

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 11, 2006

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, December 11, 2006, at 6:40 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, Crystal Kennedy, Macon Roberts, Jeff Friedman, Jake Metcalfe, Mary Marks, and Tim Steele.

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Rhonda Gardner, Leslie Vandergaw, Mike Henry, Patricia McRae, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Eric Tollefsen, Michelle Egan, Robb Boyer, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Ralph Feriani, Lt. Col. Luu, Damita Owen, Ray Amsden, Pam Chenier, Stan Syta, Marie Laule, Johanna Lee, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Steiner announced that the Policy Subcommittee would be meeting on at 9:00 am. Thursday, December 14. He also reminded everyone that there will be a brownbag luncheon with legislators on at noon on December 18.

Mr. Friedman reported that he had attended the Drama, Debate, and Forensics competition at South High School over the past weekend. He remarked that the competition reaffirmed that the vast majority of our students are doing wonderful things and we need to remember that and encourage the press to report on those things.

Ms. Marks noted that she had attended the Legos Robotics team competition at Mirror Lake Middle School over the weekend.

Mr. Steele noted that this will be the last Board meeting in this facility. From this point on board meetings will be held at the Anchorage School District Education Center at 5530 Northern Lights Boulevard.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

1. Goldenview Orchestra, Mary Alice Donaldson director

The students of the Goldenview Orchestra performed several numbers for the entertainment of the Board and other community members in attendance.

2. Presentation by the Alaska Music Educators Association

Ms. Sally Miller, president of the Alaska Music Educators Association, announced the winners of the Music Advocate of the Year Award and the Music Teachers of the Year Award.

Ms. Miller presented the award for Music Advocate of the Year to Superintendent Carol Comeau. Ms. Jean Lenoir had nominated Ms. Comeau for this honor and read part of her nomination letter. She noted that Ms. Comeau had supported the music program in three crucial areas: finances, public relations, and personal values.

Ms. Sally Miller recognized the two winners of the Music Teachers of the Year, Susan and Philip Birch. Both have worked in many collaborative programs at the elementary and middle school level, as well as many community programs and festivals. These master teachers are loved and respected by their students and fellow music educators.

As a surprise for all of the winners the Chugiak Swing Choir, under the direction of Mr. Ron Lange, presented the song "Blessing". Most of the students in the choir had either Susan or Philip Birch or both as a teacher over the years.

3. ASD Memorandum #149 - Recognition of the Alaska State History Day Winner

Mr. Roberts read that students at Dimond High School held their first ever History Day contest in conjunction with the 2006 National History Day competition. The annual event encourages students to make history come alive and is part of a contest that spans 49 states, the District of Columbia and American Samoa. Student projects focused on the theme "Taking a Stand in History."

Mercedes Curran entered Dimond's competition with a 10 minute video documentary on Steve Biko, a South African Civil Rights activist.

Mercedes' video won the school competition and advanced her to the state and then national level. Mercedes entered the competition as one of more than half a million students in grades six through 12 across the nation. When final judging was complete, her video documentary was one of the 14 best projects in the entire contest.

For her efforts, Mercedes was selected to participate as a student ambassador in the "Jamestown Live!" Web cast. The Web cast focused on the history of the first permanent English Settlement in the United States. The live, interactive Web cast allowed teachers and students across the country to watch and engage in classroom discussions about the first settlement in our nation.

The School Board recognized Mercedes Curran for her extraordinary project that led to national recognition. We hope her enthusiasm and creativity will encourage other students to make history come alive.

The Board and community were pleased to be able to view the video produced by Ms. Curran.

4. ASD Memorandum # 150 - Recognition of Alaska Art Educator of the Year

Mr. Metcalfe read that Leslie Matz is getting an early start on being the Alaska Art Educator of the Year for 2007. The Alaska Art Education Association bestowed the title on Les at its fall conference in Juneau. Les has taught at Dimond High School since 1988 and currently chairs the school's Fine Arts Department. He will be officially recognized at the National Art Education Association conference in March in New York City.

Rebecca Voris, a past president of the AAEEA, was happy to recommend Les for the honor because of his dedication to art education and installation of art in public places. She cites his work as a member of the 1% for Art Committees for Chinook Elementary and Dimond, and the building design committees for South Anchorage High School and Dimond.

An accomplished artist himself, Les understands that each student's life is like a blank canvas that becomes illustrated by the choices they make. Rebecca says Les shines in the classroom and works with students beyond the school day including special Saturday events devoted to the Dimond High Art Club, which he initiated.

“His students receive awards and recognitions for their art works, including the prestigious regional Scholastic Arts competition and AP Studio Art portfolio evaluations. He works relentlessly to accommodate his students’ needs,” Rebecca says.

Les is a past winner of the BP Teacher of Excellence award and has also volunteered in the community as a Junior Olympic Nordic ski coach. In 2003, he earned the Anchorage School District’s Art Department Outstanding Volunteer Award. A past national Nordic ski champion and All-American, Les also was a member of the first winter bicycle expedition to ride the Iditarod Trail in 1989.

The School Board recognized Leslie Matz for being chosen as the Alaska Art Educator of the Year for 2007. His dedication and commitment to his students and his art make him a credit to our district and his profession.

5. ASD Memorandum # 151 - Recognition of Career Technology and Education Award Winners

Ms. Marks read that five Anchorage educators were recently honored with awards from the Alaska Association of Career and Technical Education for their outstanding efforts to connect students with the world of work.

**Rick Rios:** The CTE Administrator of the Year went to Rick Rios, who heads the office of Career and Technology Education for the district. Rick’s passion and enthusiasm for his profession were duly noted and his willingness to work collaboratively with business partners and students to create more workforce development opportunities for the district. Rick has “become an increasingly important part of the Anchorage School District’s mission to prepare productive and engaged citizens,” the association stated.

**Tressa Whitten:** The title of Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher of the Year went to Tress Whitten of Romig Middle School. The association remarked on Whitten’s continuing energy, after 24 years in education, to develop lesson plans and activities that prepare her students for real-life situations. She is adept at designing unique instructional techniques and teaches across the curriculum to incorporate reading, math, English and science into many of her lessons.

**Rebecca Jesse:** Named Hospitality/Tourism Teacher of the Year by the association, Rebecca Jesse of East High School was praised for continually reaching beyond her standard role to bring positive work experiences to her students. "Her energy, vision, passion and professionalism are winning combinations as her program continues to grow and develop," the association said.

**Bill Corbett:** The association presented its "Promising Practices" award to Bill Corbett of Service High School and described him as a "true visionary who has taken his school beyond conventional computing practices." Due to his forward thinking and considerable talents, Bill has implemented technology that enhances every aspect of his students' educational experience.

**Jack Nurmi:** The New Career and Technical Education Teacher of the Year award went to Jack Nurmi of the King Career Center. In his short tenure as chef instructor, Jack has demonstrated a passion for his craft and an intuitive ability to impart those skills to his students, according to the association. His patience, people skills, community contacts and vast experience have resulted in taking KCC's culinary program to a new level of excellence.

The School Board recognized these fine employees for the honors they received.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Mr. Feriani reported that the Student Advisory Board met last Tuesday at the King Career Center. Ms. Comeau, Mr. Henry, and Mr. Arndt were in attendance. Among the items discussed were the budget and the teacher negotiations. He noted that a draft of a Greenstar Resolution was developed in an effort to make the schools more energy efficient. The final draft of that resolution will be presented for approval at the next Student Advisory Board meeting.

The next meeting Student Advisory Board meeting will be January 23, 2007 at 11:30 a.m. at King Career Center. Mr. Feriani invited all of the Board members to attend.

2. Military Delegate

Lt. Col. Fuu was not in attendance.

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

Mr. Johnson reported that the next meeting of the MECAC is scheduled for January 18<sup>th</sup> at the ASD Education Center. On behalf of the MECAC he wished everyone the best of the season.

Mr. Johnson voiced his appreciation for the peaceful, public expression of opinion and noted that this process is a good lesson in civics.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Bernadette Helms, a teacher at Tudor Elementary, spoke on the consequences of not having quality teachers in the District. She noted that at the beginning of last year Tudor Elementary had an unfilled position in Special Education that remained unfilled for the entire year. Tudor Elementary did not meet AYP last year even though the staff did their best to fill that gap left by the vacancy. Ms. Helms attributed the fact that Tudor Elementary did not meet AYP to the inability to fill that position. She noted that the school and staff are being held accountable for the District's inability to hire a quality teacher. She believed that having a quality teacher in every classroom has to be made a priority in the District.

Ms. Megan Larson, a teacher in the District, indicated her belief that teachers have the most impact on student achievement and therefore they are the most important item on the budget. She felt that the budget review recommendations should be used and applied to insure that superfluous and redundant items. Students should not be cheated by short-changing teachers.

Mr. Rich Kronberg, a teacher from Mears Middle School, noted that the Board should direct the administration to assess each of their many programs based on actual improvement in student achievement or behavior. He believed the Board should be able to identify whether and to what degree each of the multitude of programs actually impacts students. He encouraged the Board to settle the contract now in a way that both respects the contribution of the professional educators and helps provide each student access to the quality teachers they need and deserve.

Ms. Ruth Ann Dickie, a parent and grandparent of children in the District, spoke in support of the teachers. She was surprised and disappointed that the contract negotiations seem to be so difficult and mean-spirited. She believed that the District is setting a bad example for the children. She questioned why funding increases from Juneau over the past three years hasn't been used to invest in teachers.

Ms. Leslie Hiebert, a parent, spoke in support of the teachers in the District. She indicated her belief that the teachers are what make this District so good.

Mr. Carl Aronson, a parent, urged the Board to settle a fair and competitive contract with the teachers. He reviewed the impact that the teachers have had on his children. He noted that his children's success can be attributed to their teachers, not programs. He urged the Board to invest in their teachers because they deserve the best.

Ms. Jana Hayenga, a parent and former elementary school teacher, urged the Board to return to the negotiation table and to settle a fair and competitive contract with the teachers. She indicated the need for a contract that will send teachers the message that they are valued, supported and recognized for the work that they do with our children. She noted that teachers make a school district exceptional. It is not the buildings, the textbooks, the labs, the facilities or the programs. She indicated that the District needs to make sure that the best and the brightest teachers are in our schools to teach our children. She encouraged the Board to settle a contract that sends a message to our teachers that we value their work and that we are willing to pay for greatness.

Mr. Thomas Pease, a District teacher, reviewed several points that a variety of teachers have presented to the Board over the last several Board meetings. He also reviewed the arbitrators report from the late 1990s which warned that teacher salaries were not keeping pace with the cost of living or other school districts. He felt that low teacher pay can be explained by a conscious effort on the part of the administration to make teachers pay secondary to other budget priorities.

Mr. Joel Adkins, a small business owner in the community, explained that he had considered being a teacher but was discouraged during the 1990s due to pay freezes, unfavorable class size, and the two-tiered retirement system. He noted that the District should provide competitive salaries for

their teachers before adding educational programs or building new facilities. He encouraged the Board to do what is necessary to keep good teachers in the classroom where they belong.

Ms. Laura Wrenn, a teacher at Gruening Middle School and a parent in the District, reminded the Board that teachers are professionals. She compared the hours worked by teachers with other professionals. She encouraged the Board to put the District's money into the classroom where it will do the most good. Good teaching is the single most important factor in student learning that the District has control over.

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. Regular Meeting - October 2, 2006
  - b. Special Meeting - December 4, 2006
2. ASD Memorandum # 142 - Superintendent Evaluation and Contract Changes

It is recommended that the School Board approve the attached contract with Superintendent Carol Comeau for a three year period beginning January 1, 2007, and ending on December 31, 2009 with an annual salary of \$141,100.

3. ASD Memorandum # 152 - 2007 General Obligation Bond Recommendations

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve a Bond proposal package totaling \$85,000,000, comprised of Proposition 1 - Clark Middle School Renewal in the amount of \$65,000,000; and Proposition 2 - Districtwide Building System Renewals Priority One Projects in the amount of \$20,000,000.

4. ASD Memorandum # 154 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 343.34 - Accessibility of Records (Second Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt on Second Reading the recommended policy changes for School Board Policy 343.34, Accessibility of Records (Attachment A).

5. ASD Memorandum # 155 - Continuation of Right Start Contract: North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View, and Big Lake Elementary Schools

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to continue a contract from the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) in the amount of \$29,060. Funds will be used to provide intervention for children in North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View and Big Lake elementary schools who need extra help in specific areas of development.

6. ASD Memorandum # 137 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Alaska Energy Cost Reduction Projects

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) in the amount of \$363,789 for implementation of energy control measures at multiple District facilities.

7. ASD Memorandum # 136 - Award of Contract: Magna Brand Furniture

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a two year contract to Arctic Office Products to furnish and install Magna Brand Furniture in various schools throughout the District in a total estimated amount not to exceed \$500,000 with two additional one-year options to renew.

8. ASD Memorandum # 138 - Award of Contract: William Tyson Elementary School Security System Upgrades

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the William Tyson Elementary School Security Upgrades to Consolidated Contracting & Engineering for the Base Bid amount of \$57,555 and award Additive Alternate One for \$45,444 for a total award of \$102,999.

9. ASD Memorandum # 140 - Personnel Report

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

Mr. Friedman asked that ASD Memorandum #152, 2007 General Obligation Bond Recommendations; ASD Memorandum #155, Continuation of Right Start Contract: North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View, and Big Lake Elementary Schools; and ASD Memorandum #138, Award of Contract: William Tyson Elementary School Security System Upgrades, be pulled from the Consent Agenda for discussion.

Ms. Comeau requested that ASD Memorandum #99, Six-Year Instructional Plan Evaluation for 2005-2006 School Year, and ASD Memorandum #144, Profile of Performance, be pulled from the Superintendent's Report for discussion.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jake Metcalfe  
Seconded by: Tim Steele

To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 2, 2006, the minutes of the Special Meeting December 4, 2006, and ASD Memoranda #142, #154, #137, #136, and #140.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 152 - 2007 General Obligation Bond  
Recommendations

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve a Bond proposal package totaling \$85,000,000, comprised of Proposition 1 - Clark Middle School Renewal in the amount of \$65,000,000; and Proposition 2 - Districtwide Building System Renewals Priority One Projects in the amount of \$20,000,000.

ACTION:

Moved by: Tim Steele  
Seconded by: Mary Marks

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve a Bond proposal package totaling \$85,000,000, comprised of Proposition 1 - Clark Middle School Renewal in the amount of \$65,000,000; and Proposition 2 - Districtwide Building System Renewals Priority One Projects in the amount of \$20,000,000.

**Proposition 1 - Clark Middle School Renewal.....\$65,000,000**

Proposition 2 - Districtwide Building System Renewals Priority One Projects

Districtwide Code/Hazmat/ADA/Sprinkler Projects..... \$1,265,000

Districtwide Roof Replacement and Repairs.....\$1,950,000

Multi-School Security System Upgrades.....\$890,000

Emergency Communications Systems - High Schools.....\$650,000

Districtwide Building Renewal Projects.....\$4,110,000

Districtwide Electrical Projects .....\$2,190,000

Districtwide Mechanical Upgrades .....\$5,845,000

Districtwide Traffic Safety .....\$3,100,000

**Proposition 2 Total.....\$20,000,000**

Ms. Kitte' Miller noted that she has been doing research on Clark Middle School. She reported that Clark is the oldest middle school in the District, built the year of statehood. At that time, just as today, it took a lot of effort and community support to get the money for the facility. She acknowledged that it is a compromise to only forward Clark on the Bond Proposition because there are many other buildings in the District in need of attention that have been delayed. She noted that it is going to take

some education to get the community to support even this proposition. She felt that, in light of everything else going on in the District, that this is a sensible bond package to forward.

Rep. Max Gruenberg encouraged the Board to approve the motion. He noted that, from the legislative point of view, 60-70% of the money will be paid by the State if the Board approves the recommendations and the voters approve the bonds. It is most important to take advantage of that legislation while the money is available. He noted that the job goes further than simply approving the recommendation this evening. It continues with the need to present the package to the Assembly and to gain their support. Then the most difficult and most important step is getting the people of Anchorage to agree.

Mr. Metcalfe commented on the need to sell the bond proposition. He noted that it would be helpful if the Anchorage Caucus would return to Anchorage to help in those efforts. All of the elected leaders in the community need to support the bond package. He also noted that it would be extremely helpful for the Legislature to provide additional money to the District. He explained that in all of the years that he has been on the Board, save one, the District budget has had to be cut. It makes it difficult to give the teachers the pay that they deserve when the administration has to cut programs. Then the Board is asked to prioritize and pay teachers at the cost of other positions being cut. He would really appreciate the Anchorage Caucus uniting behind getting more funding for the District so that all of the employees can be retained and the District can continue to make Adequate Yearly Progress.

Rep. Gruenberg indicated his belief that the Anchorage Caucus has not been as active recently as in the past. He doesn't believe that the Anchorage Caucus, in the years that he has served, has exercised the muscle and the ability it has. He would like to see a catalyst that would bring the Caucus together. He welcomed the opportunity to work with the Board to support education.

Mr. Friedman noted that it is very disappointing when Assembly members don't support the bonds that they put on the ballot. It is also frustrating when legislators encourage the Board to put bonds on the ballot and then do not show any support for them.

Mr. Steele voiced his appreciation for both speakers. He added that the entire budget process needs to be addressed. He reviewed the process of having to make a budget without knowing what funding will be coming

from the Legislature. At the end of the process each year the district seems to get only enough funding of barely get by. There never seems to be enough to make any progress in addressing many of the issues the District faces.

Ms. Marks thanked the speakers. She noted that the students are very enthusiastic about the building at Clark Middle School.

Rep. Gruenberg suggested that the Board prepare a draft of what they would like to see in a piece of legislation addressing the budget issues. Ms. Comeau indicated that she would get in touch with Rep. Gruenberg prior to the brown bag luncheon scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Steiner noted that, historically, the Anchorage School District has had a great deal of difficulty ever getting the Legislature to appropriate for a specific project in the Anchorage District. We get match money or debt reimbursement but, even though we have schools at the top of the state list, they rarely get funded. He asked Rep. Gruenberg whether there may be any change to that or should we expect that to continue this session. Mr. Gruenberg explained that, from his point of view, the schools that generally receive direct support are typically schools that have no tax base. He doesn't believe the current process is likely to change.

Mr. Metcalfe asked Rep. Gruenberg to pass on to the Mountain View Community Council meeting that there was only an 8% voter turnout from the Clark precinct in the last election. He added that Clark Middle School was on the ballot at that election. That area really needs to turn out and support this bond if they want to get the new school.

Ms. Comeau thanked both of the speakers for their advocacy for these bonds.

The Board went into recess at 8:15 p.m. Mr. Friedman called the meeting back to order at 8:23 p.m.

Ms. Comeau explained that she had tasked the staff to present a bond recommendation that would not exceed the amount of bonds that have been paid off from the last successful election in November, 2004 through April, 2007. During that two year period the District will have repaid \$85,000,000 of debt service. She introduced Mr. Ivan Moore to present the results of his recently completed survey.

Mr. Moore explained that the survey was begun in the middle of last week and completed late yesterday afternoon. He noted that this was very

straight forward with just the two bond propositions, the \$65 million Clark Middle School bond and the \$20 million building renewal bond, on the survey.

Mr. Moore reported that the survey showed an unfavorable result on the Clark Middle School bond with 48% in favor and 50% opposed. He reminded the Board that there is a systematic and very consistent difference between the results of these polls and the actual election results. On average the poll results will exceed the ultimate outcome by around 5 points. Mr. Moore reviewed a number of reasons why this occurs. He did point out that information regarding the availability of State debt reimbursement was not included in the initial question.

Mr. Moore reported that there did not seem to be any problem with the \$20 million building renewal bond. It has been recognized that people are more than willing to vote for the invariably smaller maintenance bonds and far less likely to support the larger construction bonds.

Mr. Moore explained that the survey went on to test the response when the two bonds are combined as one. The results in this instance indicate that there is even less support if the two bonds are combined. He strongly suggested that the bonds be kept separate.

When the survey addressed the State Debt Reimbursement, noting that more than 60% of the cost of the combined bond will be paid for by the state, the results are dramatically different. The support jumped to 64% and opposition fell to 35%. The conclusion to be drawn from this is to secure the reimbursement and then make sure that voters know about it. Educating the public regarding the reimbursement is crucial.

Ms. Comeau added that, in addition to making sure that the public is aware of the debt reimbursement, it is also crucial to make them aware of the amount of outstanding debt that the District has paid off. In an overview of several messages that were tested Mr. Moore indicated that the most effective message is the debt reimbursement message.

Mr. Moore briefly summarized the survey results noting that the bottom line is to keep the bonds separate, get the debt reimbursement, and make sure that the message regarding the debt reimbursement is front and center in all advertising.

During discussion Ms. Comeau noted that feedback on bond propositions that have failed in the past indicated strong public opinion that different

projects should be kept on separate bond propositions. Mr. Moore noted his belief that the question of whether or not to combine the bonds does not depend on whether there is debt reimbursement. He felt that the decision to combine the bonds depends more on the relative sizes of the individual bonds and the relative levels of popularity of the two separate bonds.

Mr. George Vakalis explained that several focus groups contributed to the development of these bond recommendations. He noted that the original recommendation from the CRAC included two elementary schools, Clark Middle School and the building systems renewal. While there is no doubt that those projects are needed, it was felt to be more important to have a smaller package and to get some success on the bonds. The focus groups also felt that the two propositions should be kept separate.

Mr. Friedman noted that one issue that continues to be raised is the question of why the \$20 million dollar renewal money can't be put in the classroom. Mr. Vakalis reviewed the difference between operating budgets and capital budgets. It is important to have funds set aside to keep building within code, to keep them safe, and to replace the systems that keep the buildings operational. Ms. Comeau clarified that the question that continues to be raised is why money continues to be put into buildings rather than into salaries and benefits. Mr. Vakalis explained that the funds addressed in that question are two separate types of funds altogether. Capital funds can not be used to supplement the operating budget. That distinction is made by law and by the covenants agreed to when these projects are bonded for.

Mr. Ray Amsden reemphasized that this recommendation accounts for the highest priority needs among a lot of high priority projects.

Mr. Steiner asked about the estimated increase in annual operation and maintenance costs associated with the Clark Middle School construction funding and the associated increase in the property tax cap. He wondered why an increase would be necessary on a project that replaces an existing school. Mr. Amsden explained that the new building will be larger than the current building by about 28% which will necessitate additional custodial staff and will increase maintenance requirements. Mr. Steiner understood that the costs would increase but wondered about the necessity to raise the tax cap. Ms. Comeau explained that the question has to be asked on the ballot to not only approve the bonds but to also approve an increase in the tax cap for increased operations and maintenance.

Mr. Steiner noted that there are a number of energy conservation projects on the building system renewal bond propositions. He asked if there was any sense of the payback period on those projects and whether the bond repayment period would be adjusted accordingly. Ms. Stokesbary explained that the loan term for each of the projects is based on the life of the item not on the payback period. She noted that the District makes sure that we have principal that is being paid off that corresponds to the life of the project.

Ms. Marks asked whether the cost of demolition included in the Clark Middle School bond proposition. Mr. Amsden indicated that it is.

Mr. Metcalfe wondered whether we know how much the Assembly is planning to put in their bond package. Ms. Comeau believed that she had read that the Assembly plans several small bonds which will total around \$60 million.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by: Jake Metcalfe  
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To change the total figure in the memorandum from \$85 million to \$65 million and delete "and Proposition 2 - Districtwide Building Renewals Priority One Projects in the amount of \$20 million" and the accompanying details.

Mr. Metcalfe explained that he put forth this amendment because Clark Middle School has been the number one priority of the District and the amendment addresses that priority. He believed that, based on the failure of prior bond packages, the public is concerned about the amount of the bonds. When District bonds are combined with Municipal bond packages it leads to an outrageous number that tax payers will be hesitant to support. By passing the amendment the District will be offering a conservative bond package with our number one priority.

Mr. Steiner voiced his belief that having the districtwide projects on the ballot as well as the Clark bond helps rather than hurts the bond package. He also voiced his concern that the District is almost 2 ½ years behind on our CIP and this amendment will put us even further behind and ultimately increase maintenance costs. He recalled that the survey discussed earlier indicated more support for the Building Renewal bond

and believed that, although there is some risk of offering a choice between the two propositions, having this on the ballot will not undermine the ability to pass the Clark bond.

Mr. Steele voiced his belief that having both bonds on the ballot will help diversify the proposals for the voters. It is his understanding that the total Municipality and District bond package will be significantly smaller than the last one. He believed that this package balances out our requests. He is optimistic that the community will be supportive of the both of the bond proposals.

Mr. Metcalfe reiterated his concern with passing the Clark Middle School Renewal bond. He proposed this amendment in the belief that all of the efforts should be focused on Clark and not diluted with other projects.

Ms. Comeau indicated her understanding of Mr. Metcalfe's position but shared her concern with eliminating funding for the items on the second proposition. Mr. Vakalis noted that one of the definitions of the priority one major system renewals is that the system is either failing or in imminent risk of failure. There are no other monies available that will take care of these items. In order for the District to qualify for the 60% and 70% debt reimbursement we have to have a pro-active preventative maintenance program, which we have. It does not, however, do any good to follow a maintenance schedule if the equipment is not replaced when it fails. He also noted that many of the items on the list are life safety issues. Mr. Amsden added that failing to provide for these items now will increase future cost.

Ms. Kennedy noted that, historically, building renewal bonds have passed fairly regularly. She did not believe that putting the two separate bonds on the ballot will negatively impact the ability of either to pass. Mr. Steiner added that nothing in the survey indicated that the Clark bond standing alone can pass.

VOTE on AMENDMENT:

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

MOTION FAILS

Ms. Marks voiced her concern with the Clark Renewal bond. Ms. Comeau acknowledged that there is going to be an uphill battle but it is one that

has to be fought. This school absolutely deserves to be completely replaced. She believed that one of the things learned during last year's bond campaign was that greater efforts have to be made to make people understand that this school can not deliver a quality educational program, in spite of the heroic efforts of the staff there, simply because of the constraints of the building. It is not fair to those students, the staff or the community. Efforts need to be made to engage all of the members of that community to work to get this bond passed.

During further discussion Ms. Comeau clarified that most of the items in the second bond proposition qualify for 70% debt reimbursement and that the Clark Middle School Renewal will qualify for 60% reimbursement.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 155 - Continuation of Right Start Contract:  
North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View, and Big Lake  
Elementary Schools

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to continue a contract from the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) in the amount of \$29,060. Funds will be used to provide intervention for children in North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View and Big Lake elementary schools who need extra help in specific areas of development.

ACTION:

Moved by: Mary Marks

Seconded by: Macon Roberts

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to continue a contract from the State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) in the amount of \$29,060. Funds will be used to provide intervention for children in North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View and Big Lake elementary schools who need extra

help in specific areas of development.

Mr. Friedman explained that this memorandum was originally pulled for discussion because it was believed that Rep. Gruenberg wished to speak on it, which he did not. With no further discussion or questions from the Board, Mr. Friedman called for the vote.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 138 - Award of Contract: William Tyson  
Elementary School Security System Upgrades

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the William Tyson Elementary School Security Upgrades to Consolidated Contracting & Engineering for the Base Bid amount of \$57,555 and award Additive Alternate One for \$45,444 for a total award of \$102,999.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner  
Seconded by: Tim Steele

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the William Tyson Elementary School Security Upgrades to Consolidated Contracting & Engineering for the Base Bid amount of \$57,555 and award Additive Alternate One for \$45,444 for a total award of \$102,999.

Mr. Friedman explained that this memorandum was also originally pulled for discussion because it was believed that Rep. Gruenberg wished to speak on it, which he did not. With no further discussion or questions from the Board, Mr. Friedman called for the vote.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 141 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of November 16, 2006 through December 1, 2006.

2. ASD Memorandum # 99 - Six-Year Instructional Plan Evaluation for 2005-2006 School Year

The Anchorage School Board adopted the Six-Year Instructional Plan at their meeting on May 10, 2004, and four additional department plans were added in 2005. Each of the plans is evaluated and presented to the Board for approval. Revisions to the original plan were made in each of the 29 discrete plans and adopted by the Board on January 9, 2006.

Ms. Comeau voiced her appreciation to the curriculum staff and introduced Dr. Enid Silverstein to present the Six-Year Instructional Plan Evaluation.

Dr. Silverstein noted that this is the second edition of the Six-Year Plan Evaluation and reflects a lot of time and effort by a number of people. She indicated that something as important as this document, which serves as a lighthouse across the District, certainly needs evaluating. Taking the time and effort needed to perform and prepare this evaluation is appropriate. She noted that she and Ms. Laurel Vorachek had done a presentation at the recent Council of Great City Schools conference. During that presentation a researcher from the University of Texas voiced an interest in coming to Anchorage to see some of the work that we do with our assessment reporting system and the math training that is going on. The researcher was extremely impressed with our Six-Year Plan.

Dr. Silverstein commended the sterling work done by everyone involved with the Six-Year Plan. She noted that, after three years, the Six-Year Plan has become institutionalized as a referential anchor. It consistently connects instruction to Board goals. It links curriculum and plan objectives and initiatives to the budget. The Plan also encourages and insures that people maintain a focus on their own goals and initiatives and, in turn, the accountability of those. The Plan also allows for some elaboration and revision within a framework. All of those things, plus the interdepartmental collaboration and support of each others plans that has evolved from this process, are important in terms of reducing duplication of effort and resources.

Mr. Steiner asked to what extent the Plan merely documents what is already being done as opposed to planning and looking at what we are doing differently and more intentionally to try to achieve Board goals. He also asked whether this serves more as a rubric to evaluate what has been done or if it also evaluates what needs to be done. Dr. Silverstein noted that when the process began the evaluations were thought to be suitable for the goals and initiatives that were to be measured. As the process has unfolded they are looking to align as many of the measurement tools as possible to the Profile of Performance which, in turn, evaluates the Board goals. The desire is that the Six-Year Plan be more integrated with that effort and each year it is coming into closer alignment.

Mr. Rios testified on behalf of what the Six-Year Plan has done for Career and Technical Education. He believed that it has not forged a whole new road but rather has allowed them to put curriculum and instruction on the same track. In addition, the Six-Year Plan directs the training. Inservice and training is now directed to the goals within the Six-Year Plan. He noted that the Six-Year Plan has been an incredible tool.

Dr. Silverstein noted two items that have come out of this evaluation. The first is that the timeline will be reorganized next year so that the Six-Year Plan Evaluation will go after the Profile of Performance. This will alleviate the need to scramble around for information before it is easily available. Secondly, there will be a meeting where all of the participants will be able to share their key objectives and initiatives with one another so that people within the scope of the plan can collaborate even more than is being done at this time.

Ms. Thornberg testified that the Six-Year Plan has been tremendously helpful in aligning everyone. It lets people know where they are transparent with other people and where their efforts are integrated. It also lets everyone know whether we are achieving the outcomes we are working for.

Ms. Marks, referencing the Indian Education portion of the Evaluation on page 117, asked what the average return rate is for the Indian Education Program Eligibility application. Ms. Doreen Brown explained that every year these forms, the 506 forms, have to be chased down. She noted that according to District records there are about 7200 eligible students but only about 6500 of these forms have been returned to date. Ms. Marks asked the question in light of the fact that the number of eligible students vary each year. She was concerned that tracking a percentage increase in a variable number of students would not reflect accurate results.

Ms. Marks asked whether services are provided to all of the students who complete the 506 form. Ms. Brown noted that efforts are made to provide services to all of those students. Direct services are provided within schools. Indirect services are also provided to any families and students in the District but specifically geared to cultural responsive practices. In response to an additional question from Ms. Marks it was noted that the number of students for whom services are provided through Indian Education continues to grow every year.

Ms. Marks asked about the effectiveness of the cross-cultural training developed in conjunction with AFACT in light of the recommendation that the program be eliminated from the budget. Ms. Comeau explained that the results of an evaluation on the effectiveness of the program, which AFACT contracted with ISR to perform, will not be available until the end of the year.

Ms. Marks questioned what strategies are being used to address the unmet goal to increase the percentage of Native Educators by 5%. Ms. Brown noted that, while the objective was not met, they did hire at 4.1%. She explained that the Indian Education department communicates with Robb Boyer and Margo Bellamy to find what Native teachers are in the candidate pool and how the Indian Education department can help them. They have done such things as holding practice interviews, helping potential employees become familiar with the District, and helping them to become familiar with

the curriculum. Part of the problem is that there are not a lot of potential candidates coming into the pool.

Mr. Steve Ex, Social Studies coordinator, noted that the Six-Year Evaluation process underscores the serious lack of resources for supporting teachers in the classroom with adoptions with appropriate instructional materials. For example, the last time new curriculum and materials were adopted for the elementary social studies program was in 1994. Ms. Comeau noted that the Board has expressed great concern about the lack of a regular curriculum review and adoption cycle.

Mr. Steele questioned where we are on the various curriculum adoptions. He wondered whether there are some that are ready to go that are just waiting for funds. Dr. Silverstein distributed an illustration of the four levels of six-year curriculum renewal cycle and a list of the various stages of the review cycle for each of the content areas. This information is available on the website. Dr. Silverstein acknowledged that this document reflects a planned cycle that was prepared in the past and it could not be assumed that the planned actions have been done at the scheduled times. Mr. Steiner requested an update on where the District actually stands in this cycle. He also asked for information on how old the current materials are in areas where planned items have not been implemented.

Mr. Friedman noted that when Board members meet with legislators next week they should stress that our 21<sup>st</sup> century students need a 21<sup>st</sup> century curriculum.

Ms. Comeau clarified that the Board is requesting information on what the actual curriculum adoption process is and who is involved, when the last curriculum adoptions took place for each of the major content areas, and an updated version of the renewal cycle document.

Ms. Kennedy asked whether there has been any conversation on developing an additional three years to add to the Plan at one time or to add one additional year to the Plan each year as we go along. Dr. Silverstein felt that to go year-by-year is too short range. She felt that the District needs to look ahead at least three years but going out much farther than three years would make the Plan look pretty sparse. There needs to be structure but there also needs to be flexibility. She noted that, in her opinion, it makes the most sense to extend the Plan an additional three years and anticipates providing a three-year addition to the Plan every three years.

Mr. Steiner voiced his concern with the notation in the Evaluation that items were “partially met”. It was not clear at times what that notation meant. Mr. Steiner also raised a question about pacing within the language arts and math curriculum. Ms. Comeau noted that one of principles in the core curriculum in the Title I schools is to help standardize the curriculum for language arts, reading and math. This entails not only the standardization of the curriculum but also the pacing so that students that move from school to school will be on the same basic schedule.

3. ASD Memorandum # 144 - Profile of Performance

The *Profile of Performance* is the Anchorage School District (ASD) report to the School Board and the community on the academic achievement of Anchorage students and schools. The report is divided into two parts. Each part is described briefly below:

Part I provides an overview of the District and the success of the District in meeting the School Board Goals for the 2005-2006 school year. It also provides a summary of performance across the entire district on a variety of indicators used in the identification and analysis of achievement gaps among the student groups designated by the federal No Child Left Behind Act and related Alaska state regulations.

Part II of the report provides summary profiles for each of the ASD schools. Part II includes information on the attainment of school goals, staff and student demographics, and student academic achievement at the school level.

Ms. Laurel Vorachek introduced members of her team including Mr. Eugene Geller, Dr. Xiong Sun, and Mr. Christine Leibner.

Ms. Vorachek noted that the format of the Profile of Performance report is the same as it has been in previous years. The report has been separated into two books this year so that it is a little easier to manage. She noted that each particular data reporting point will always quote the source. She reviewed the list of data reporting points for the Profile including the Fall OASIS, the Participation File, the NCLB Summary Data Collection, the Report Card Data Submission, and the SMS Year-End.

Ms. Vorachek provided a brief review of the data on each of the tables in the Profile. Ms. Vorachek pointed out the pattern of the percentage of white students continues to decline, falling from 66% in '98-'99 to 54.9% in '05-'06. Under the Socioeconomic Status of Students, Ms. Vorachek noted that 33.5% of enrolled students are classified as Economically Disadvantaged Students (EDS) for '05-'06. She reported that, overall, our EDS students did score lower than our non-EDS students.

On the Special Programs' Population table under Title VII Indian Education Eligible Students, Ms. Vorachek noted that the drastic increase in the figure reflects a concerted effort to get 506 Forms returned by the students. Ms. Vorachek reviewed new data on bilingual students. She noted that the majority of our students tested into the intermediate and proficient levels. In fact, only 48 students out of the 7876 bilingual students in the District tested at the beginner low category in overall proficiency.

Ms. Vorachek reviewed the seven general board goals and the indicators under each one. These goals are as follows:

1. Increase in achievement on the state measures of academic performance
2. Increase in reading achievement of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders
3. Increase in the percentage of students in the accelerated math sequence
4. Decrease in the dropout rate
5. Increase in the graduation rate
6. Increase in the percentage of high school student successfully completing higher-level courses
7. Improve customer service and satisfaction

She noted that the data may be reported by status or growth in this year's Profile. With status information we are looking at comparing groups comprised of different students, such as comparing last year's fifth graders with this year's fifth graders. With growth we are looking at the same students from year to year. So if the student does not have scores in both years they are not included in the calculation.

Ms. Vorachek reviewed the results of each indicator under each goal individually. The results on detailed on pages 34 - 255 in the District Overview of the Profile of Performance report. As she reviewed the results in reducing the achievement gap in several areas, Ms. Vorachek

explained that there are good ways to reduce the achievement gap and there are not such good ways to reduce the achievement gap. The good way is when the group you are comparing against continues to grow but the study group grows at a faster rate. The less desirable way to reduce the achievement gap is when the group you are comparing to loses ground.

On Goal 2, the year to year comparison of % proficient in reading, the data indicated that 80.85% of our third grade students are at grade level. This is an extremely impressive result. Ms. Vorachek explained that the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) in Goal 2, Indicator 'b' is not an accountability piece but is an assessment that is used in our elementary schools. The DRA is an excellent formative assessment for the Standards Based Assessment. Ms. Vorachek noted that the DRA is really being used in a diagnostic fashion as there are very specific interventions and remediation efforts based upon assessment results.

When looking at Goal 6, Indicator 'a', Ms. Vorachek explained that the students are tested in reading, language and math in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The District saw percentage points gained in all subjects, in both grades. She was very excited to see these results.

Ms. Vorachek noted that it was a great year for the Anchorage School District. She reported that these are the best data results that she has seen since joining the Assessment department. She highlighted the numbers noting that there was an increase in the percent proficient in language arts and math, the achievement gap was reduced, over 80% of District students are reading at grade level in third grade, and there was a 98.3% gain of students who completed Algebra I in eighth grade or earlier. There was a reduction in the dropout rate and an increase in the graduation rate. These are just some of the important achievements shown by the data. In addition, a baseline has been established for customer service.

Ms. Comeau voiced her appreciation to all of the folks who contributed to preparing the Profile of Performance and particularly to all of the staff whose work was so critically to the results seen in the Profile.

4. ASD Memorandum # 143 - 2006-2007 Ethnicity Report

Today 46 percent of the students in the Anchorage School District are ethnically diverse, compared to 13 percent in 1976, thirty years ago. Of today's ethnic minority population, the Alaska Native/American Indian (13 percent) category is the largest, followed by the Asian/Pacific Islander (11 percent), African American/Black (7 percent), and Hispanic (6 percent) groups. Since 1997-98, the fastest growing ethnic population, percentage-wise, has been Asian/Pacific Islander, followed by Hispanic. The Asian/Pacific Islander ethnic group grew by 44 percent and the Hispanic ethnic group grew by 29 percent.

5. ASD Memorandum # 139 - First Quarter Parent/Teacher Conference Report 2006-2007

The School Board and the Administration have long supported and encouraged opportunities for parents and teachers to meet to discuss student progress at various times during the school year. In many cases, students have been encouraged to be active participants in these conferences.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Kennedy reported that Wendler Middle School will do a roll-out on the One-to-One Project at 9:30 a.m. on Friday. Everyone was invited to attend.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS LITIGATION

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of December 11, 2006, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:55 p.m.

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Jeff Friedman, President

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Mary Marks, Clerk

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Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

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Date Minutes Approved