do it. So, it seems to Mr. Metcalfe, that the option works.

Macon Roberts stated that he would not support the amendment. Mr. Roberts stated that he believes one can learn a lot from things that they do not agree with. There are options available so therefore he will not support the amendment.

Tim Steele commented that he agreed with Ms. Kennedy while he was reading the book and then got more into the story as he kept reading it. The purpose of the AP is to stimulate people and find that teachable moment when folks get excited about something, either positively or negatively. It is that excitement that opens them up to discussion. Mr. Steele thinks that a syllabus is important. Mr. Steele feels it is difficult enough to teach the subject matter without adding to it a bunch of options. Mr. Steele prefers to put it in or take it out, but not require the teachers to do more than they are already doing in that regard. Mr. Steele stated that he will not be supporting the amendment.

Mr. Steiner stated that if this amendment fails he is going to propose that the options are strengthened. If the options are going to fail he is going to support this motion. Mr. Steiner feels we have to respect people who have this concern and if there are valid alternatives that doesn't relegate someone to say, "If you want AP you have to go online because we're going to discuss things in class that offend you." Mr. Steiner doesn't feel we need to cater to sensitivities but does not think we ought to ostracize people who have sensitivities. That is why he is in favor of an option, but without knowing whether an option is acceptable to a majority of the Board effects how he would vote on this topic.

Mr. Steiner requested that his amendment substitute the current amendment.

AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT:

Moved by: John Steiner

seconded by: Jeff Friedman

the option between this book and an alternate must be accompanied by a description of both its graphic content and educational value. The option must be provided in a manner that is respectful of each student's choice and in no way minimizes legitimate concerns.

Mr. Metcalfe stated that he is opposed to the amendment to the amendment for many of the same reasons he is opposed to the first amendment and feels this is worse because it is micromanaging to an extent that he does not understand and feels teachers will have a difficult time understanding as well.

Mr. Steiner stated that he feels it is important that all students have an opportunity to take the AP courses and that there are some legitimate reasons to have sensitivities to this book, although he does not see it problematic for many students. He is not keen on the original amendment to put it on the supplemental list because he agrees that the discussion of it is where the value mostly is. It concerns Mr. Steiner that people have to choose not to take the class or potentially be ostracized or their concerns minimized.

Mr. Friedman requested administrative comment on this amendment to the amendment. Ms. Comeau responded that she knows how much preparation goes into teach any AP course. It may not be possible for every teacher to be able to make the time out of his/her own schedule to teach a credible option. Ms. Comeau agrees that a list of books should go out in the spring so everyone knows what they are and then the students and families should make the decision of whether or not take AP literature or something else. Ms. Comeau cannot professionally or personally support the amendments.

Enid Hunter stated that if she were a teacher she would find it difficult to categorize what might be objectionable to some people. Ms. Hunter wondered how a teacher could have the responsibility to second guess an audience in terms of what is deemed objectionable and what is not.

Macon Roberts agrees that is impossible to make things suitable for each student. There are some options in terms of online or perhaps letting a student complete a book report. Mr. Roberts feels it is time to make a decision and vote.

Mary Marks stated that she would not be supporting this amendment as well.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT:

Ayes: Kennedy, Friedman, Steiner
Nays: Metcalfe, Marks, Steele, Roberts
AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT FAILED

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

Ayes: Kennedy, Steiner
Nays: Metcalfe, Marks, Steele,
Friedman, Roberts
AMENDMENT FAILED

AMENDMENT:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman to delete the language "the Advance Placement (AP) Literature Course" and replace with "college preparatory grades 11 and 12."
seconded by: Jake Metcalfe

Jeff Friedman stated that this clarifies how it is currently being used.

Jake Metcalfe called the question. Macon Roberts seconded the motion.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

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

Jake Metcalfe called the question to vote on the motion as amended. Macon Roberts seconded the motion. John Steiner requested further discussion. Mr.

Steiner requested to vote on calling the question in order to continue the discussion.

VOTE TO CALL THE QUESTION:

Ayes: Metcalfe, Marks, Steele,
Roberts

Nays: Kennedy, Friedman, Steiner

VOTE TO CALL THE QUESTION PASSED

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:

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

Nays: Kennedy

MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED PASSED

I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum #204 - Report Of Emergency Procurement: Fire Lake Boiler Replacement

In accordance with District School Board Policy 725.23, Emergency Construction Projects, the District awarded on February 18, 2005 the Fire Lake Elementary School Emergency HVAC Upgrade Project to Udelhoven Oilfield System Services, Inc. in the total award amount of \$221,757. The emergency was the failure of one of the two boilers at Fire Lake Elementary School, which created the possibility of serious damage to the facility if the weather turned cold and/or second boiler were to fail.

2. ASD Memorandum #254 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of February 14, 2005 through March 14, 2005.

3. ASD Memorandum #182- Second Quarter Suspension /Weapons/ Expulsion Report 2004-2005

Information regarding suspensions and expulsions for various offenses, including weapons, is collected from the elementary, middle, and high schools each quarter. The information is shown in the narrative information below and in Attachments A-F.

4. ASD Memorandum #217 - Operating Budget Transfers - February Monthly Report FY 2004-2005

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of February 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 February 2005 and related information are available in the Budget Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

5. ASD Memorandum #218 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap: February 28, 2005

The attached report consists of two parts: the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Recap. 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 February 28, 2005.

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

The Special Meeting of March 28, 2005, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:10 p.m.

Tim Steele, President

Jeff Friedman, Clerk

Robin Siegfried, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved