

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 26, 2006

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, June 26, 2006, 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: John Steiner, Macon Roberts, Crystal Kennedy, Jeff Friedman, Jake Metcalfe, Mary Marks, and Tim Steele.

Others Present: Rhonda Gardner, Leslie Vandergaw, Mike Henry, Patricia McRae, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Eric Tollefsen, Michelle Egan, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Danise Podvin, Chad Stitler, William Johnson, Ray Amsden, Pam Chenier, Stan Syta, Robin Siegfried, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Friedman noted that there was an addendum to personnel report.

The agenda was approved, as modified, by unanimous consent.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Comeau reported that the Board will not meet in July. The next meeting of the Board will be August 14, 2006. She also reported that the Administration Building and all District support buildings will be closed next week, July 3-7. There will be no Summer School Monday, July 3, and Tuesday, July 4. Summer school classes will meet the rest of the week.

Ms. Kennedy reported that the Policy Subcommittee will meet on July 17 at 9:00 a.m. in the Room 320.

Ms. Marks acknowledged Dr. Larry Wiget and announced that today was his last day with the District. She noted that he has been a great asset to the District. He was our eyes and ears in Juneau. Dr. Wiget will be greatly missed and his service has been greatly appreciated.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

Ms. Comeau noted that both of the recognitions this evening are in honor of two new, outstanding school facilities. It is more than just the aesthetics and architecture that make the buildings outstanding. These awards recognize how well the District went through the process of designing and building the facilities, everything from working with the community to achieving the objectives within the District's mission of creating a functional and efficient educational building. These two design and construction teams have given us buildings that really are a benefit and source of pride, not only to those that value education but to the entire community.

1. ASD Memo # 342 - Recognition of Pinnacle Design Award

Mr. Roberts read that the Pinnacle Award is given by the Pacific Northwest region of the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI). The sole mission of the council is improving the places where children learn. The Pinnacle Award is the Pacific Northwest CEFPI's highest honor.

The Pinnacle Award was given to the Chugach Optional Elementary School design and construction team. Congratulation to the members of the following all-Alaskan team: McCool Carlson Green Architects, and its consultants: RSA Engineers, Rod Kinney Associates, BBFM Engineers, and EHS Alaska; ASD Facilities staff: Marilyn Barbeau, Project Manager (retired); Jack McCay, Construction Manager; and Rob Balivet, Design Manager; and Janssen Construction Company

According to CEFPI, the design and construction of Chugach Optional was exemplary in meeting and enhancing the client's stated program, reinforcing the surrounding community and context, creating positive aesthetics and use of materials, adapting to changes in education delivery method, and finding innovative solutions to traditional project constraints.

Chugach Optional Elementary School is the first Alaska project to win the Pinnacle Award. This should be a source of pride not just for the people directly involved in the project but the entire community that supports quality education.

The School Board recognized the Chugach Optional design and construction team for its dedication and commitment to creating outstanding learning environments.

2. ASD Memo # 343 – Recognition of Outstanding High School Design

Mr. Steele read that South Anchorage High School was the first new high school within the Anchorage School District in nearly 30 years. It was designed for education in the 21st century which is reflected in its forward-thinking, youthful appearance.

The 50 acre campus is on a wooded site with an 80 foot slope drop. The site provides all program requirements while minimizing visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood. The building form and materials present a simple, natural modern aesthetic. Finishes were selected for durability and cost effectiveness. Environmentally sustainable design measures provide a combination of a healthy indoor environment and long-term savings.

SAHS was one of three top candidates internationally considered for the prestigious MacConnell Award given by the Council of Educational Facilities Planners International. The MacConnell Award recognizes significant contributions to the profession of planning educational facilities and school facility excellence.

In addition to the MacConnell Award, the school's architects, ECI/HYER Architecture and Interiors, received a Citation Award from the American Association of School Administrators for the design of South Anchorage High School. The recognition acknowledges a student and community-oriented facility, a dual-focus Commons area, the pallet of sophisticated materials, and the use of art and natural light as strong points of the design.

The South Anchorage High School project was also honored by the American Institute of Architects, Alaska Honor Award for excellence in design. The AIA awards jury commented, "The client is clearly taking education seriously in their community and the architect in turn created a sense of place that will encourage ties to Anchorage."

The School Board recognize the South Anchorage High School design team for its outstanding work in creating a learning environment that students, staff and the community can be proud of for many decades to come.

Mr. Friedman added that it is the support of the community on the bond ballots that make all these things possible. Overall, the community does support education and quality buildings. Mr. Friedman voiced his appreciation for that support.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

There was no report from the Student Advisory Board.

2. Military Delegate

There was no report from the Military Delegate.

3. M.E.C.A.C.

Mr. Johnson reported that the MECAC met on June 15th and obtained a quorum. The next meeting will be August 17th at 12:00 noon in the 3rd floor conference.

Mr. Johnson introduced Ms. Damita Owen, the new chair of the MECAC. He also reported that Ms. Atisa Logo will continue in the position of co-chair. The decision has been made to use the School Board meeting model for MECAC next year. They will hold a scheduled Work Session on the first Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. The MECAC will present their End-of-the-Year Report at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Marks thanked Mr. Johnson for his for dedication and service as chairman and spokesperson for MECAC. She looked forward to hearing great reports from the new chair.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Steven O'Hara, a District parent, thanked the Board for their public service. He voiced his opinion that one reason why graduation rate is 59% is the way middle school students are treated in the District. He believed that the policy in the middle schools is to presume guilt, treat our middle school students like criminals, make everything a power struggle, and to

show them who is the boss. The only disciplinary options used are detentions, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions. In reality, Mr. O'Hara believed that typical middle school antics should be recognized as such and the students kept in the classroom. The drop-out rate is not an economic or race issue, rather it is a matter of throwing the students away which leads them to believe that they are losers by removing them from the classroom for normal middle school antics. Mr. O'Hara respectfully requested that the Board issue an immediate order to keep middle school students in the classroom at all costs.

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 - December 1, 2005
 - b. Regular Meeting - March 27, 2006
 - c. Regular Meeting - April 20, 2006
 - d. Special Meeting - June 12, 2006
2. ASD Memorandum # 318 - Budget Transfers for FY 2005-2006

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to process budget transfers from unexpended accounts at year-end, in the amount of \$1,110,000 into various accounts where unanticipated expenditures occurred. It is also recommended that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to process budget transfers in the amount of \$3,624,739 from unexpended accounts into various accounts for one-time expenditure needs. These expenditure requests are outlined below. Since the overall revision will not exceed the approved upper limit of the budget, no approval from the Anchorage Assembly is required.

3. ASD Memorandum # 340 - Appropriation of State of Alaska Legislative Grant Funds Senate Bill 231

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board accept from the State of Alaska grant appropriations funded by Senate Bill No. 231 in the total amount of \$2,516,200 (Attachment A).
4. ASD Memorandum # 302 - No Child Left Behind Federal Program Consolidated Project Application for 2006-2007

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to submit the FY 2006-2007 "No Child Left Behind" Federal Programs Consolidated Project Application to the State Department of Education and Early Development. This application includes Titles I, II, III, IV, and V in the amount of \$20,505,689.81.

5. ASD Memorandum # 331 - Acceptance of Grant Award:
Interlibrary Cooperation

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the Alaska State Library in the amount of \$9,800 for the development of a "Guided Tour" of Alaskan databases.

6. ASD Memorandum # 339 - FY 2005-2006 Budget Adjustment for
Winterberry Charter School

It is the Administration's recommendation that Winterberry Charter School be allowed to continue operations for the 2006-2007 school year if the school maintains a minimum student enrollment of 150 students throughout the October count period in 2006. If, however, the school does not meet the minimum student count of at least 150 students, the process of closing the school will begin immediately thereafter.

7. ASD Memorandum # 332 - Award of Contract: Turn-Key
Electronic Document Management System

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Perceptive Software, Inc. for a Turn-Key Electronic Document Management System at a cost of \$74,735 for Phase I and \$56,850 for Phase II for a total of \$131,585 with a four-year annual maintenance agreement of \$7,979 per year and \$10,233 per year respectively for a total contract amount not to exceed \$204,433.

8. ASD Memorandum # 303 - Award of Contract: Employee
Assistance Program

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a three year contract to Magellan Behavioral Health for an Employee Assistance Program at a cost of \$64,000 for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007; \$66,880 for the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008; and \$70,224 for the period of July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 for a total fixed fee amount of \$201,104; with an option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods in the amounts of \$74,087 for the

period of July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010; and \$78,162 for the period of July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

9. ASD Memorandum # 295 - Award of Contract: Clark Middle School Upper Roof Repairs

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for Clark Middle School Upper Roof Repairs to Consolidated Enterprises Inc. for the Base Bid amount of \$248,720.

10. ASD Memorandum # 337 - Approval of Funding for Capital Projects Using Interest Earnings and Project Balances

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the use of Capital Projects Fund interest earnings and redirection of bond funds in a total amount of \$2,865,830 for projects identified in this memorandum.

11. ASD Memorandum # 334 - Gladys Wood Elementary School Master Planning Services

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the selection of McCool Carlson Green as the Designer of Record for Gladys Wood Elementary School Master Planning Services, and pending Municipal Assembly approval, authorize the Superintendent to negotiate and enter into a contract with McCool Carlson Green for design services.

12. ASD Memorandum # 315 - Personnel Report

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

Ms. Marks requested that Memorandum #339, FY 2005-2006 Budget Adjustments for Winterberry Charter School be pulled for discussion.

Under the Superintendent's Report, Ms. Comeau requested that ASD Memorandum #344, Buddy Bear Program Update, ASD Memorandum #338, Report on Vending Machines, ASD Memorandum #321, Update on Indian Education Program and Native Advisory Committee, and ASD Memorandum #335, Math Program Evaluation, all be pulled for discussion.

ACTION:

Moved by: Macon Roberts
Seconded by: Tim Steele

To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 1, 2005, the Regular Meeting of March 27, 2006, the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2006, the Special Meeting of June 12, 2006, and Memoranda #318, #340, #302, #331, #332, #303, #295, #337, #334, and #315.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Mr. Mike Henry introduced two new principals, Ms. Carrie Fleischhacker, King Career Center Third Session, and Mr. Dan Gallego, Bartlett High School.

Mr. Steiner noted that the Board had, on Consent Agenda, just approved some budget transfers and the use of some unexpended capital monies and interest earnings. He explained that one thing these monies will be used for is to take items off of the Capital Improvement Plan. These items might otherwise have gone to bonding.

ASD Memorandum # 339 - FY 2005-2006 Budget Adjustment for Winterberry Charter School

It is the Administration's recommendation that Winterberry Charter School be allowed to continue operations for the 2006-2007 school year if the school maintains a minimum student enrollment of 150 students throughout the October count period in 2006. If, however, the school does not meet the minimum student count of at least 150 students, the process of closing the school will begin immediately thereafter.

ACTION:

Moved by: Mary Marks
seconded by: Jake Metcalfe

To approve the Administration's recommendation that Winterberry Charter School be allowed to continue operations for the 2006-2007 school year if the school maintains a minimum student enrollment of 150 students throughout the October count period in 2006. If, however, the school does not meet the minimum student count of at least 150 students, the process of closing the school will begin immediately thereafter.

Ms. Comeau reported that she and Ms. Connie Bensler have met with the Academic Policy Committee (APC) of the Winterberry Charter School. They had a very good discussion and the APC has a clear understanding the seriousness of this issue. Ms. Comeau believed that the plan that Winterberry submitted at the last Board meeting has an overwhelming opportunity for success based on the number of students that are on their waiting list and their intention of reducing the deficit as soon as school gets started in the fall. In addition, the APC is very clear on what the result will be if the plan is not successful. She indicated her belief that this school does deserve the chance to start from scratch next year, in their building and with their students intact.

Ms. Marks is concerned with the process of helping this school when the Board has not helped other charter schools in the past. She indicated that she will not be supporting this recommendation.

Ms. Steele recalled that the Board has sat through discussions with other charter schools which have had problems. He indicated his belief that this is a unique situation based on the issues with their facility. He hoped, however, that the Board is not setting a precedent because it is not one that he would like to set. He noted his belief that the school should be given a chance. Furthermore, he also believed the situation to be low risk.

John Steiner questioned whether the 150 student minimum is by state regulation. Ms. Comeau explained that the school gets a much lower funding, by statute, if they do not reach the 150 students through the count period. Mr. Steiner believed that the risk of taking this action is low. He did, however, believe that the Board is setting a precedent. The

precedent is that the Board should not wear blinders. The Board should look at all of the facts and not make knee-jerk reactions without reviewing all of the circumstances. This school did face some unique circumstances. He agreed with Mr. Steele that the likelihood of the school not meeting their enrollment goal is very low. The school has also shown the ability to manage the \$682,000 shortfall and pare it to less than a \$200,000 shortfall by the end of the year. He reiterated that he is not concerned about the particular precedent but felt it was important to be on record that this action is due to very unique circumstances that put Winterberry in this situation and their amazing ability to deal with that adversity. They were in the situation not through negligence or poor management but due to circumstances beyond their control.

Mr. Metcalfe indicated his agreement that in today's world, where it is important to pay particular attention to the way tax dollars are being spent, it is Board's fiduciary responsibility to pay close attention to the ultimate viability of charter schools. He believed that issues faced by Winterberry are a lot different than the problems that the Board has seen in the past. There is support by parents, by staff, and from the community. The issue last year was the late start due to problems with the facility and that problem has been taken care of. He is confident, but also believed that the Board needs to watch and be careful when approving charter schools.

Ms. Kennedy indicated her concern with starting off the school year with a deficit. She questioned whether taking funds from an upcoming year to pay back a debt from the previous year is a legitimate use of funds. Ms. Comeau noted that, while it is not something that is done often, it has been done in the past. It is believed that the school has a plan to eliminate the deficit by the end of the first quarter. Their parents have committed to raising some funds to offset some of the deficit. Winterberry is satisfied with the budget that they will have. They are the ones who have asked us to give this consideration and we believe that this is fair to the students and to the staff at the school. Ms. Kennedy questioned how the \$180,000 deficit would be covered if the school had decided not to stay open next year. Ms. Comeau indicated that the District would probably have had to pay it out of the Fund Balance.

Mr. Metcalfe asked whether the District has had to cover the costs of other charter schools that have failed. Ms. Comeau verified that to be true with both Waldon Pond Charter School and Village Charter School. Mr. Metcalfe recalled that there was a continuing problem with Village Charter making their enrollment numbers for at least three years and the

Board allowed them to continue. Ms. Comeau reported that, against the administration's recommendation, the Board at the time had allowed Village Charter to build a budget based on significantly high enrollment numbers than they were ever able to attain.

Mr. Roberts reported that he has seen the community support for Winterberry Charter School and is aware of all that they have gone through this past year to survive. He was confident in their ability to be successful.

Ms. Stokesbary clarified that the minimum number of students needed to get the full state funding is 150.

In response to Ms. Kennedy's concern, Mr. Steiner indicated that starting out the year saddled with an \$180,000 deficit would not be good for the students, however last year they were saddled with a \$682,000 deficit and they were able to reduce that by over \$500,000 in order to be able to get to where they are. At the end of the year the families associated with Winterberry gave nothing but glowing reports on the school. In fact, all indications were that the school was able to accomplish great things with less money. According to Mr. Steiner, the choice at this juncture is either to have the District absorb the loss or to allow the to continue on with what appears to be a very strong likelihood of restoring that loss back to the District. The second option provides opportunity for the school having another successful year with more money than they had this year. After reviewing all of the issues the school has had to face, Mr. Steiner felt that they deserve another year.

VOTE:

Ayes: Steiner, Roberts,
Friedman, Metcalfe,
Steele

Nays: Kennedy, Marks

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 316 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of May 22, 2006 through June 6, 2006.

2. ASD Memorandum # 322 - Facility Contract Modification Report and Completed Projects for the Month of May 2006

The monthly Facility Contract Modification Report for the month of May 2006 is attached. There are no exceptions to report this month.

3. ASD Memorandum # 344 - Buddy Bear Program Update

The federal law, IDEA, requires that the District identify preschool students with disabilities and provide services when the child reaches the age of three. Educational services for non-disabled preschool classrooms are not required by state or federal mandates.

The District developed the Buddy Bear Program in the early 1990's to provide interaction with non-disabled peers when all preschool services were offered at Mt. Iliamna, a special school for disabled students. The Mt. Iliamna model focused all services in the most restrictive setting, preschool classrooms located in a facility that served only children with disabilities.

Ms. Comeau reported that the administration met following the June 12th Board meeting to discuss the pros and cons of continuing of the Buddy Bear program in the elementary special education preschool. She noted that these kinds of programs are not required by mandate. She explained that the program was started when Mt. Iliamna was the only preschool site and it was a very restrictive setting. The District was looking for ways to give those students some opportunities with non-disabled peers in the classroom and it was very successful. Several key points were heavily discussed before coming to a conclusion. One point is that space is at a premium and it is a real issue. As the District's special education population has almost doubled during the year. More and more preschool classes have been added in elementary schools around the District where space can be found. One of the challenges for the District is making sure that there is adequate space in classrooms for the preschool students who are identified with disabilities so that they can get the education that their IEP requires.

The other issue that was not discussed as much is that some of the parents of the non-disabled children, in other words the Buddy Bear parents, were complaining that their children were not being challenged academically. Ms. Comeau stressed that the program was not developed for that purpose. It is not a preschool program for non-disabled students. It is a preschool program for students with

disabilities and the IEP team of each individual student determines the program. Parents who want their children to be in the Buddy Bear program need to realize that the program was not designed to teach up to their ability level.

The biggest issue was the tuition, which was being charged at \$115 per month with waivers available for students who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. Some families had fallen into arrears, which was really starting to burden both the office staff at the elementary schools and the special education clerical staff. In addition, the tuition cost negated the ability for all of the preschool special education programs to have Buddy Bears in the classes because a lot of families simply could not afford the tuition. The reason the tuition was originally established was to pay for the Temporary School Attendant (TSA). The program was supposed to be cost-neutral. There was also an \$80 per year supply fee which, as it turns out, went into a general account rather than staying at the school. It was difficult to keep TSAs in the position as they would move into jobs that provided benefits.

The final issue is the inequality across the District. There is no doubt that the students who benefit from having Buddy Bears in their class go to kindergarten well prepared. There is no question that modeling is very appropriate. When there are only a few schools whose parents can afford the tuition and the supply fee it becomes very inequitable.

Ms. Comeau explained that the administration is willing to allow the program to continue but in a much different format. It is important to note that the program will be reviewed annually to determine whether it will continue year to year. The District will also survey all of the preschool teachers, the kindergarten teachers, principals, preschool teacher assistants, and parents near the end of the third quarter to get feedback and to identify issues. The District will also continually monitor the space on an annual basis.

Mr. Comeau reviewed the changes to the program: three-year-olds participating as Buddy Bears must have turned three by September 1st; there will be a cap of three Buddy Bears per class, the actual number (0-3) will be determined by the school team; there will be no tuition charged and no Temporary School Attendants will be hired for the program; the \$80 per year supply fee will be charged and will be kept at the school with waivers available for Buddy Bears qualifying for Free and Reduced Lunch; and the District reserves the right to decrease the number of Buddy Bears if unforeseen increases in the

special education population occur. All of these new parameters will be clearly stated on the application so that there will be no surprises to families coming into the program. Ms. Comeau emphasized that the most important thing for the public to take away from this discussion is that the Buddy Bear program is not a program geared to non-disabled preschoolers. It is a program to support students with disabilities who are between the ages of three and five coming into the District.

Mr. Steele asked how disabled children are assigned to specific schools. Ms. Dugdale explained that preschool classrooms are located regionally and efforts are made to keep the children as close to their neighborhood as possible. There are both dedicated autism classes and classes serving children with a wide range of disabilities in the preschool program. When a child is assigned to a specific site the team looks at which of the available sessions the child should go in to based on space and a variety of other variables. Mr. Steele asked how the Buddy Bears application process will take place under this plan. Ms. Dugdale explained that the Buddy Bears will make application at the site for that specific school. Ms. Dugdale also reported that the District transports the special education preschoolers but does not transport the Buddy Bears.

Ms. Kennedy appreciated the fact that areas of the District where this program is already working can be maintained. She wondered what the process would be in the situation where a Buddy Bear had to be asked to leave because of an increase in the special education population. Ms. Comeau explained that the District will use the last in - first out system. The Buddy Bear parent would be given the option to move their students to other classrooms where space is available or to put them at the top of the waiting list at their location.

Mr. Steiner wondered whether there was a consensus among the teachers who so adamantly supported the program that eliminating the TSA positions is a good trade off. Ms. Comeau noted that she had only heard from two teachers, one of whom had testified at the last meeting, and they both were thrilled that the program would be allowed to continue and felt that the proposed changes would work.

4. ASD Memorandum # 338 - Report of Vending Machines

The District held a meeting regarding the healthy choices and the potential changes to our current vending contract structure with the contractors that currently provide vending services to the middle and high schools. During the meeting, discussion was centered on the healthy choice options for snacks and beverages; change in district vending products; as well as other entities that offer food and beverages, such as parent teacher association groups, student stores and fundraising activities. All vendors were provided with a list of the items that we know meet both the federal requirements and those recommended by the District's Wellness Committee. Vendors were asked to review the list and respond back with the items that they would be able to provide in the vending machines. Additionally, the vendors were asked to provide information they believe would be beneficial to the District in the vending contracts. Copies of the draft Wellness Committee Report; the Mayor's Obesity Task Force Report, as well as the vending contract status reports were provided to them via email at their request.

Ms. Comeau indicated that she has received many positive responses to the decisions made regarding vending machines. Mr. Vakalis and Ms. Chenier have met with both vendors serving the District and have developed a list of what can be provided in the vending machines. There is a huge selection available. These restrictions will be applicable for all staff and students from 6:00 am to one-half hour after school is out. There will be no restriction on fundraising or activities that happen in the evenings or on the weekends. Food and drink choices sold in school stores during the day will have to meet these criteria. These guidelines and requirements apply to all buildings including the administration and support buildings. The administration believed that the timing is right and the recommendations send the right message. The administration is asking for the School Board Policy Subcommittee to review and revise SB Policy 765, paragraph a(4).

Mr. Steiner commented that when the Policy Subcommittee takes up Policy 765 they will also have to look at paragraph a(3) regarding the building principal discretion. The policy may need to reflect that the superintendent may administratively put limitations on the discretion of the principal. Ms. Comeau indicated her desire to make sure that the principals are given clear direction with some latitude.

The Board recessed for a ten-minute break at 7:42. Mr. Friedman reminded those present that a display highlighting the new Muldoon Area Middle School 1% for Art pieces had been set up in the front of the Board Room for people for view.

Mr. Friedman called the Board back into session at 7:55 p.m.

Ms. Jamie Blei, the parent of a student in the Buddy Bear program, testified that she credits the program with how well her daughter is prepared to enter kindergarten in August. After reading the Superintendent's Report on the Buddy Bear program, Ms. Blei indicated that she is still disheartened to see that the ASD still feels the need to do only the minimum required by the state and federal mandate with regards to the preschool special education program. She is also concerned with the decision to eliminate tuition for the Buddy Bears. She suggested that a sliding fee scale based on family income would be appropriate. She also suggested streamlining the monthly payment process so that payments are made through the mail to one central office, not at each individual school. She asked the District to consider offering a discount for families willing to pay full year tuition in advance. She believed that the TSA position is crucial in this program and that if the tuition pays for those positions then it is well worth the cost. Without the TSAs she believed that the District will see even greater teacher and TA burnout. Ms. Blei noted that her soon-to-be three year old son has significant speech delay and will be starting the Buddy Bear program in August. The prospect of him attending classes with only other disabled students causes her great concern. Language is largely learned by imitation. She felt that limiting Buddy Bears to three or fewer per classroom jeopardizes that opportunity. Without Buddy Bears she indicated that she would have to reconsider whether the ASD preschool environment would be the best for her child. In addition, the decision for the District to retain the right to remove Buddy Bears at any time during the school year leaves her son vulnerable to ending up in a setting that would no longer be conducive to the optional learning environment he needs. In light of that concern, she encouraged the District to consider opening additional classrooms for new students rather than displacing Buddy Bears and subjecting the special education students to the abrupt change in peers at any time.

Ms. Marks asked for clarification input on the curriculum in the preschool classes. Ms. Comeau explained that the curriculum is determined by the IEP of each student in the class. Ms. Marks asked

the speaker her thoughts on the high turnover rate of the TSAs. Ms. Blei suggested that consideration should be given to increasing the tuition in order to increase the pay and perhaps offer benefits to the TSA.

5. ASD Memorandum # 314 - End-of-the-year Membership Summary for 2005-2006

The total active enrollment at the end of the 2005-06 school year was 48,342. This enrollment represents a decrease of 1,247 students when compared to September 30, 2005. Table 1 compares the beginning and ending membership totals for the year. For the same time period for the 2004-05 school year, membership declined by 1,261.

6. ASD Memorandum # 320 - Evaluation of the District Improvement Plan for the 2005-2006 School Year

The No Child Left Behind Act and Alaska state regulations require school districts in Adequate Yearly Progress Level II or higher to submit an improvement plan to the Department of Education and Early Development. This plan was submitted to and approved by the Anchorage School Board in December and was subsequently submitted to the state. The Department also requires that the District submit an evaluation of progress to date on that improvement plan by May 31. That evaluation is made available here for your review.

7. ASD Memorandum # 321 - Update on Indian Education Program and Native Advisory Committee

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Indian Education Program provided academic support to 1,500 students in 33 elementary schools and three middle schools. An additional 1,600 students in four high schools had contact with and support from four community counselors.

The program focused on two major areas this school year, enhancing communication and increasing accountability. The image of Indian Education, as a responsive, student focused, highly motivated and accountable program, was enhanced through newsletters, the ASD Website, Public Service Announcements, radio talk shows, bulletin boards, ASD's Channel 14, and presentations to a variety of community organizations.

Ms. Comeau introduced Ms. Doreen Brown, Indian Education Program supervisor, and Ms. Ann Haddox, Native Advisory Committee representative.

Ms. Haddox introduced her daughter, Dana, and explained that they have served on the Native Advisory Committee (NAC) for the past school year. Dana Haddox explained that she is a student representative from Bartlett High School. She noted that the NAC is comprised of four student representatives, four parent representatives, two teacher representatives and two at-large representatives. The NAC met monthly at various schools, received training, and held several work sessions. The purpose of meeting at the various schools was to see the wonderful things that Indian Education is doing for the Native students, to showcase the students and their schools, to inform parents of the NAC, to reach out to parents and families at the various schools, to listen to the public comments and concerns, and to find out what the communities wanted from the NAC and the Indian Education program. The topics of the various meetings and work sessions were reviewed.

Ms. Ann Haddox reported on the activities and responsibilities of the student representatives to the NAC. She noted that they had a voice and had the right to vote. The NAC goals for the coming year are to assist in grant writing and aligning the grant objectives with the NCLB while retaining cultural ties to the Native community. Ms. Haddox explained that Dana represented at-risk students, having dealt with depression and suicide issues in the past. Ms. Haddox indicated her belief that her daughters' opportunity to serve on the NAC and her wonderful experience at Bartlett have allowed her to turn her life around and to serve as a voice for other at-risk students.

Ms. Doreen Brown indicated the pride that the Indian Education has for their students and highlighted student involvement in the program and on the NAC. She noted that, in addition to Indian Ed staff working in six summer school elementary sites and three middle school summer school sites, there are also five interns at elementary schools. There is also one student intern through CITC. There are over twenty families that are tapping into Lightspan/PLATO and Indian Ed staff members are meeting with them personally to hook them up with the website and/or allow them to check out the playstations and CDs so the students can either maintain or increase their skills in math, reading, and writing.

Ms. Brown noted that Indian Ed is working on developing a professional speakers' bureau booklet for Alaska Native/American Indian Heritage Month in November. They are recruiting Alaska Native and American Indian professionals for the booklet which will be organized by content areas. Ms. Brown explained that the program will focus on the high school level but that the booklet can also be used in the middle school model. The program is working with the Native Heritage Center to develop more cultural projects that are also linked to academic standards. Ms. Brown reported that there is a new link on the Title XII Indian Education website that lists scholarships, job opportunities, and workshops for high school students.

The Indian Education hosted a Summer Kick-off on June 1st. Many community organizations participated including Head Start, Southcentral Foundation, and Wells Fargo. All of the summer schools were featured. The math and reading departments were there and offered hands-on activities. A group interested in starting a charter school for native students was also there.

Ms. Brown reviewed the areas that Indian Education needs to work on for the next year. She indicated her desire to be more proactive in addressing both attendance and dropout issues. There are also lots of plans for the Cultural Responsive Six-Year Plan and the Cultural Responsive Continuum. She noted that, in reference to the formula grant application, this year is when the program will do the work to prepare for the next five years. They will be writing and submitting a grant for 2007-2012. Ms. Brown emphasized that we all have to work together toward student success and student achievement.

Ms. Marks questioned when the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) would be coming in to do the program assessment that was discussed a couple of months ago. Ms. Comeau explained that the CGCS has asked to delay their assessment here as they are currently dealing with some other major school urban issues, but she will discuss scheduling the assessment with the CGCS at their meeting next month. She indicated that the assessment may be approached differently to look specifically at language acquisition skills through both Indian Education and Bilingual together. Ms. Comeau noted that all of the Title programs will definitely be involved because they all work very closely together.

Ms. Marks asked whether improvements have been made in the area of communication with parents. Ms. Brown noted that

communication is very important and is an area that needs to continually be worked on. She noted that the issue has been approached using Channel 14, websites, open houses at different schools, and lots of phone contacts. There has been a lot more tracking and accountability in the area of communication but improvement can still be made. Ms. Marks requested input from the NAC representative on what can be done to improve communication. Dana Haddox indicated that she believes that the parents and the teachers need to talk more than they do. Ms. Haddox noted that having her daughter under a 504 Plan from the previous year had helped facilitate regular contact between her and Dana's teachers.

Mr. Steele asked how the Cultural Responsive program which was piloted at both Willowcrest Elementary and Romig Middle schools this year have done. Ms. Brown reported that AFACT has been coming in to both of these pilot schools this year to do training and modeling of home visits by teachers. The two schools are very different and have approached the process from very different ways. Romig did a lot with curriculum, working on developing curriculum activities that were culturally responsive. Willowcrest took the Cultural Continuum and rated themselves as a staff and then developed an action plan on the direction that they would like to go. The District plans to adopt ten additional sites to pilot the Cultural Responsive program this fall.

Ms. Comeau explained that she is trying to identify the funds so that staff at those two pilot schools can conduct home visits in August and then follow-up visits in the spring. The key is to realize that each school is different and that the plan will be unique to each school.

Mr. Metcalfe asked Dana to give her perspective on how the students were utilized on the committee. Dana responded that the students were asked their opinions on issues like the dropout rates. They were also asked to share what programs they would like to see in their schools. It was noted that two of the NAC student representatives were Upik and two were Tlingit, with three girls and one boy. There were a couple of items that were continual raised by the students. One was the sense of community within their schools, for example the desire to have a culture club at the school. Racism is another issue that was often discussed. Another recurring topic of discussion was cultural ties and how the students can voice their pride and be connected to their culture in the schools.

Mr. Metcalfe asked whether Dana believed there to be enough Native role models in her school or in the District. Dana noted that she has only met one, the Native counselor at Bartlett.

Mr. Steiner wondered whether representation was limited to four students or if there could be a student representative from each of the high schools. Ms. Brown explained that the NAC is in the process of revising their bylaws. This past year was the first time that there was a nomination and application process. The NAC hopes to have a student representative from each one of the high schools because each school is very different.

Ms. Ann Haddox spoke on behalf of Native educators. She reported that she had applied to the ASD and gone through the interviewing process, was highly qualified and certified, but was overlooked. There is a need for more Native educators. There needs to be some kind of system set up to allow the District to pull in the Native educators who are qualified and ready to work.

Mr. Roberts wondered if the students have been able to shed any light on the dropout rate. Ms. Brown noted that there are many factors that impact the dropout rate. One is the attendance issue. She noted that attendance needs to start being addressed at a much younger age. It is important that parents know that there are strict guidelines regarding attendance. It is also important that there is good communication between staff at the different schools as the student transitions between schools and academic levels.

Mr. Steiner questioned whether there are special circumstances that the Policy Subcommittee should take into consideration as they review the attendance policy. Ms. Brown indicated that it is important that the District and the Board Policy Subcommittee is aware of the cultural needs of the Native community, such as subsistence hunting and family responsibilities at fish camps. The needs of the students will also vary according to language group and geographic areas. It is really a matter of getting to know the individual students. Mr. Friedman indicated that it might be appropriate to send the current policy to Indian Education for review and input.

Mr. Friedman voiced his hope that the NAC is able to expand the number of students representatives. He indicated that groups meeting throughout the District should seek out ways to have student

participation. The other area that he believed could be expanded is the whole customer service attitude.

Mr. Johnson, MECAC chair, thanked the Native Advisory Committee for their work. He indicated that the NAC set the bar and set the standard for other committees to emulate.

8. ASD Memorandum # 335 - Math Program Evaluation

In our ongoing efforts to identify best practices and increase student achievement, an evaluation was done to identify the factors associated with high math performance in our district. Results from this evaluation will be used to develop action plans and allocate resources in a manner that improves student achievement. While curriculum review is an important part of a study of performance, this evaluation explored many additional factors.

Ms. Comeau introduced Ms. Danise Podvin and Ms. Rhonda Gardner who were in attendance to review the Math Program Evaluation. She noted that it has been an ongoing goal in the District to not only increase math achievement but also to increase the opportunity for students to take higher level math at a younger age.

Ms. Podvin explained that the purpose of the evaluation was to identify the factors associated with high math performance. The study looked at last years' SBA math results and combined these at the school and grade level with the results from the surveys completed by teachers and principals. Ms. Podvin reviewed the details of how the evaluations were compiled and analyzed.

Ms. Podvin reported that the critical factors found were: cooperation and collaboration; data driven instruction; high expectations; curriculum effectiveness; curriculum support; and school leadership practices.

Ms. Gardner explained what steps will be taken now that the math evaluation is complete. The leadership team has met with the principals. They have also met with the AEA executive board to share these key findings. There will be a review of the K-8 math curriculum. In addition, the District needs to respond to the items found through the math evaluation. Among those things are that students with learning needs, such as bilingual students and special education students, need additional support with the current curriculum. The

Curriculum department is working on plans to provide that support. Ms. Gardner noted that she is particularly excited about the partnership between the Assessment department and the Curriculum department. Work will also continue on developing and communicating the school improvement plans.

Ms. Kennedy asked whether there has been conversation with the principals about their role in math achievement. Ms. Gardner noted that these results have been shared with all three principal groups with good discussion at all three levels. The principals were not surprised that their leadership is critically important.

Ms. Kennedy wondered whether there are any requirements for the pacing guides. Ms. Gardner indicated that it is a matter of professional development and comfort level with the use of the pacing guides. She noted that the pacing guides have just been developed over the last couple of years. She explained that, just this spring, the math experts in combination with teachers have done an incredible amount of work aligning text books with particular GLEs. In this way they can map all of that out for the staff as they continue to work on these pacing guides, making sure that they are meeting the GLEs in time for the test in a way that makes sense for the curriculum and student learning of those concepts.

9. ASD Memorandum # 323 - Operating Budget Transfers - May Monthly Report FY 2005-2006

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of May 2006 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 May 2006 and related information are available in the Budget Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

10. ASD Memorandum # 324 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap: May 31, 2006

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 May 31, 2006.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Comeau commended the staff for all of the work they have done through the past year. They have done a tremendous job bringing along student achievement. It has been a good year.

Mr. Friedman agreed that tremendous progress has been made over the past year. He noted that just recognizing where we need to be is a big step.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS
LITIGATION

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of June 26, 2006, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:15 p.m.

Jeff Friedman, President

Mary Marks, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved