

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 3, 2007

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, December 3, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, Tim Steele, presided.

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

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

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Rhonda Gardner, Mike Henry, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Eric Tollefsen, Michele Egan, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Lt. Col. Sonny Luu, Jose DelReal, Ray Amsden, Marie Laule, Chad Stiteler, Ophelia Dargon-Steed, Laurel Vorachek, Pam Chenier, Johanna Lee, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Roberts announced that the superintendent, several board members and several district staff members attended the NAACP CT Lewis Freedom Fund Banquet last Friday, November 30, 2007. He remarked on the talented students who were featured on the program.

Ms. Comeau announced that the State Board of Education will be meeting this Thursday and Friday, December 6 and 7, 2007. Governor Palin is scheduled to announce her recommendations on education funding during the meeting on Friday, December 7 at 2:00 p.m.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

The Bayshore Hand Chimes Choir, under the direction of Debbie Wakefield, performed several numbers for the entertainment of the Board and other members of public.

ASD Memorandum #137- Recognition of the Alaska Federation of Natives Educator of the Year, Shirley Kendall

Mr. Steiner read that East High School Tlingit language teacher, Shirley Kendall, was presented with the Eileen Panigeo MacLean Education award at the Alaska Federation of Natives convention in Fairbanks in October. Shirley was noted for her many contributions to the Anchorage School District in developing an Alaska Native language curriculum, and for her commitment to her students.

Shirley was acknowledged for being a Harvard-educated, Alaska Native woman, who chose to bring her education and skills back to Alaska. She is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Native languages and heritage. Her life's work has had a profound impact on the education of Native students, the Native community and educational system.

As Doreen Brown, supervisor of the ASD Title VII, Indian Education Program, said, Shirley truly deserves this honor. Her passion is educating students.

The Anchorage School Board recognized Shirley Kendall for earning this honor in every way. Her contributions have helped weave Alaska Native culture into our district - through the teaching of curriculum and increasing awareness of Native values and living history.

Ms. Marks noted that she has had the privilege of working with Ms. Kendall in several different capacities over the years. She presented Ms. Kendall copies of the instructional DVD *Voices of Promise* for use in her classes.

ASD Memorandum #138- Recognition of School Bus Fleet Administrator of the Year, Steve Kalmes

Mr. Friedman read that Steve Kalmes, director of Student Transportation for the district, earned a national honor at the National Association of Pupil Transportation convention in Grand Rapids, Mich. in late October.

Steve took home the *School Bus Fleet* Administrator of the Year award for his outstanding managerial skills and dedication to professionalism. "School Bus Fleet" is the trade journal for pupil transportation and serves more than 24,000 subscribers.

Steve is a former president and regional director of the NAPT. He currently serves as chair of the association's professional development series.

The Anchorage School Board recognized Steve for his continued success as an Anchorage School District administrator. His dedication to professionalism has made Anchorage a safer place for students and brought national recognition to our district through his efforts.

Oral Language Interpreter Center Project Presentation

Ms. Comeau introduced Robin Bronen, Executive Director of the Alaska Immigration Justice Project, and Barb Jacobs, Program Manager of the Language Interpreter Center. She noted that the Anchorage School District has been working with a diverse group of people and organizations for the last several years to help develop the Language Interpreter Center.

Ms. Bronen explained that many government agencies, non-profit organization, and private businesses in Alaska serve customers and clients with limited English proficiency. A 2004 survey conducted by the Alaska Court System identified the need for qualified language interpreters to help provide better services to these individuals. At the time, there was no comprehensive system for identifying qualified interpreters and linking them to those in need of their services. In addition, there were too few qualified language interpreters in the state, no programs for providing necessary training, and no system for screening, testing and certifying qualified interpreters. The Language Interpreter Center is a collaborative, multi-agency, public-private effort to create a pool of qualified language interpreters for public and private entities statewide.

Ms. Bronen reviewed several of the Language Interpreter Center program goals which include providing training and certification to interpreters and linking qualified interpreters to government, business and service organizations for Alaskans with limited English proficiency. Ms. Jacobs explained the recruitment, training for interpreters and professional development efforts being made through the Language Interpreter Center. Ms. Jacobs noted that it is the strong desire of the Language Interpreter Center to provide services so that limited English-proficient Alaskans are treated fairly and equally.

Ms. Bronen thanked Ms. Comeau for being so supportive of the efforts to establish the Language Interpreter Center.

Mr. Steiner asked whether there is enough demand for interpreter services in any specific language that someone could work full-time as an interpreter. Ms. Bronen noted that Yu'pik, Inupiak, Spanish, Tagalog, Korean, Russian, and Samoan are the seven languages identified in the survey as the most prevalent in the state. Having a central location where all of the different entities across the state who need interpretive services seek out those services increases the economic opportunities for individuals providing the services. Mr. Steiner asked whether there were different levels of certification for interpreters. Ms. Bronen explained that certification is different depending on the field. For instance, certification for interpretation in the legal field has one process which is different than the certification for the medical field. She explained that standards also vary by state.

Mr. Steele asked whether the Language Interpreter Center offers services for the deaf and hard of hearing community. Ms. Bronen explained that there is already program in place which provides interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing community which is far ahead of the oral interpreter program. She noted that the Language Interpreter Center can definitely learn from the process established by that organization.

Ms. Comeau suggested that two reports on the agenda, the Class Size Report and the Ethnicity Report, would be very useful to add to the conversation regarding the changing demographics of the Anchorage community. She noted the growing Hmong and Laotian population in the district.

In response to a question from Ms. Marks it was noted that the Alaskan Native Justice Center was involved in the Interpreter Summits that the Alaska Court System facilitated and has been a part of the on-going process.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Mr. Jose DelReal was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Military Delegate

Lt. Col. Luu did not have anything to report. He indicated his pleasure that so many of our soldiers are home for the holidays.

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

The representative from M.E.C.A.C. was unable to attend the meeting.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Dennis Traylor spoke on the issue of Best Value Contracting. He requested that, as the board considers the criteria for Best Value Contracting, the safety record of a contractor be considered. He also asked that apprenticeship training programs be included in the criteria. He noted his belief that apprenticeship training is not a union issue as there are non-union contractors who support apprenticeships.

Mr. Patrick Falon spoke in support of the prequalification for the general contractor method. He indicated that some of the issues that should be considered are the contractor record of on-time completion, compliance with laws and regulations, and the safety record. In addition, he believed that having an apprenticeship program should be included on the criteria list. Mr. Falon also noted the importance of making sure that the General Contractor does not wrongly classify workers as independent contractors. He encouraged board support for pre-qualification for the general contractor method.

Dr. Teresa Obermeyer voiced her interest in being involved in the Superintendent's evaluation process. She indicated her desire to speak to the board during their Executive Session scheduled for Friday.

G. CONSENT AGENDA

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

1. Approval of Minutes

a. Special Meeting - November 12, 2007

2. ASD Memorandum # 104 - 2008 Legislative Priorities

The Legislative Subcommittee of the Anchorage School Board recommends the Board approve and adopt the 2008 Anchorage School District Legislative Priorities (Attachment A).

3. ASD Memorandum # 115 - Appointment of Controversial Issues Review Committee Members

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board appoint the following people to serve on the Controversial Issues Review Committee: Sheri Zachary, Elementary Librarian (new), Kyle Horn, Student Advisory Board (new), Christina Knapp, Student Advisory Board (new), Tanya Carney, Citizen-at-Large (returning), David Dunsmore, Citizen-at-Large (returning), Deanna Smith, Citizen-at-Large (returning), Davina Stallworth, Citizen-at-Large (returning), Ann Morgester, Coordinator, Library (returning), Grace Sy, Citizen-at-Large (returning), Jim Curran, PTSA (returning), Damito Owen, Minority Education Concerns Advisory Committee (returning), Gina Pastos, Secondary Principal (returning), Brooke Hull, Elementary Principal (returning), Mary Jo Iagulli, Middle School Librarian (returning), and Ghodsie Sabri, Minority Community (returning).

4. ASD Memorandum # 146 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 725 Purchasing and Contracting (First Reading)

It is the Policy Subcommittee's recommendation that the School Board adopt the proposed changes to School Board Policies: 725.211 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.212 Acquisition of Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.213 Acquisition of Projects valued at \$100,000 and above by use of Alternative Techniques; 725.22 Acquisition of Construction Projects and Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued less than \$100,000; 725.221 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued less than \$100,000; and 725.368.2(a) Appeal Process for Aggrieved Bidders/Proposers for Contract Awards of \$100,000 and above. These recommendations include minor changes to clarify the intent and use of these policies and to provide additional procurement methods that can be utilized when they are determined to be in the best interest of the District, reference attachment A.

5. ASD Memorandum # 66 - Acceptance of Sub-Recipient Grant Award: Skills Alaska, Avant-Garde Learning Foundation

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a sub-recipient grant for the U.S. Department of Defense's Project SOAR through a contract with the Avant-Garde Learning Foundation for \$109,000 for support of district use of the Skills Alaska program (formerly Following the Leaders).

6. ASD Memorandum # 126 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Manning Family Foundation

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to accept a cash grant from the Manning Family Foundation to Inlet View Elementary School in the amount of \$10,000.

7. ASD Memorandum # 139 - Continuation of Sub-Recipient Grant: Alaska Parent Information and Resource Center, Southeast Regional Resource Center

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to accept a sub-recipient grant from the U.S. Department of Education through a contract with the Southeast Regional Resource Center (SERRC) for \$152,664. This is the second year of a five-year partnership second- involving SERRC, the Anchorage School District, RurAL CAP, and two rural Alaskan school districts.

8. ASD Memorandum # 140 - Prior Approval of Grant Award: 21st Century Alaska Community Learning Centers

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for a five-year grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development for after-school programs, through the 21st Century Alaska Community Learning Centers program.

9. ASD Memorandum # 141 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Media Literacy/Substance Abuse Prevention Initiative

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority in the amount of \$81,000 to fund the Safe and Drug-Free Schools (SDFS) Program's media literacy/substance abuse prevention initiative.

10. ASD Memorandum # 144 - Acceptance of Grant Award: McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to accept a McKinney grant award from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development for \$51,340. This grant begins July 1, 2007 and ends June 30, 2008. The

Title I Child In Transition/Homeless Project administers McKinney funds.

11. ASD Memorandum # 117 - Award of Contract: Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Applied Microsystems, Inc. to purchase Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories in the amount of \$270,332.

12. ASD Memorandum # 125 - Award of Contract: Two School Buses

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to purchase two new 72 passenger Type D diesel school buses to Cascadia International, LLC in the amount of \$228,238.

13. ASD Memorandum # 123 - Personnel Report

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

Mr. Steiner requested that ASD Memorandum #146, School Board Policy Revision: Section 725 Purchasing and Contracting (First Reading); and ASD Memorandum #117, Award of Contract: Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories, be pulled for discussion.

Ms. Comeau requested that ASD Memorandum #122, Monthly Update Student Information System - Zangle; ASD Memorandum #120, Class Size Report 2007-2008; and ASD Memorandum #121, 2007-2008 Ethnicity Report, be pulled from the Superintendent's Report for presentations.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of November 12, 2007 and Memoranda #104, #115, #66, #126, #139, #140, #141, #144, #125, and #123.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 146 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 725 Purchasing and Contracting (First Reading)

It is the Policy Subcommittee's recommendation that the School Board adopt the proposed changes to School Board Policies: 725.211 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.212 Acquisition of Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.213 Acquisition of Projects valued at \$100,000 and above by use of Alternative Techniques; 725.22 Acquisition of Construction Projects and Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued less than \$100,000; 725.221 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued less than \$100,000; and 725.368.2(a) Appeal Process for Aggrieved Bidders/Proposers for Contract Awards of \$100,000 and above. These recommendations include minor changes to clarify the intent and use of these policies and to provide additional procurement methods that can be utilized when they are determined to be in the best interest of the District, see attachment A.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
Seconded by: Macon Roberts

To adopt the proposed changes to School Board Policies: 725.211 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.212 Acquisition of Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued at \$100,000 and above; 725.213 Acquisition of Projects valued at \$100,000 and above by use of Alternative Techniques; 725.22 Acquisition of Construction Projects and Architectural/Engineering Design Services valued less than \$100,000; 725.221 Acquisition of Construction Projects valued less than \$100,000; and 725.368.2(a) Appeal Process for Aggrieved Bidders/Proposers for Contract Awards of \$100,000 and above. These recommendations include minor changes to clarify the intent and use of these policies and to provide additional procurement methods that can be utilized when they are determined to be in the best interest of the District, reference attachment A.

Mr. Steiner reminded the board that the speakers who had addressed the board earlier this evening had suggested that consideration be given to including certain criteria in the Best Value Contracting qualification process. Those criteria may or may not relate to the value that the district might receive under a contract. Mr. Steiner reviewed the list of possible criteria for Best Value Contract listed on page three (3) of the memorandum. Some of the items mentioned by the speakers are clearly included within the types of items listed. Mr. Steiner noted that, while the apprenticeship program is something that is of value for the community and the industry, it may or may not be of value specifically to the district project. The proposed policy doesn't give any guidance as to the board's position on what kinds of things should be considered for best value. The pertinent facts suggest that best value consideration would be given to items that would specifically lead to positive performance on the contract for a good price, not necessarily those aspects that would go to the betterment of the community or industry. Mr. Steiner requested input from the administration as to whether the board would consider best value as adding value specifically to the project in question.

Ms. Comeau requested a presentation on this topic from Mr. Ray Amsden, Mr. Saul Friedman, and Mr. Mike Price. Mr. Amsden indicated that he welcomed the opportunity to bring these changes forward to the board and voiced his appreciation to the board for their consideration of the recommended policy changes. He noted that the memorandum listed some examples of potential criteria that could be used as a selection process. They are not intended to be exclusionary to other things. They are simple sample criteria that would typically be appropriate to projects. He noted that the list would be expanded based on the needs of a project. He believed that bringing well qualified, well trained trades people is a value to the district.

Mr. Mike Price indicated that the goal is to be able to attract the best of the industry for district projects. The district would like to be a client that is a preferred client for the bidders, general contractors, workers, sub-contractors and vendors. The desire is to provide alternative mechanisms when it is in the best interest of the project in order for the district to attract the best companies to provide the best work with the best people at the best price. It is felt that, when the appropriate projects come up, these policy changes will help the district do just that.

Mr. Saul Friedman, an attorney for the district, responded to the question of using apprenticeship programs as part of the criteria for potential bidders. He referenced 725.211(c) which sets forth a variety of criteria that would be evaluated separate and apart from cost. The very first item

listed is the ability, capacity and skill of the proposer to perform the contract. The district does not tell the proposer how it is going to perform the contract. It does not tell the proposer what educational standards or training is required in order to provide a successful project. The questions become how far the district wants to go in establishing criteria for a contractor and to what level the district wants to insert itself into the contractor's business. It is felt that the criteria presented can be objectively analyzed and allows a determination to be made as to whether or not a contractor meets various qualifications and is able to perform a job and provide benefit to the district which is over and above merely offering the lowest price. This policy does not dictate or demand how the contractor is going to do that.

Mr. Friedman referred to 725.211(c)(12) which indicated that after a contractor has met the minimum qualifications the district can then consider other enhancements offered by the proposer that would increase the quality, efficiency, or value of the project. He wondered if the board decides, as a matter of policy, that having an apprentice program generally will increase the quality, efficiency, or value of the project, whether it could be an item that could be included as part of the Best Value criteria to be considered. He did not suggest that an apprenticeship program be a yes/no factor but rather something that would add points to a proposer's score. Mr. Saul Friedman indicated that he was not prepared to provide an analysis as to whether or not including an apprenticeship program, which might require a contractor to have union affiliation in order to participate in it, would be legally appropriate. Mr. Amsden noted that there are apprenticeship programs that are non-union.

Mr. Tuck pointed out that, in his opinion, this is an educational issue. He noted that one of the district's goals is to maximize opportunity for life-long learning. He believed that, through policy, we can ensure that that happens. He noted that many non-union contractors have their own apprenticeship programs. Mr. Tuck believed that having an apprenticeship program should not be a requirement for bidding a job, rather that such a program should be considered as part of a weighted decision. He noted that he would like to see criteria added into the policy for apprenticeship provisions to be looked at and considered during the bid process and offered to make an amendment to that effect. He also believed that this should apply not only to Best Value Contracting but also to Design Build Contracting and Job Order Contracting as well.

Mr. Steele asked whether including an apprenticeship program in the criteria for consideration had been discussed by the policy subcommittee. Ms. Kennedy indicated that the issue had not been discussed at the

subcommittee level. Mr. Friedman pointed out that the actual policy on Best Value Contracting really does not specify any criteria at all. He believed that the policy subcommittee needs to discuss whether there should be criteria specified in that section or whether it should be left to the administration to develop and modify over time. He indicated that he was not prepared to take action on any changes at this time. He would like the policy subcommittee to have further opportunity to discuss these issues in light of the comments made this evening.

Mr. Steiner requested an explanation of what Best Value Contracting does that is not already possible in the Competitive Proposal Process (725.21). Mr. Saul Friedman explained that in the Competitive Proposal Process once the contractors are responsive to the requirements of the bid in that they meet the minimal qualifications the district accepts the lowest price from that group of contractors. The district does not evaluate the contractors to determine which ones might provide a better product to the district, which ones can work more efficiently, or make any other distinctions. In Best Value Contracting the district compares the qualifications of all of the contractors who are submitting proposals and they are awarded points on a system of evaluation which does not include the cost. Those points are then compared to the points that are awarded for the lowest price. So the contract could be awarded to a contractor who does not come in with the lowest cost based on achieving the most points overall. Mr. Steiner, referencing 725.211(b) noted his understanding that the policy language already allows for granting points using criteria in such a way that allows for consideration of other factors besides price. Mr. Price explained that the language Mr. Steiner indicated actually references policy 725.213 which is the policy addressing alternative acquisition techniques which includes the section on Best Value Contracting.

It was suggested that this policy revision recommendation be referred back to the policy subcommittee for further review. Mr. Friedman noted that he does not have any problem with allowing the administration to develop the criteria to implement Best Value Contracting. He stated that he believed that apprenticeship programs, in general, do add value. The value may not be to the specific contract that is being awarded but the programs would increase the availability of trained workers in the community which could impact projects in the future. He noted that, if there is a way to work apprenticeship programs into Best Value Contracting he would appreciate and support that effort.

Mr. Tuck noted that one of the board goals is collaborating with other community agencies to maximize opportunities for life-long learning and

that another is to ensure the wise use of financial resources in responsible construction and maintenance of facilities. He commented that there is a shortage of workers and that the Anchorage School District has a role to play by seeing that the contractors that have a registered apprenticeship program. Investing in training for the future should have some sort of weighted advantage if a decision comes down between two contractors. Mr. Tuck noted several additional items specific to apprenticeship programs that should also be taken into consideration such as the number of apprentices on the job, the curriculum standards, and the success rate of the program.

Ms. Kennedy noted that the policy subcommittee always meets one time between first and second readings of any policy revisions. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 11 at 8:30 a.m. The issues discussed at this evening's meeting will be addressed during that meeting.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 117 - Award of Contract: Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Applied Microsystems, Inc. to purchase Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories in the amount of \$270,332.

ACTION:

Moved by: John Steiner
Seconded by: Macon Roberts

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Applied Microsystems, Inc. to purchase Network Appliance Hardware and Accessories in the amount of \$270,332.

Mr. Steiner explained that he had some concern regarding this Award of Contract as there was only one bid made for the contract. He had some misgivings as to whether the district should go forward with this because

of the feeling that it may not have been fully competitive. There were twenty-three suppliers who received an invitation to bid. While a variety of explanations were given as to why many of those did not submit a bid Mr. Steiner remained uncomfortable with a feeling that something may have directed the bid to one entity. Mr. Steiner explained that Mr. Wood felt that it was a good price and there is a concern about re-issuing an invitation to bid when one entity has already disclosed their bid. Mr. Steiner indicated that he did not have any specific facts that anything untoward had gone on with this bidding process but the confluence of things and the responses caused him to wonder. He requested input from other board members as to their feelings regarding this issue.

Mr. Tuck indicated his belief that the recommended contractor did not know that they would be the sole bidder and that they bid the contract competitively. While he understood Mr. Steiner's concerns he did not share those concerns and was comfortable supporting the recommendations.

Mr. Friedman indicated that he, too, was struck by the fact that there was only one bidder. He requested some additional information on the product being purchased and why the administration is comfortable with this price. Mr. Steele asked for insight as to whether the district would be likely to get more response if the contract was open for bids again. Ms. Chenier explained that the invitation to bid was out for about two weeks, which is pretty typical for product bids. On the issue of re-submitting the contract for bid, she explained that the district has no assurance that the single bidder would submit again. She indicated her desire to verify that there would actually be more responses before re-opening the process. Mr. Wood explained that the district had been working closely with this vendor on the configuration and that they had shared the manufacturers suggested price on a number of occasions. This bid came in well below what their list price is and very close to what was budgeted. Mr. Wood noted that the impact of sending this out to bid again would result in a delay but that the administration wanted to make sure that the board is very comfortable with the process, with the product, and with the pricing.

Ms. Comeau voiced her concern with sending this out for bid again with the bid from this vendor already public knowledge. Mr. Tuck shared that concern. He explained the possible ramifications of opening this up again and having a different vendor secure the contract for a few dollars less than the current bid. He also noted that there have been no complaints thus far regarding this award.

Mr. Friedman noted that he is not happy that there was only one bid but he was willing to support the recommendation.

Ms. Kennedy noted that she had also been curious as to why the district had only received one bid. She explained that she is not sure that this can be addressed with any assurance that it will be done better if it is put out for bid a second time. She noted that it may behoove the board to address the issue of handling a single bid response in policy.

Ms. Comeau noted that this really needs to be discussed in policy as there are times when there is only one true legitimate bid. She indicated that care needs to be taken to not tie the district up and delay the process just because there is only one bid on a given contract.

Mr. Steiner asked whether there is a non-collusion certification as part of the bid. Ms. Chenier explained that there is a non-collusion certification which is part of the signature page. Mr. Steiner noted that the information provided during this discussion led him to believe that the district has gotten a reasonable price in this case. He continued to be a little concerned with the possibility that there could have been collusion. Because he did not see a clear means to get a different result he indicated that he would support this recommendation. He did, however, indicate that the board should consider whether anything can and should be done as a matter of policy to try to protect the district when a question like this comes up.

Mr. Tuck made a couple of policy suggestions including putting a mechanism in place to extend the bid deadline when only one bid comes in on a contract without releasing the specifics of that bid.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

The board went into recess at 8:10 p.m. Mr. Steele called the meeting back to order at 8:20 p.m.

Ms. Comeau introduced Mr. Brett Agenbroad, Annette Island School District Superintendent, and his wife. They are in Anchorage to attend the ALASBO Conference.

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 124 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of October 30, 2007 through November 20, 2007.

2. ASD Memorandum # 122 - Monthly Update Student Information System - Zangle

The Zangle Student Information System implementation continues to move forward. Phase I of the project is the Fit Gap Analysis, during which the district will determine how well the proposed solution meets District requirements. Phase II is installation and implementation of the system, contingent upon the successful completion of the Fit Gap Analysis.

Ms. Mary McKean, project manager for the new student information system implementation, reported that the fit gap sessions have been completed and that the district is very pleased with the product. The product definitely meets the needs of the district and there were no "show stoppers" identified during the fit gap meetings. The issue that did come up is the fact that the quantity of work that is going to be required to configure the system and get it put together in the way the district would like is going to take significantly more time than was allowed for in the original project plan. She explained that the original plan aimed for a project start date in January of 2007 but that the project did not actually start until August of 2007. That seven month delay has proven to be significant particularly in light of the fact that the original project, in and of itself, was pretty ambitious. We are now looking at the reality that additional time will be needed in order to put the system together in a manner that will satisfy all of the district stakeholders.

While all of the stakeholders would like for the system to be ready yesterday, they all have their own list of adaptations and personalization that they would like the system to include. Ms. McKean noted that the desire is to provide as many of those adaptations as possible. One of the benefits of this system is that it is so highly adaptable. The district is now looking at a go-live date of August 2009 rather than August 2008. Ms. McKean explained that the

district is reassessing which division will be brought on-line first and how the implementation will proceed.

Mr. Steiner asked whether the training schedule was being reevaluated as well in light of the possible negative impact a delay between training and implementation might cause. Ms. McKean noted that the training schedule is being looked at. The district has entered a contract with CompuCom and they have indicated that they are very flexible on when the training takes place. Some of the training will still need to be done this spring as the staff who will be impacted by the IFAS implementation will need to have the training now. Training for staff who are being training specifically for Zangle will be pushed back until closer to the Zangle implementation so that it is relevant and timely. Ms. Comeau noted that the district will still be going forward with the IFAS 7i implementation so that training is still necessary in the near term.

Mr. Steele asked if the cost will be extending by a year as the implementation is postponed by a year. Mr. Wood explained that there are some staff members who will be retained longer than initially planned which will entail some additional cost. These employees will be extremely busy during that twelve-month period preparing the system for implementation. Mr. Wood assured the board that the district will not lose any productivity through the delay in implementation.

Ms. Comeau recalled the IFAS implementation that the district went through in the late 1990s. While the district undertook a thorough needs assessment and tried very hard to make it a smooth transition with plenty of training, that implementation caused huge problems because there was not enough training. It was a very difficult but the district learned from that experience and realizes the importance of adequate training on the front end as well as supporting the staff during the transition and providing timely training for new staff. As much as everyone wants the system up as soon as possible they also want it done right. Ms. Comeau believed that it is better to proceed in the suggested manner in order to allow the system to be rolled-out once and rolled-out correctly rather than trying to push forward an earlier implementation based on an artificial and unreasonable timeline and risk running into problems later.

3. ASD Memorandum # 118 - First Quarter Suspension/Weapons/Expulsion Report 2007-2008

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

4. ASD Memorandum # 120 - Class Size Report 2007-2008

This report for the 2007-2008 school year is divided into the following categories: Elementary Education, Middle School Education, High School Education, Special Education, Bilingual Education, and Charter Schools. In addition, the administration has compiled information on class sizes in the alternative programs and the student-to-counselor ratio at the eight major high schools.

Ms. Comeau commended the executive directors for the way they have worked with the building principals to staff district schools. Ms. Comeau referenced the enormous amount of information that can be found in this report including the impressive information on Bilingual Education and Limited English Proficient students referenced early in this meeting during the discussion on the Language Interpreter Center.

Ms. McRae thanked the board and the superintendent for their support in reducing class sizes to those of previous years. She noted that the class size is now close to optimal in the elementary grades considering the budgeted ratios that are used. Referencing the figures from the kindergarten through third grade class sizes, Ms. McRae explained that, as part of the NCLB grant, there is an opportunity for the district to choose to allocate funding for class size reduction. The board and the superintendent had asked that kindergartens and first grade classes be targeted with that funding.

Ms. Gardner reported for the middle school division in the absence of Ms. Vandergaw. She explained the complexities of staffing at the middle school level this year in light of closing Clark Middle School for construction, having to move those students to four different schools, redistributing the staff for those schools, and the overall increased enrollment at the middle school level. The data shows that the number of large-sized classes has decreased at the middle school level. Mr. Steiner noticed that there was a higher frequency of larger classes in middle school for science. He wondered about the reason behind this

observation. He speculated that this may have something to do with availability of instructors. Ms. Gardner indicated that she would have Ms. Vandergaw provide additional information on that issue to the board.

Mr. Henry explained the distribution of staff and the impact that the additional staffing has had on student achievement, particularly in the Language Arts classes. The trend is that class size averages continue to go down. He noted that the alternative schools, particularly those for at-risk students, have a ratio of approximately 15 students per teacher.

Mr. Sjolander explained that there are a number of different types of staffing for the different types of classes provided for special education students. He reviewed the staffing ratios used in the different programs. Ms. Comeau pointed out that there are ninety-two students scheduled for preschool assessments between the count date and the end of the calendar year. This is an important figure that highlights the importance of educating the legislature on the issue of funding students who enter the program after the count date. This is a statewide issue. In response to a question from Mr. Steiner it was explained that the numbers in the pupil teacher ratios are just the teacher staff and does not include the teacher assistants.

Mr. Gardner explained the substantial change in regulation this year about how students in bilingual services are exited which has had a huge impact on the program. She noted that the acting director of the Bilingual program is analyzing what that means for the district, how we can provide support for those students, and what the monitoring plan will look like. Prior to the change in regulation a student had to test as proficient twice on the English Language Proficiency Exam and once on the SBAs before being exited from services. The regulation now indicates that students need only be proficient once on the English Language Proficiency Exam with no requirement for the SBA at all. Of course this change led to a large number of students being exited from the program. The district is working through the changes, making sure that the students are receiving the support they need and moving staff as necessary. Ms. Comeau noted that the district administration did testify against the regulation changes and will continue to bring the data forward to ask whether the change is really in the best interest of the students.

Ms. Kennedy indicated that the district should continue to support the Newcomer Center, particularly in light of the impact that regulation changes have had on the Bilingual program. Ms. Gardner assured her

that the Newcomers Center is definitely part of the discussion regarding how the district meets the needs of students requiring language support. She noted that there are other issues that impact the Newcomers Center including facility space and transportation.

Mr. Friedman clarified that the change in the regulation did not change the need to provide bilingual services to all of the students who are exited from the Bilingual program. Those students still need those services. Ms. Comeau added that, just like with NCLB, the district still provides the services necessary to meet the needs of our students. The funding will have to come out of the general funds if adequate resources are not provided in conjunction with program mandates.

Mr. Steiner asked whether the regulation impacts state or federal money. Ms. Comeau explained that the funding comes to the state through a federal grant. Ms. Gardner noted that the students who are exited from the program can still be served they just can not be served with Title 3 funding dollars.

Mr. Steiner asked for some clarification regarding the two years of monitoring and how that impacts AYP testing. Ms. Gardner explained that students in both Monitor Year 1 and Monitor Year 2 are counted in the LEP category for AYP purposes.

Dr. Silverstein reported that two district staff members will be attending a Newcomers Conference in February, 2008. She is hopeful that there will be good information from that conference regarding possibly reconfiguring the Newcomers Center. She also noted that the district is going through a type of fit gap analysis with the Bilingual program, utilizing current research to determine if there are any ways that the program can better serve district students. There is some really good information coming out of that analysis.

Ms. Comeau reminded that board that Charter schools get to determine, based on their own charter, what their class size will be. Charter schools do not have to follow the district's ratios.

Mr. Friedman reiterated the importance of focusing on class size and trying to keep it small. While there is conflicting information about what the optimal class size is to maximize student achievement, he noted that what has been voiced over the last few weeks at the High School Forums is the importance of relationships. There is no way that a teacher can build the kind of relationships that have been discussed with five classes of over thirty students. Teachers have to have the

time to put in with each individual student in order to build those relationships. He believed that to be true at all levels, not just high schools. He also felt that smaller class size is bound to help with teacher retention. Mr. Friedman recalled that over his time on the board the district has been able to reduce the number of larger classes to the point that, particularly in the elementary level, classes rarely if ever exceed thirty-four students. He indicated the importance, as a board, to support lower class size whenever possible. Ms. Comeau indicated that lower class size is important as long as there is a top-notch teacher in every classroom building relationships with the students.

5. ASD Memorandum # 121 - 2007-2008 Ethnicity Report

Today 50 percent of the students in the Anchorage School District are ethnically diverse, compared to 13 percent in 1976. Of today's ethnic minority population, the multi-ethnic (13%) category is the largest, followed by the Asian/Pacific Islander (12%), Hispanic (10%), Alaska Native/American Indian (9%), and African American/Black (6%) groups. Last year, the Alaska Native/American Indian category was the largest followed by Asian/Pacific Islander.

Ms. Comeau noted that district is now a minority majority school district. A full fifty percent of our students are ethnically diverse compared to thirteen percent in 1976. All students and staff were asked to re-identify themselves racially using the new categories developed by the federal government. The largest ethnic minority category now is Multi-Ethnic, at 13%, followed by Asian or Pacific Islander, at 12%, Hispanic, at 10%, Alaska Native or American Indian, at 9%, and African American or Black, at 6%. The importance of this information is that, as we recognize our diversity, everything possible needs to be done to increase staff diversity. In light of the fact that the district has been challenged by hiring as many diverse staff as we would like we need to do everything possible to provide training that helps district staff to be sensitive to students of all cultures and races. Everyone has been working hard on that training through Social and Emotional Learning, the Culturally Responsive Standards, Indian Education, and other district programs. It is a continuous effort to learn how to break down those barriers so that families feel comfortable in our schools and that students feel accepted.

Ms. Marks pointed out that the percentage of Ethnic Minority students in Special Services programs is higher than that in the general student population. Ms. Comeau agreed that Ethnic Minorities do make up

more than half of the students being served through special programs in the district. Hopefully these special programs are positively impacting student success in the various ethnic groups. Many of these programs, like Benny Benson, SAVE, AVAIL, and COHO, were developed to support students. Unfortunately, in many cases, the vast majority of the students that need those services happen to be part of an Ethnic Minority group. The good news is that students are getting that support and staying in school. Before many of these programs were started those students were dropping out of school. We need to be doing more to help these students be successful in our mainstream schools but for many it simple is not possible. For many students the sheer size of our mainstream schools is overwhelming.

Ms. Kennedy wondered how this ethnicity report might impact funding and whether there is any funding that is directly tied to ethnicity. Ms. Comeau explained that only Indian Education funding is directly tied to ethnicity.

6. ASD Memorandum #101 - Operating Budget Transfers - October Monthly Report FY 2007-2008

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of October 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 October 2007 and related information are available in the Budget Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

7. ASD Memorandum # 119 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap October 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 October 31, 2007.

I. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

J. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Steiner highlighted the First Quarter Suspension/Expulsion Report which had really good news in it at every level. Although the report was not pulled for discussion, Mr. Steiner wanted to congratulate each of the divisions for their efforts to positively impact disciplinary issues throughout the district.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION – PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS
LITIGATION

L. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of December 3, 2007, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:30 p.m.

Tim Steele, President

Crystal Kennedy, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved