

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2005

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, September 12, 2005, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, Jeff Friedman, presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, Jeff Friedman Presiding

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

Board Members excused: Mary Marks

Others Present: Enid Hunter, Mike Henry, Patricia McRae, Jerry Sjolander, Leslie Vandergaw, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Ralph Feriani, Ray Amsden, Pam Chenier, Mark Standley, Stan Syta, Michelle Egan, Larry Wiget, LTC David Jones, William Johnson, Johanna Lee, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Friedman noted that ASD Memorandum #50 is removed from the agenda and that there are speakers signed up for ASD Memorandum #27.

Ms. Comeau confirmed that ASD Memorandum #20 from the Superintendent's Report has a revision and requested that it and ASD Memorandum #33 be pulled for an update.

Mr. Steiner requested that ASD Memorandum #47 be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Steele requested that the Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of August 15, 2005 be pulled for editorial corrections.

The agenda was unanimously approved as revised.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Johnson presented the Minority Education Concerns Committee (MECC) Year-End Report 2004-2005 (see attached). Mr. Johnson reiterated

the continued importance of the role MECC was tasked to do thirty-one years ago which is to provide a voice for the community. MECC has identified the need to make a special effort this year to go into the field to re-establish itself as a community liaison for the School Board.

Mr. Johnson noted that the MECC has been conducting interviews for new members and that, although he will remain on the committee, he will be stepping down from the chairman position. He noted that he will be presenting the new members for Board approval in the very near future. Mr. Friedman commended the MECC for their efforts to get out into the community more and believes that those efforts are essential, noting that the Board members are also making that a priority.

Mr. Metcalfe voiced his appreciation to Mr. Johnson for his volunteer efforts and leadership. He noted how important the MECC is, especially in a district with the number of minority students that we have.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Mr. Feriani reported that the Student Advisory has not met yet this school year but that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 19th, 9:00 a.m. - 11 a.m. at Eagle River High School. The meeting will be an orientation for students and elections for new officers. Mr. Feriani thanked Ms. Christensen for attending the Freshman Orientation at Dimond High School.

2. Military Delegate

LTC Jones reported that school seems to have started well this year. He noted that there are a large number of military families that are new to the District due to the restructuring of the brigade and Fort Richardson. These new families will continue to be flowing into the District at least through December. In light of this information, Mrs. Comeau requested that LTC Jones write a letter documenting this expected increase in student numbers. The count period for funding ends at the end of October and she would like to alert the state regarding the anticipated increase in students from military families.

3. M.E.C.C.

Mr. Johnson announced that the MECC will hold its next business meeting on September 22nd at 12:00 p.m. in Room 322 of the ASD Administration Building. This is a change from the scheduled September 15th meeting. As always, the public is welcome.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Michelle Mandel and Mike Kenzik, co-presidents of the Chester Valley PTA, were in attendance to speak about renovations to Chester Valley. They wished to ascertain if it is the School Board's intention to put forth a school bond package for April 2006. They noted that the ASD website indicates that Chester Valley is one of two elementary schools listed as the District's most critical needed renovation projects. It is the hope of the Chester Valley PTA that the Board will present a bond issue in April and that Chester Valley will be on it. Ms. Comeau explained that the Capital Request Advisory Committee will be meeting this month and it is the intent of the administration to recommend a bond proposal for April to the School Board. She noted that the District has about \$62 million of debt reimbursement eligibility, but a decision has not been made as to what specific recommendations will be made to the Board. Ms. Comeau did agree that Chester Valley Elementary, Sand Lake Elementary and Clark Middle School are the three most critical renovation projects in the District. Unfortunately the three project come to more than the available eligibility, so there are difficult decisions to be made. The Capital Request Advisory Committee's recommendation will be a very important part of this decision process.

Mr. Steiner questioned whether Chester Valley is on the State Board of Education's list of capital projects. Ms. Comeau explained that it was one of the projects included as the justification for the \$62 million along with Sand Lake and a number of other planning projects. It was clarified that this project was not funded directly from the legislature, it will only be funded if we get voter approval on a bond package. Mr. Steiner noted that Chester Valley is identified as one of the "receiving schools" in accordance with the transfer policy provided for in NCLB and, as such, its priority for renovations increases. Ms. Mandel voiced the commitment of the Chester Valley PTA to serve as advocates to help get voter support for this project. Mr. Metcalfe suggests that School Board members visit the school, noting that he has been to Chester Valley and agrees with the need for renovations. He also suggested that the PTA members contact area legislators and assembly members to get them behind the effort to support

funding the renovations either through a bond measure or through the state legislature. Ms. Mandel assured the Board that Chester Valley PTA has been actively pursuing support from their elected officials.

Ms. Kennedy has also visited Chester Valley and recognizes the needs there. Ms. Kennedy voiced her concern that we will have to pay more to get projects done in light of the saturation of construction projects throughout the community. It is her hope that the Capital Request Advisory Committee will research what is available out there in terms of being able to support these building projects. Ms. Comeau added that the Facilities Department has had that same concern and that they are looking into it, but these projects remain a high priority. Ms. Comeau announced that Chester Valley enrollment is right on projection and that their status as a "receiving school" has not overloaded the school.

John Lindsay introduced himself as a 7th/8th grade teacher at Northern Lights ABC. Mr. Lindsay addressed the Board in order to explain what the ASD budget and lack of funding means to individual teachers on a personal level. He acknowledged that getting the resources teachers need in today's political climate is difficult. He also believes that schools in Anchorage are not funded adequately and that we have to work together to ask our legislators for what is truly needed to pay teachers a professional wage. Mr. Lindsay feels that often times education leaders do not ask for funding that will assure good pay for quality teachers. He notes that, with next year being an election year, it will be especially important to set an appropriate budget. Mr. Lindsay asks for the Board to believe in and help fight for funding that will allow teachers to be paid a professional wage. A question was raised regarding how the budget is set. Mr. Friedman explained that the Board does not set the revenue. The District gets a certain amount of money and the Board must then decide how to best utilize the available funds. Mr. Friedman noted that we have gone, and will continue to go, to Juneau to argue for adequate funding. Mr. Friedman believes that what it takes is a community effort - teachers, school board members, district employees, but most importantly parents, students, and business leaders - to identify the need and advocate for adequate funding.

Mr. Metcalfe reiterated that we are dependent on the state for funding so we have to go to Juneau and ask for what we believe is adequate and that is what we have done. He noted that we have not been given what we asked for, so we are forced to deal with what we receive. Mr. Metcalfe agreed with Mr. Friedman that it takes a year-round effort by all of the interested parties in order to get the bureaucracy in Juneau to listen to

local school districts. He believes that this Board has pushed for a year-round effort and hopes that we can get everyone together to make it a united effort. Mr. Lindsay agrees that it must be a united effort. Mr. Steiner noted that while the Board does not establish the amount of money available to the District, it is the responsibility of the Board to determine how the available money is spent. He went on to note that we have an open budget process and he encouraged the AEA members to actively participate in the budget development process. Once the budget is fixed and dollars allocated to different items it is very difficult to go through negotiations such as we have been going through because it requires readjusting the distribution of the fixed dollars available. As we approach the next budget development process it will be very helpful to have AEA members and all the members of the public talk about how the available monies are being allocated so that we can use the funds as efficiently as possible.

Mr. Steiner pointed out that it is very important to distinguish between a nine-month and a full-year time frame. He feels that the Board, the District and the AEA need to talk about how to express things in such a way that we are comparing apples-to-apples when we talk to the public. Many times the public compares the information for a nine-month contract to a twelve-month contract and we must understand the difference and find a common vocabulary and a common way of looking at things so that, in the future, both sides aren't talking past each other. Mr. Lindsay agreed that a common vocabulary would be very helpful. He also points out the need to look at the amount of education required for positions within the education system compared to the compensation packages, which he contends would not line up with corporate positions, regardless of the contract term. He ended his presentation by stating that he would just like to have a contract as good as the teachers that came before him, those who educated him.

Mr. Steele explained that the Board went to Juneau last year and told the legislature what this District needed in order to maintain the current programs and requested additional funds in order be able to do other things within the District. The issue is not a lack of understanding on the part of the legislature as to what the need is, because they knew what our numbers were and we got less than that. The issue is that they need to be convinced that this is the place to put the money, that education is a priority. Mr. Lindsay asked if, historically, the legislature has delivered less than what is asked for. Mr. Friedman confirmed that it is true that we historically we receive less than what is requested and certainly less than what is needed.

Maria Benavides is a Kindergarten teacher at Wonder Park Elementary. She addressed the Board in order to highlight the issue of what it costs teachers to continue their education. It is her contention that the compensation for having advanced education does not justify the expense. She expressed her appreciation for the efforts the Board has made and looks forward to working as a team to move forward in the budget process.

Virginia Kurnow introduced herself as a parent with two children in the District. She addressed the Board to express her dissatisfaction with how the contract negotiations went this summer. Even with the acceptance of a one-year contract, she questioned how much the education and educational tools provided will decrease. She believes that when there is more money funded into education the actual child should benefit the most; for example, more classroom supplies, an adequate number of books, having smaller classroom sizes, etc. Ms. Kurnow feels that instead of seeing these benefits, every time there is an increase in funding, the teachers union wants an enormous increase in wages and benefits or they threaten to strike. She explains that she believes that we are fortunate to have many awesome teachers and she does not mean to de-value them in any way. She expects that they should receive annual increases but that those increases would be within reason of what monies are available. It saddens her that, when it comes to money for the funding of education, the children are faced with the greatest chance of being left behind. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to voice her concerns.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

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

1. Approval of Minutes:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|-----------|
| a. Special Meeting | - | August 15, 2005 | 4:30 p.m. |
| b. Regular Meeting | - | August 15, 2005 | 6:30 p.m. |
| c. Special Meeting | - | August 22, 2005 | 4:30 p.m. |
| d. Regular Meeting | - | August 22, 2005 | 6:30 p.m. |

2. ASD Memorandum # 27 - A Proposed Calendar Change 2005-2006: Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences Week

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board modify the 2005-2006 school year calendar by moving third quarter parent-teacher conference week from April 10-14 to April 17-21. Making this change will avoid conflicts with Passover observances.

3. ASD Memorandum # 37 - ASD Resolution in Support of Mayor's Diversity Week

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve a resolution recognizing September 25 through October 1 as Mayor's Diversity Week.

4. ASD Memorandum # 38 - Acceptance of Continuation Grant Award: Alaska Community Learning Centers - 21st Century Community Learning Centers FY2006

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant award from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development in the amount of \$1,633,924. The Alaska Community Learning Centers competition carries forward the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program through the No Child Left Behind federal authorization. Funding will continue after-school programs in thirteen high-needs elementary schools and one middle school. The sites are Fairview, Government Hill, Mountain View, Muldoon, North Star, Northwood, Ptarmigan, Russian Jack, Taku, Williwaw, Willow Crest, and Wonder Park elementary schools, and Clark Middle School.

5. ASD Memorandum # 39 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Municipality of Anchorage, Parks & Recreation / Anchorage 21st Century Community Learning Center Non-Profit Association

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant award from the Anchorage 21st Century Community Learning Center Non-Profit Association in the amount of \$11,000. Funding will continue the Healthy Kids, Healthy Minds physical activity curriculum during the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) after-school program at all sites.

6. ASD Memorandum # 40 - Acceptance of Grant Award: YWCA of Anchorage

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant award from the YWCA of Anchorage (AYWCA) in the amount of \$8,466.25. This enabled the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) program to partner with the AYWCA to continue the Let's Get Active Fitness Program during the 21st CCLC summer intensive program at all thirteen 21st CCLC sites.

7. ASD Memorandum # 35 - Approval of Alaska Association of School Boards Core Resolutions

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board move to approve and adopt the Anchorage School Board Legislative Subcommittee's changes and additions to the Association of Alaska School Boards' (AASB) Belief Statements and Core Resolutions (Attachment A).

8. ASD Memorandum # 47 - Resolution Authorizing District Participation in HB161: Reemployment of PERS/TRS Retirees

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board pass the attached resolution allowing the District to employ individuals who are currently receiving a retirement benefit from the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

9. ASD Memorandum # 31 - Personnel Report

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

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
seconded by: Macon Roberts

To approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting, August 15, 2005, Special Meeting, August 22, 2005, Regular Meeting, August 22, 2005 and ASD Memoranda #37, #38, #39, #40, #35, and #31.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ACTION:

Moved by: Tim Steele
seconded by: Crystal Kennedy

To approve the Minutes of the
Regular Meeting, August 15, 2005
as corrected.

Mr. Steele requested an editorial change to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 15, 2005. He requested that on the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 2 under announcements be amended to read "The Legislative Sub-committee will be working on *AASB resolutions for School Board approval next month*".

Mr Steiner requested that the first full sentence on page 12 be amended to read "Mr. Steiner noted his concern that we *may not* have followed the Board policy in making this selection". He noted that this was an observation of uncertainty. Mr. Friedman noted that, also on page 12, the motion to table was actually a motion to postpone.

Ms. Comeau requested that Allan Tesche and Jim Posey be removed from the list of "Others Present" and that, on page 4, the last line of the MECC Report a typographical error be corrected to reference mandated AYP requirements. She also requested that on page 11, the second paragraph be corrected to read "Mr. Roberts...".

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 27 - A Proposed Calendar Change 2005-2006: Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences Week

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board modify the 2005-2006 school year calendar by moving third quarter parent-teacher

conflicts from recurring. It is hoped that the work of that task force is put to good use and will prevent the need to approach these issues on a piecemeal basis.

Barbara Brown began by thanking Ms Comeau for her quick response to a personal issue with a calendar conflict involving her daughter's cross country schedule and Yom Kippur. Ms. Brown is a member of Leadership Anchorage, who creates their calendar a year in advance with a view to eliminating conflict for a variety of groups and sub-groups. She appreciates the Board's attention to this issue.

Ms. Comeau noted that Dr. Hunter, who chaired the committee about which Mr. Cravez spoke, is making a huge impact on how we look at our curriculum, our art, our music programs and other things that we have become more sensitive to. Ms. Comeau explained that Ms. Vandergaw, Executive Director of Middle School Education, is responsible for the quick response to the cross country schedule issue. Ms. Comeau is very pleased with the proposed calendar change and believes that it is the right thing to do. She strongly urges the Board to support it for all the reasons that have been brought forward.

Mr. Roberts explained that, prior to listening to the speakers this evening, he had some concerns about opening pandora's box by changing the calendar, in particular opening the door to issues with Seventh Day Adventists, who worship on Saturdays, and the scheduling of PSAT, SAT, and ACT tests on Saturdays. Coordination with the Interfaith Council on the calendar has diminished his concerns.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 47 - Resolution Authorizing District Participation in HB161: Reemployment of PERS/TRS Retirees

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board pass the attached resolution allowing the District to employ individuals who are currently receiving a retirement benefit from the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) or the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

developed to assure that the work will continue to be performed” when the program ends. He believes that this is important whether it is when this particular re-hiring program ends or when staff actually retire so that we don’t have to bring in all new people. Mr. Steiner would love to see these retirees bring their expertise back into the system, particularly if they are able to mentor others. Ms. Comeau explained that we have a very successful partnership mentor program with AEA using numerous retired teachers doing just that. She noted that we recently received a joint award from the NEA recognizing our strong partnership. This has been a tremendous asset to our new teachers. Ms. Comeau agrees that it doesn’t do us any good just to keep hiring back retirees and never building the next generation of educators. She assured the Board that she scrutinizes every one of these requests because she believes that we really need to be building our future work force. Sometimes we have no option and retirees provide a tremendous service to us but the goal is the future.

Mr. Metcalfe noted that it is his understanding that the legislature has eliminated PERS/TRS and have gone to a 401K. He questions how we are going to be able to recruit qualified applicants for technical and professional positions when we don’t have any retirement. Ms. Comeau acknowledged that it is going to be a challenge. She noted that we have a year to figure out the ramifications of that change in legislation as it doesn’t take effect until July 2006. This very issue was the reason why Ms. Comeau and others testified about how very concerned they were with what the legislature was doing. Mr. Tollefsen agreed that this is something that we need to work on because it does not just affect retirees coming back but will also be the retirement system for anyone we hire going forward unless something changes. Mr. Metcalfe identified that we currently have retirees in this community that we can recruit but if we don’t have a retirement system those retirees won’t stick around. He views this as evidence that we need to get the message out that these retirees are here because there is a retirement program in the School District and with the public employees in this state and that they provide a service to our District by supplying a pool of people available to work.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 32 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of August 15, 2005 through August 29, 2005.

2. ASD Memorandum # 20 - Fourth Quarter and End of 2004-2005 School Year Suspensions/Weapons/Expulsion Report

Information regarding suspensions and expulsions for various offenses, including weapons, is collected from the elementary, middle, and high schools each quarter.

3. ASD Memorandum # 33 - First Week of School Enrollment Update FY 2005-2006

The total membership on the fourth day of school, September 9, 2005, was 48,874. This enrollment represents 99.16 percent of the 49,289 projected membership for the official membership date of September 30.

Ms. Comeau reported an update on ASD Memorandum # 33, which reported enrollment numbers through last Friday, the fourth day of school. She pulled numbers from today and reports that we are now at 49,127 students or 99.67% of projected enrollment. She noted that we are over projection in the high schools. In light of this, Ms. Comeau will be meeting with Mr. Henry, Executive Director of High School Education, to discuss freeing-up some of their frozen positions. Numbers also continue to increase in elementary schools, middle schools and other areas. Daily counts are taken through the 10th day of school. Staffing adjustments will be made late this week and early next week. Ms. Comeau believes we are on target to make our projections, which is very good news.

Ms. Comeau announced that Winterberry Charter School has not yet received its Conditional Certificate of Occupancy. It is hoped that they will get the certificate today and will start up next Monday. They already have a plan in place for making up the days missed. Winterberry has a ways to go to meet enrollment, although Ms. Comeau thinks that the numbers will come up once they get in the school. The other new charter school, Eagle Academy, was just a little short of enrollment.

Mr. Metcalfe questioned whether the number of students on the report is the number that has registered. Ms. Comeau explained that the number represents the students who have registered and activated, however, until they walk in the door we cannot confirm those numbers. She went on to note that both Eagle and Winterberry both need to enroll and activate 151 students through the count period because their funding is very different if they don't reach that number.

Ms. Kennedy voiced her interest in what is going on with high school enrollment. Ms. Comeau noted that we will be informing the Board but she wants to make sure we have verified our numbers at each school before we allocate staff. Ms. Kennedy explained that, if the numbers are accurate she wonders why we are seeing an increase in high school enrollment. She is encouraged by the increase because that would indicate that more students are staying in school and waiting to graduate. She voiced her hopes that we are doing something that is drawing them in and keeping them there. Ms. Comeau noted that a number of students are coming back to us at South Anchorage High School from private schools in that area. Mr. Henry also noted an influx of students from private schools back into the District. He explained that he has spoken to a number of private school parents about their decision to enroll their students in public school. Many of these parents indicated that they felt the need to get into our comprehensive high schools in order to get the type of curriculum they wanted for their students: rigorous course offerings, advanced placement, and the international baccalaureate program. These parents were very pleased with the teachers and the environment at their private schools, but they are coming back to the public schools for the curriculum. He also noted that if they didn't feel safe they would not be coming back so that is another reason he is pleased with these numbers.

Mr. Henry reported that we are also holding on to more students. Traditionally, on a semester basis, we were withdraw-failing over 700 students out of the high schools because of the attendance policies. We now have a place for those students and so they are staying in the system. He also noted that there had been a real concern that we would lose students as families relocate to the Valley, but that is not happening.

Ms. Kennedy shared that someone from a private school had mentioned to her that one of the drawbacks that people are starting to experience in the private schools is that their students are not allowed to take the exit exam. She is curious as to how many students might decide to go to a public school in order to be able to secure that stamp of approval.

Mr. Steiner wondered whether the marginal increase above projections will have a fiscal impact. It is his understanding that it costs more, per student, to educate high school students based on staffing and curriculum. He is interested in whether it will cost the District more because we are more heavily weighted in high school students. Ms. Comeau briefly explained how the allocations are made and emphasized that the goal is to make our projection so that we qualify for all available resources.

Ms. Comeau asked the Executive Directors to report on their disciplinary reports (ASD Memorandum #20). Ms. McRea, Executive Director for Elementary Education, reported a trend in a decrease in fighting, threats and assaults. She noted a number of efforts in the elementary division that have been undertaken including Positive School-wide Discipline. Seventeen new schools will be trained in this program in addition to doing "Refresh Training"; bringing teams back together to look at their data, their situation, and to discuss how their plans are working and where it needs improvement. There is an ongoing process of using the data to make decisions to help insure a safe school environment. The efforts that we undertake are to prevent disciplinary incidents from occurring in the first place. Ms. McRae is pleased that almost all of our elementary schools are participating in the Positive School-wide Discipline program. The other efforts that have been undertaken include training all of the staff last year on utilizing a kit provided by the Board on anti-bullying strategies. Ms. Kennedy pointed out that the numbers are up for harassment and bullying and wondered whether that could be a result of becoming better at recognizing these issues. Ms. McRae indicated that an increase in reported incidents is one of the outcomes expected when you pay attention to a particular issue. She also noted that we are training young children to tell when they feel threatened, frightened or hurt so, if teachers are vigilant when children report, this increase in numbers is an expected phenomenon. It was noted that these types of numbers tend to increase specifically because we are cracking down. Mr. Friedman reiterated that, while we would certainly like to see numbers decrease, we want to know that they are dropping because there are truly fewer incidents.

Ms. Vandergaw, Executive Director of Middle School Education, reported successes across the board. She attributes much of the success to the Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders (AVB) anti-bullying and school climate program. Every staff member in every middle school was involved in some way in the implementation of this program. She believes that this has had a significant impact on discipline issues. Ms.

Vandergaw also attributes some of the success to the assistance of the School Resource Officers.

Mr. Henry, Executive Director of High School Education, highlighted the annual figures for the Fighting/Threats category on page 10 of the report. He noted a decrease in the numbers between the 02/03 school year and the 03/04 school year, followed by an increase in 04/05. He explained that two years ago we had a very successful, all-out assault on fights and threats on our campuses. It was the first year we had our School Resource Officers and we also spent a great deal of instructional time early in the year on the issue. He believes that we moved on to other issues too quickly last year, which allowed those numbers to come back up. He noted that we have refocused our energies on fights and threats. Many of the high schools even took the time during registration to interview students with a history of fighting as a means to let those students know that we were glad they are at school, we are looking forward to a good year and to remind them that it is expected that they will not participate in any fighting. Mr. Henry indicates that we are not happy with the numbers but we are pleased with the progress being made and believes that we can continue to make a difference.

Mr. Henry highlighted the information regarding the yearly expulsions. He voiced his hope and his intent that the Continuation School can be out of business. The Continuation School is for those students who are second-time drug and alcohol offenders. He noted a steady decline in drug and alcohol incidents in the total number of expulsions. He is pleased with this number because of his desire to keep as many students as possible in our comprehensive high schools.

Ms. Kennedy remembered the intense focus given to Fighting/Threats a couple of years ago and noted that, at that time, there were a lot of students being made an example of. She questioned if there was a way to report the numbers by class which might indicate that the lessons of that year have been lost on the freshmen who were not yet in high school to learn from those examples. Mr. Henry reported that at one particular school last year the numbers were up and the numbers were up with the freshmen students. He believes that we had not adequately conveyed the information to the students. He believes that it needs to be made very clear, not only to students but also to parents, that there is an expectation that there will be no fighting in school.

Mr. Steiner observed that there seemed to be a shift in numbers between "General Disruptive Behavior" and "Disruptive Behavior/Disobedience".

It appears to be a possible posting issue rather than a meaningful accounting of incidents. He suggested that the criteria between these two categories be reviewed and clarified so that we can keep our comparisons meaningful.

Ms. Comeau applauds the efforts of all the school staff and the Executive Directors. She feels that the Board's goal of creating a safe learning environment for students so that teachers can teach and students can learn and people can be safe in school was taken very seriously. It really took a team effort and she believes the statistics reflect these efforts.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Kennedy shared a comment from her son regarding his new calculus book. He made the remark that it looked really hard, but that it was a really great book. When she told him that the Board had just recently approved the book he asked her tell the Board that it was a good choice.

Mr. Roberts wanted to return to the earlier discussion regarding the renovations of Sand Lake Elementary, Chester Valley Elementary, and Clark Middle School. He is not certain that we will get parents and students from Clark to appear before us as did the Chester Valley representatives. He emphasized that the needs of the school should not be given less attention or priority in our decision making process due to any possible lack of advocacy.

On the topic of the recent teacher contract negotiations Mr. Roberts voiced his appreciation for the numerous telephone calls from the teachers. He noted that every member of the Board appreciates and respects the teachers. Mr. Roberts feels that it should be obvious but needs to be said that the Board, as well as the administration, cares about, appreciates and treasures our teachers.

Mr. Friedman echoed those statements and adds his appreciation that, despite how difficult the negotiations became at times, the tone of communication to the Board remained consistently respectful. The message was basically that quality education costs money and we need to pay for it. He assured everyone that the Board certainly heard that message.

In response to Mr. Roberts' comments regarding Clark Middle School, Mr. Metcalfe shared some information regarding an article written by Jonathan Kozol in the most recent *Harpers Magazine* about adequate education funding. Mr. Metcalfe encouraged everyone to read the article which proposes that we have forgotten about education funding in this country, especially in our urban schools. He thinks that the same issues can be found in our urban schools here in Anchorage. Mr. Metcalfe noted that there is probably a \$1.6 billion surplus in the state due to the price of oil over the past two years. He believes there seems to be a lack of leadership when it comes to a plan for adequate education funding. With the amount of money we have in this state we have a unique opportunity to provide great structures and great education to all of our students. Mr. Metcalfe thinks that we play a role in encouraging the legislators that control that huge pot of money to do something for our students over the next few years that will make this state a much better place to live and maybe an example for the rest of the United States. He stated that we probably aren't going to have opportunities like this again and now is really the time to do something about our schools; both the structures, and what we offer in them. Mr. Metcalfe noted that this is an election year and we need to get the legislators in Juneau to stand up and do something about funding education. He reiterated that we need to have good school facilities because that encourages people to move here and encourages people to stay here and it makes for a vibrant economy. That economic impact can last for a long time, but the oil money will not.

Ms. Comeau reported that Jonathan Kozol will be at the Council of Great City Schools conference. He will be speaking on his new book from which the Harpers' article Mr. Metcalfe was speaking about was taken.

Ms. Comeau expressed to Mr. Kronberg that, as difficult as the last few months have been, everyone is extremely pleased that we were able to bring closure to the negotiations at this point. She is also pleased that we can now begin the process of building a coalition with the education community to get out and tell the story about why quality education, both internal and external, is critical for the health of this state.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS
LITIGATION

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of September 12, 2005, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:08 p.m.

Jeff Friedman, President

John Steiner, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved