

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 25, 2007

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, June 25, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. Vice-President, Macon Roberts, presided.

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

Board Members Present: John Steiner, Macon Roberts, Crystal Kennedy, Jeff Friedman, Chris Tuck, and Mary Marks. Tim Steele joined by phone.

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Rhonda Gardner, Leslie Vandergaw, Mike Henry, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Eric Tollefsen, Michele Egan, George Vakalis, Damita Owen, Jose DelReal, Pam Chenier, Johanna Lee, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Friedman noted that Memorandum #335, No Child Left Behind Federal Programs Consolidated Project Application for 2007-2008, was revised. He also reported that there was an addendum to the Personnel Report.

The agenda was approved with the addendum and the revision by unanimous consent.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Kennedy announced that the Policy Subcommittee will meet Wednesday, June 27th at 8:30 a.m. in the Board Conference Room.

Mr. Steiner announced that the Legislative Subcommittee will meet Friday, June 29th at 8:30 a.m. in the Board Conference Room.

Ms. Comeau announced that the district requested a waiver from the AASA Board of Directors to allow the Region IV Cross Country Regional Meet to be held on Sunday, September 23rd. She reported that the ASAA Board of Directors voted five to three to deny that request. She noted that the district will be rescheduling the meet on Friday, September 21, 2007.

Ms. Comeau announced that all Anchorage School District administrative offices will be closed next week, the first week of July.

Mr. Roberts announced that the School Board will not hold regular meetings during the month of July but that committee meetings will continue to be held as necessary.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Mr. Jose DelReal reported that the Student Advisory Board is on summer break and will not meet again until the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year.

2. Military Delegate

Lt. Col Luu was not able to attend.

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

Ms. Owen presented the MECAC Year-End Report. She noted that the committee appreciated the opportunity to meet together and be a part of listening to parents. They also appreciated the opportunity to bring issues to the Board.

Ms. Owen noted that MECAC met twice a month for ten months and were able to hold two forums. They ended the year recognizing that one of the challenges was having enough discretionary time to serve on other ASD committees. The membership was encouraged to go back into their communities and look for additional volunteers who could spend time interacting with the District. The MECAC is planning three additional forums in the coming year.

The MECAC came up with two recommendations that they would like the district and the Board to focus on this coming year. The

MECAC encouraged the district to work to develop a greater partnership between ASD and the Anchorage business community in order to support paid time off for parents so that they can attend parent-teacher conferences at least twice a year. They believed that this will facilitate great participation by parents at those conferences. In addition the MECAC would like to see a measurable goal in the Six-Year Plan that would require school principals to demonstrate and report on a monthly basis the activities they are engaged in that encourage racial diversity in their teaching and counseling staff. They would also like a report on activities which support an atmosphere in their schools that support professionals from all cultures to feel comfortable working in their schools. It was believed that this is important in attracting and retaining teachers from multi-ethnic groups and that a more aggressive effort needs to be made to diversify our teacher and counseling staff.

Ms. Owen thanked the Board for allowing the MECAC a voice in these meetings and for supporting their efforts this year and looked forward to continuing their work next year.

Ms. Marks asked whether the MECAC has a liaison to the School Business Partnership (SBP) Board. Ms. Comeau reported that to her knowledge there has never been a designated seat on the SBP Board for a representative from MECAC. That does not mean that such a position can not be designated in the future. She believed that this is an excellent topic for those who do attend that meeting to begin that discussion. Mr. Steiner noted that the topic is also a good issue to bring up to the Chamber of Commerce and the Assembly.

Ms. Marks believed that adding a position on the School Business Partnership (SBP) for a representative from MECAC is a great idea and hope that the recommendation to do so would be addressed by the SBP Board.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Paul D. Kendall explained that he has been watching the School Board for some time and it seemed to him that the Board has lost its' mission. He voiced his appreciation for Ms. Comeau and indicated his belief that she has, by sheer will, moved the District forward and expanded it rather than letting it be disassembled by the impact of a society that no longer has a vision. He felt compelled to speak to the Board as he watched the

discussion regarding moving the cross country meet. Making an exception for religions or accommodations for those that would impact the greater society caused him great concern, noting that there are over 11 thousand religions around the world.

Mr. Kendall pointed out his frustration with the public's ability to engage in calm, contemplative dialogue with the Board in the three minutes allowed to speakers. He asked that a better mechanism be developed in which individuals can engage the Board outside of business meetings.

Mr. Friedman acknowledged that individuals are only afforded a short time on the agenda at Board meetings but noted that each member of the Board has contact information and they are all more than happy to speak with people outside of these meetings. Mr. Kendall voiced his appreciation for that but noted that some of the discussions need to engage the greater collective. So many problems are interwoven and need to be discussed through the larger body. He believed that shutting down the ability to do that is a fundamental flaw in this institution as it is in the political system.

Ms. Comeau noted that the one of the issues that the Board is wrestling with right now is high schools and their purpose in the twenty-first century. She explained that the Board held a forum and invited the public in and spent over three hours doing just what Mr. Kendall is asking. She requested Mr. Kendall's contact information so that he can be invited to attend those types of events each time they are held. There are a number of forums being planned on a variety of issues over the next year and the Board is extremely interested in having the public participate. There are lots of opportunities where the public is invited to come in and engage with the Board and the administration in a much more casual, open manner. Most meetings are taped and broadcast if the format is conducive to that. Every attempt is made to be very open and transparent to the public.

Ms. Kennedy noted that the Policy Subcommittee will be meeting Wednesday and is open to the public. She explained that at least three Board members are typically present at those meetings and invited Mr. Kendall to attend.

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 - February 26, 2007
- b. Special Meeting - June 11, 2007

2. ASD Memorandum # 346 - Naming of the Anchorage High School Auditorium

It is the Superintendent's recommendation that the School Board approve the request of the West Anchorage High School staff, PTSA and Alumni Association to name the auditorium at West Anchorage High School the "Anchorage High School Auditorium".

3. ASD Memorandum # 336 - Budget Adjustments for FY 2006-2007

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 \$938,800 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 \$2,300,000 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.

4. ASD Memorandum # 294 - Award of Contract: K-12 Student Information System

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve award of a contract to C Innovation, Inc.: to conduct a Fit Gap Analysis at a cost of \$147,935; and, upon successful completion of the Fit Gap Analysis, to provide a comprehensive web-based K-12 Student Information System to include Legacy Data Conversion, Data Integration, and professional services, at a cost of \$630,717; and to provide fixed annual software maintenance and support at an annual cost of \$160,550 for a three-year period (\$481,650), in the total contract amount not to exceed \$1,260,302.

5. ASD Memorandum # 335 - No Child Left Behind Federal Programs Consolidated Project Application for 2007-2008

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to submit the FY 2007-2008 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 \$20,208,188.

6. ASD Memorandum # 339 - School Board Policy Addition: Appendix A Student Rights and Responsibilities - Cellular Phone and Other Electronic Communication Device Usage & Cyberbullying (Second Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt on Second Reading additions to the Student Rights and Responsibilities document (Appendix A to Board policy 450) defining the rights and responsibilities of students regarding cellular phone and other electronic communication device usage and cyberbullying.

It is further recommended that the School Board amend the policy related to cellular phone use as reflected in Attachment C.

7. ASD Memorandum # 328 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Lowe's Toolbox for Education

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant award from Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation for Willard L. Bowman Elementary School in the amount of \$7,500 to construct an elevated boardwalk in Tanglewood Park.

8. ASD Memorandum # 342 - Textbook Adoption: AP Statistics

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the adoption of the following math textbook and materials for Advanced Placement Statistics:

The Practice of Statistics, 3rd Ed. Yates et al. W. H. Freeman and Company. New York. 2008.

9. ASD Memorandum # 343 - Curriculum and Textbook Adoption: 9th and 10th Grade World and US History

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the attached curriculum (see Appendices A and B) and recommended textbooks for ninth grade World History and tenth grade U.S. History (Appendix C).

10. ASD Memorandum # 344 - Textbook Adoption: 6-8 Middle School Math

It is the recommendation of the administration that the School Board approve and adopt the following math textbooks and materials for Math 6, Math 7, and Math 8.

MathScape: Seeing and Thinking Mathematically, Courses 1, 2, 3.
Education Development Center, Inc. Glencoe /McGraw-Hill. 2005.

11. ASD Memorandum # 345 - Textbook Adoption: K-5 Handwriting Curriculum

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the purchase of *Handwriting Without Tears*, a handwriting skills instruction program supplement to Houghton Mifflin Reading, grades K-5. Implementation will begin in grades K, 1, & 2, for the 2007-2008 school year.

12. ASD Memorandum # 247 - Award of Contract: Magazine/Periodical Subscription Service

It is the recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contract with EBSCO Subscription Services, for a three-year period, July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010, with the option to renew for up to two additional years, for an annual estimated amount of \$49,456 and an estimated amount of \$148,368 for the three year contract period.

13. ASD Memorandum # 348 - Award of Contract: Dairy Products

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Peterkin Distributors to furnish Dairy Products in the estimated aggregate amount of \$1,271,664 with three additional one-year options to renew.

14. ASD Memorandum # 349 - Award of Contract: Fresh Pizza

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to

Buckstone West LLC DBA Papa Johns Pizza to furnish fresh pizza in the estimated aggregate amount of \$255,213 with two additional one-year options to renew.

15. ASD Memorandum # 326 - Personnel Report

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

Ms. Comeau noted that there was a speaker for Memorandum #346, Naming of the Anchorage High School Auditorium, and asked that it be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Steiner asked that Memorandum #336, Budget Adjustments for FY 2006-2007, be pulled for discussion.

Ms. Kennedy asked that Memorandum #339, School Board Policy Addition: Appendix A Student Rights and Responsibilities - Cellular Phone and Other Electronic Communication Device Usage & Cyberbullying (Second Reading), be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Steiner asked that Memorandum #345, Textbook Adoption: K-5 Handwriting Curriculum, be pulled for discussion.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 26, 2007 and the Special Meeting of June 11, 2007 and Memoranda #294, #335 as revised, #328, #342, #343, #344, #347, #348, #349, and #330 with addendum.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Vandergaw introduced the new middle school supervisor, Mr. Jerry Kuche. She also introduced Mr. Ron Brown, Mr. Brendon Wilson, and Mr. Brandon Locke who will all be new assistant principals at the middle school level.

Ms. Chenier introduced Mr. John Uhler. He is the chief technology officer for C Innovation, Inc. which is the product and the vendor the district has chosen for the Student Information System. Mr. Uhler thanked the Board. He noted that C Innovation is always excited to work with quality school districts and is looking forward to working with the Anchorage School District.

Mr. Steiner noted that he had spent a lot of time over the last twenty-four hours asking questions regarding the text book adoptions on the agenda this evening. He thanked all of the people and committees that worked so hard on that effort. He also thanked the people who had answered all of his questions.

ASD Memorandum # 346 - Naming of the Anchorage High School Auditorium

It is the Superintendent's recommendation that the School Board approve the request of the West Anchorage High School staff, PTSA and Alumni Association to name the auditorium at West Anchorage High School the "Anchorage High School Auditorium".

ACTION:

Moved by: Mary Marks
Seconded by: Jeff Friedman

To approve the request of the West Anchorage High School staff, PTSA and Alumni Association to name the auditorium at West Anchorage High School the "Anchorage High School Auditorium".

Mr. Mike Boots spoke in support of the recommendation. He noted that there have been ongoing efforts over the last two years to raise money to renovate the West High School Auditorium. The renovation efforts have been successful and are coming close to an end. As part of those efforts a great deal of history of both West High and its' predecessor, Anchorage High School including the original auditorium, has come to

light. He noted that the auditorium has never really had a true name other than it is attached to West High School.

Mr. Boots wanted to make it clear that the advisory group was formed at the request of Ms. Comeau and an effort was made in forming that committee to draw from all parts of the West High community. This request comes from that committee which has operated independently. This particular request has not been officially requested by the PTSA, the Alumni Association or any other group other than the Restoration Advisory Committee. Ms. Comeau noted that it would be appropriate to amend the motion to approve the request of the West High Auditorium Restoration Advisory Committee rather than the current wording on the memorandum.

Mr. Steiner asked whether members of the advisory group spoke at all as to their sense of how their various organizations felt about this recommendation. Mr. Boots indicated that members of the Alumni Association felt that that organization would be very much in favor of the recommendation. The representative of the PTSA was in favor of the recommendation. While that individual did not specifically speak on behalf of that entire organization, Mr. Boots felt confident that if there had been concern regarding the support of the PTSA the representative would have indicated that concern.

Ms. Comeau noted that the administration strongly supports this recommendation. This would be a wonderful way to honor the history of Anchorage High School.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by: John Steiner
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To delete the words "West Anchorage High School staff, PTSA and Alumni Association" from the original motion and to substitute the words "West High School Auditorium Restoration Advisory Committee".

VOTE on the Amendment:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Mr. Steiner had some concern whether the process has circumvented such groups as the PSTA and the Alumni Association and presumed that they would approve without actually asking for their formal approval. Ms. Comeau noted that she is comfortable that the Auditorium Restoration Advisory Committee has more than adequately represented their various organizations. Mr. Henry had a good sense that there will be no problems with this recommendation at West High School after visiting with the principal, Mr. Stone.

VOTE on Main Motion as Amended:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 336 - Budget Adjustments for FY 2006-2007

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 \$938,800 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 \$2,300,000 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.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to process budget transfers from unexpended accounts at year-end in the amount of \$938,800 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 \$2,300,000 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.

Ms. Comeau explained that this is the same procedure that is used every year at the end of the year. She noted that this recommendation reflects end of year, one time expenditures that the administration believed will not only support the instructional program from the support side but will also allow the district to pay the utility bills and move forward on the gate installation at the transportation center which comes about as the extension of the new Bragaw Street is completed. Many other items are an attempt to upgrade technology systems. As the district becomes more and more dependent on technology to support everything we do the infrastructure needs to be closely attended to. Ms. Comeau briefly reviewed the items on the recommendation.

Mr. Steele asked what the \$300,000 earmarked for Bandwidth will buy the district over what we currently have. Mr. Wood explained that the district currently has a 30 megabyte access and this will give the district an additional 30 megabyte access for the period of one year. If we decide to continue at that level of access for additional years it will become an ongoing expense. The purpose behind this is primarily to find out just exactly how much bandwidth we need as an organization. We are doing a lot of different things to manage the use of bandwidth and educate our staff and students on how to use it but we are finding that we are hitting the ceiling on our available access. Mr. Gardner added that our lack of bandwidth is really impacting our instructional programs. As more and more of our programs become technology and internet intensive we have had many situations where teachers have had to cancel lessons because they could not get the access needed. So though this is a one-time expense our goal is to examine what we use, how we use it and determine what is needed on an ongoing level.

Mr. Steele asked for clarification regarding the replacement buses. It was his understanding that the district requires the contracted bus service provider to replace buses every twelve years and felt that the district fleet ought to be held to at least that same standard. Mr. Kalmus explained that the contractor requirement is a maximum of twelve years with a fleet average of ten years. The district does meet the fleet average but does have vehicles that are considerable over twelve years old. He noted that the district has specified vehicles purchased in the last ten years to last at

least fifteen years so we are buying a heavier duty vehicle than what is operated by First Student.

Mr. Steiner noted that he had pulled this recommendation to discuss the bandwidth question. He felt it was important to understand that this is sort of like a one year pilot project but would take an ongoing dollar amount to continue at whatever level it is decided is needed.

Mr. Steiner noted that he had had some concerns regarding the increase in maintenance positions in light of the fact that Clark Middle School, which has highly intensive maintenance needs, would not be open next year and that the new Begich Middle School should have relatively few maintenance needs. He reported that he had had discussion with Mr. Vakalis and Mr. Peterson who had explained to him that there are a lot of back work orders. Mr. Steiner explained that the municipality has a standard of one maintenance worker for every 51,000 square feet. Right now the district is staffed at one maintenance worker for about every 70,000 square feet. This increase will give the district about a two-year period where we will slightly exceed that average but still not to the level of the municipal average and will help to get the backlog of work orders down. He believed that this is really a sound investment in that the district does not want to have to replace facilities faster simply because we can not keep up with the maintenance. He voiced his appreciation to Mr. Vakalis and Mr. Peterson for their time in explaining this information.

Mr. Steiner noted that the equipment being replaced by the purchase of the computers that handle our IFAS system, which is our financial accounting system, will be able to be used by the Division of Instruction. This recommendation gives us increased instructional capacity.

Mr. Steiner thanked everyone for their efforts to answer his questions throughout the day. He wanted the public to understand that a great deal of time and effort goes into reviewing these recommendations and that due diligence has been done.

Ms. Kennedy noted that many of her questions had been the same as those asked by other board members. She wondered if there should be a process so that questions asked by each member and the answers to those questions could be shared with all board members. Ms. Comeau expressed her feeling that the staff would much rather spend the time speaking directly with each member to address individual questions, even if the process seems to be repetitive. Having individual dialogue allows both parties to fully understand both the questions and answers. She

explained that emails are public records and so the staff must be very careful about what is put in an email which can be an extremely time-consuming effort.

Mr. Friedman commented on the maintenance issue and noted that it is a real compliment to our staff that we are able to do as well as we do with a much thinner staff. Ms. Comeau added that the wear and tear on schools which are heavily used by both children and the public is much different than the use of an office building. Mr. Steiner noted that the municipality also has a relatively efficient standard compared to the commercial industry.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 339 - School Board Policy Addition:
Appendix A Student Rights and Responsibilities - Cellular Phone and
Other Electronic Communication Device Usage & Cyberbullying (Second
Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt on Second Reading additions to the Student Rights and Responsibilities document (Appendix A to Board policy 450) defining the rights and responsibilities of students regarding cellular phone and other electronic communication device usage and cyberbullying.

It is further recommended that the School Board amend the policy related to cellular phone use as reflected in Attachment C.

ACTION:

Moved by: Crystal Kennedy
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To adopt, on Second Reading, additions to the Student Rights and Responsibilities document (Appendix A to Board policy 450) defining the rights and responsibilities of students regarding cellular phone and other electronic communication device usage and cyberbullying.

It is further moved to amend the policy related to cellular phone use as reflected in Attachment C.

Ms. Kennedy wanted to point out that the Policy Subcommittee had discussed a couple of questions that had been raised during First Reading. She pointed out the minor changes as reflected on Attachment C.

Mr. Steele noted that this is a relatively new process whereby the Board makes sure that the exact wording passed on First Reading is read into the record if there were any changes made in the interim.

Mr. Friedman reported that the topic of using a cell phone to harass, threaten or embarrass had been discussed by the Policy Subcommittee in light of the fact that the term "embarrass" can be rather vague. He noted that he is satisfied with the Policy Subcommittee's decision to leave that word in the policy. It was his understanding that principals and other will have to use some judgment when determining the intentions of students.

Ms. Gardner voiced her appreciation to the Board for their involvement in the process of developing this policy. She believed that the administrators will appreciate this policy and will certainly use good judgment in enforcing it. As with all policies, if we learn that there are pieces that need adjustment the administration will bring those back to the Board.

Mr. Steiner noted that it would be wise to distribute information to the students and parents at the beginning of the year regarding what this policy is and what will happen if students abuse the privileges afforded by the policy. Both the students and the parents have to honor the privileges. Ms. Comeau assured the Board that a fair amount of time and energy will be put in to educating parents and students regarding this policy.

Mr. DelReal asked why passing periods were not included as permitted times to use cell phones. Ms. Gardner responded that there had been a great deal of feedback, particularly from principals, that allowing cell phone use during passing time would be very disruptive. There was a great deal of concern about tardiness. She also noted that when the administration visited with the Student Advisory Board on the issue of cell phones there was a clear consensus that they could live without cell phones during passing periods as long as they could use them during

lunch. Ms. Comeau noted that the administration will be attending the first Student Advisory Board meeting to explain the policy. As the year goes on the administration will look to the students as well as staff at the schools to determine how the policy is working. She indicated a trust in the students to understand that use of cell phones is a privilege and to adhere to this policy. If that does not happen, the next step will basically be to ban them completely. While she does not believe anyone wants that to happen, teachers have to be able to teach in the classroom and administration and security should have to spend inordinate amounts of time worrying about cell phones while school is going on.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 345 - Textbook Adoption: K-5 Handwriting Curriculum

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the purchase of *Handwriting Without Tears*, a handwriting skills instruction program supplement to Houghton Mifflin Reading, grades K-5. Implementation will begin in grades K, 1, & 2, for the 2007-2008 school year.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To approve the purchase of *Handwriting Without Tears*, a handwriting skills instruction program supplement to Houghton Mifflin Reading, grades K-5. Implementation will begin in grades K, 1, & 2, for the 2007-2008 school year.

Dr. Silverstein introduced Ms. Mardell Kiesel. Ms. Kiesel explained that the district had adopted the D'Nealian curriculum in approximately 1989 as part of the last major elementary level comprehensive reading and writing program prior to the Houghton-Mifflin. Over time there has been inconsistency between schools in the amount of handwriting instruction

and in terms of what grade handwriting instruction is completed. There has been a great deal of discussion in the elementary curriculum committee regarding the place, the appropriateness, and the degree to which handwriting instruction is necessary for children to be fluent, to be confident and to be able to express themselves well in writing. In 2004 a position statement was drafted. From there it was decided to watch and monitor the Houghton-Mifflin program to see if those materials were sufficient to provide the consistency and the level of systemic instructions we were hoping to see grades K-5. This past year it was decided that we were not seeing that consistency. At that point the committee went back to the research, brought themselves up to date, looked at all of the materials available, and invited publishers to meet the district's criteria packet. Ms. Kiesel briefly reviewed the criteria packet and how it had been developed.

Mr. Steiner agreed that handwriting is something that every student should be proficient in even though keyboarding has become so common. He indicated that he had just seen the books for the first time this evening. His concern is that he had trouble reading the handwriting style and that a child learning to write in that style might have trouble communicating. He asked what the considerations were in moving to a different writing style than the D'Nealian method. Ms. ** shared the discussion that went into that decision. Mr. Steiner clarified that his concern was with the cursive letters rather than the printed letters.

Ms. Kiesel believed that as children transition from second to third grade, which is where the cursive transition takes place, that the *Handwriting Without Tears* which is a more simple letter formation procedures will complement more children and their developmental readiness to write clearly and fluently. It is believed that the vertical letter leading into a cursive formation, which may or may not have the degree of slant that we are accustomed to from the D'Nealian process, is eventually going to lead to more writing and writing with more complexity. Mr. Steiner remained concerned that we could be teaching students to write well but that other people will have difficulty reading it.

Mr. Friedman indicated that he was happy to approve this recommendation but agreed with Mr. Steiner's concerns. He believed that our middle school teachers will need training to learn what this new writing is.

Ms. Kennedy asked whether other districts are using this curriculum. Ms. Kiesel noted that other districts are using the program and that it is the

fastest growing writing program across the nation right now. It is achieving that success factor partly because occupational therapists are behind.

Ms. Comeau noted that, as this recommendation indicates, the curriculum will be implemented at grades K, 1, and 2 this year. She indicated that the program will be closely monitored and evaluated prior to continuing implementation on into the upper levels.

Ms. Kennedy voiced her continued concern and explained her difficulty in recognizing some words in the instructional materials written with cursive letters. She asked whether children are not being required to replicate each letter exactly thereby making the process less traumatic. Ms. Kiesel responded that the instruction does expect a certain letter formation. It is simply believed that there is less likelihood of frustration utilizing this method.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Dr. Silverstein congratulated all of the review committees that have participated in bringing about these changes. She believed that there is a real shift into looking at data to see that methods and materials are working. All of the committees have used research and have been teacher-driven. That process builds capacity within each school, allowing for expertise within each building. All of these committees are trying to establish a base from which we can work to determine the best programs for the Anchorage School District.

Mr. Henry introduced the new assistant principal at Eagle River High School, Mr. Arthur Sosa.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 331 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of June 1, 2007 through June 18, 2007.

2. ASD Memorandum # 337 - Update on Indian Education Program and Native Advisory Committee

The Federal Government maintains a special interest in the education of Alaska Native and American Indian students based on the unique relationship between the Federal Government and Native peoples, as established through Federal treaties, statutes, and the United States Constitution. The Title VII Indian Education Program, Subchapter VII, 20U.S.C. Section 7424 of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 addresses the historic problem of low achievement among Native students. Additionally, it provides the opportunity for parents, teachers of Native students, high school students, community members and the Native Advisory Committee (NAC) to provide input to program development, review program progress, and set priorities.

3. ASD Memorandum # 333 - End-of-the-Year Membership Summary for 2006-2007

The total active enrollment at the end of the 2006-07 school year was 47,783. This enrollment represents a decrease of 1,285 students when compared to September 29, 2006. Table 1 compares the beginning and ending membership totals for the year. For the same time period for the 2005-06 school year, membership declined by 1,247.

4. ASD Memorandum # 334 - Facility Contract Modification Report and Completed Projects for the Month of May 2007

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

5. ASD Memorandum # 329 - Operating Budget Transfers - May Monthly Report FY 2006-2007

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of May 2007 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 2007 and related information are available in the Budget

Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

6. ASD Memorandum # 332 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap:
May 31, 2007

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, 2007.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Marks congratulated Ms. Comeau who has been elected president of the Council of Great City Schools.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS
LITIGATION

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of June 25, 2007, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:15 p.m.

Macon Roberts, Vice-President

Crystal Kennedy, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved