

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 3, 2008

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, March 3, 2008, 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, Crystal Kennedy, Jeff Friedman, Mary Marks, Macon Roberts and Chris Tuck

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Rhonda Gardner, Leslie Vandergaw, Mike Henry, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Eric Tollefsen, Michele Egan, Janet Stokesbary, George Vakalis, Jose DelReal, Ray Amsden, Marie Laule, Chad Stiteler, Ron Fuhrer, Johanna Lee, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

C. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Marks announced that the April 14, 2008 meeting will be her last board meeting. She expressed that it has been an honor and a privilege to be an advocate for students in this district.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

The Williwaw Elementary Orchestra, under the direction of David Hagen, performed several selections for the entertainment of the Board and other members of public.

ASD Memorandum # 218 - Recognition of State Farm for Donation to Chugiak High School's FCCLA in Support of Safe Driving Awareness for Teenagers

Ms. Mary Mark read that the national statistics on teen driving are sobering: motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for

teenagers; 16 year-olds have higher crash rates than drivers of any other age; and 16-year-olds are three times more likely to die in a motor vehicle crash than the average of all drivers.

The good news is graduated driver's license programs like Alaska's appear to be making a difference. Fatal crashes involving 15 to 20-year olds in 2005 were down 6.5 percent from 1995 - the lowest level in ten years.

State Farm is going to spread that good news by having teenagers deliver the message. Al Bowler and Troy Sayer of Eagle River and Steve Pifer of Anchorage are here tonight to donate a \$5,000 check in grant funding to the members of Chugiak High School's FCCLA.

The young people will develop educational programs on the graduated driver's license, what it means to drive under the influence and the specifics of seat belt safety. They plan to teach Chugiak students about the many hazards and responsibilities associated with operation a vehicle.

We'd also like to welcome students Melissa Haken, Amber Rochon and Kathleen Kingsley, who will accept the check on their club's behalf. Their sponsor, teacher Kathleen Vik, has taught these students to have confidence in their message and humility in their leadership.

The Anchorage School Board expressed their sincere gratitude to State Farm for assisting our students in protecting the safety of their peers, and to the members of FCCLA for their continued efforts in being role models of service and community in their school.

Mr. Pifer stated that there were pleased to be able to partner with Chugiak High School in the *Shift into Safety* program.

Presentation on the Cycle of Military Deployments & Related Issues

Several representatives from our military community including Lt. Col. Sonny Luu, Col. David Shutt, Chaplain Jerry Sieg, and Cpt. Richard Barker were in attendance to provide a presentation on deployments and several related issues.

Ms. Comeau noted that the district has an exceptionally good working relationship with the military in our community. The last couple of years have been a very stressful time for military families in the community. The way our staff has really risen to the occasion to provide extra support

to the students and their families during difficult times is something that she, as superintendent, is very proud of.

Lt. Col. Luu thanked the board and the superintendent for the exceptional support that the district provides for all of their students, particularly their military students. He noted that there have been a lot of issues to deal with over the last two years related to the deployment cycle. Now we will be dealing with the post-deployment and the impact that has on military members and their families.

Chaplain Jerry Sieg likened the cycle of deployment to a rollercoaster ride and reviewed the different stages that the military members and their families go through. The stress often begins even before the military members physically leave. Once a family member deploys, family roles and responsibilities, particularly for young men, begin to shift. That shift can be a time of tremendous growth or a time of overwhelming stress. Chaplain Sieg noted the different ways that children respond to the stresses.

Many of our military members are now re-deployed back and going through a process referred to as reintegration. In the time that they have been away the soldiers have developed a set of combat skills that have kept them alive on the battlefields. The challenge for these soldiers is to keep the experiences of war out of the home. There is a certain amount of aggressiveness and irritability that soldiers bring back with them and their families are typically the ones that have to deal with those personality changes. It takes time to renegotiate and reconnect with their families. Soldiers have learned to live in the here and now, they have to re-learn to reinvest in the future. Chaplain Sieg explained that reintegration can be a lengthy process and that it is impossible to predict just how long it will take. In the midst of all of this change the school system is one of the greatest sources of stability for our children.

Capt. Richard Barker, a psychologist at Elemendorf Air Force Base, explained that Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have become the signature injuries of the war. He explained what those injuries entail. He reviewed some of the research about how these injuries affect the families and children of the injured warriors. He also reviewed what the research indicates regarding the risk of domestic violence, child abuse and child neglect during and after deployments. He offered the caveat that there is very little current research available and that the research that is available is specific to the Army and should not be generalized to other branches of the military. He

noted that military members returning from combat experiences are likely to have some mental health issues. Emotional problems or physical disabilities can increase the burden on the family unit. It is important to foster open communication and to provide support for children experiencing these issues.

Col. David Shutt noted that the one thing that is on the minds of all of the students who have a deployed parent is the safety of that parent. He also reiterated that the one stable thing in many of these student's lives is their school. The schools are absolutely critical to the well being of these students. Col. Shutt indicated that it is very important that the military and the district continue this dialogue to assure that the needs of our students are identified and met to the best of our ability.

Ms. Joan Boltz, the state youth coordinator for the Alaska National Guard Family Program's Child and Youth Program, reported that she will be meeting with the Acting Commissioner of Education. She hopes to be able to secure support in replicating what is being done in this district across the state.

Ms. Comeau reported that we will be scheduling another series of presentations with principals and vice-principals after spring break. These trainings have involved counselors, school psychologists and any other professionals who work directly with young people in our schools and have proven to be extremely helpful in the past.

Mr. Steiner wondered whether the military provides direct psychological support to the children when issues are identified. Chaplain Sieg noted that there are some resources available depending on the situation. Families can also access resources through TriCare. Army Community Services is the central resource through which families can tap into other programs to address different issues as they arise.

Mr. Roberts noted that it is a compliment to the military that they are supporting the entire family unit as they deal with deployment issues and have recognized that this support is essential to the mission.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

Mr. Jose DelReal reported that the SAB met today but did not have a quorum. Those that were able to attend spent the meeting reviewing and discussing their bylaws.

2. Military Delegate

Lt. Col. Luu had nothing more to report beyond the information shared during the presentation.

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

Mr. Dan Loring reported that the MECAC had received a very informational briefing on the Language Cultural Liaison program that is in four of our elementary schools. There was discussion on the lack of African American representative in that program. There was much discussion near the meeting regarding the racial epithet at Service High School. This was a passionate discussion which he believes will continue at the next meeting of the MECAC.

Mr. Loring noted that the MECAC has two new applicants which, should they be approved, would bring the committee to its full contingent of eleven members.

Mr. Loring reported that the joint MECAC/School Board meeting has been rescheduled for March 20. He hoped that this will be the first of what will ultimately be a regular joint meeting schedule.

Mr. DelReal strongly recommended adding at least one student seat to the MECAC. It seemed only appropriate that a committee centered on serving minority students should have a student voice. Ms. Comeau believed that action would require a bylaws change but felt that it was a good idea and encouraged the MECAC to discuss that recommendation. Mr. Loring indicated that having a student member has been discussed and felt that such a move would be supported.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Megan Larson, a health specialist with the district, shared some of the successes that the health program has had this year. She noted that this program has allowed for a very intentional focus on the health curriculum. In addition to the benefits that the students receive the classroom teachers also appreciate the additional planning time. The

program has made a positive impact on students and teachers alike. She thanked the board for instituting the program this year and encouraged their continued support.

Mr. Friedman voiced his appreciation to the speaker for sharing her experiences and noted that it is nice to hear positive feedback from our staff.

Mr. Dan Loring shared his concerns regarding the graduation rate at West High School. He thanked Senator Johnny Ellis for the historic educational funding that was passed in the Senate today. There will be more money for students, transportation and special education. Most importantly there will be forward funding so the district will be able to do earlier planning and budgeting. Mr. Loring reviewed the graduation rate at West High School. He believed that we could do better but it will require a conversation. He does not feel that enough is being done to encourage that conversation.

H. 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 - February 25, 2008
2. ASD Memorandum # 204 - Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan Analysis and Recommendations: July 1, 2008 - June 20, 2018

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the attached Anchorage School District Ten-Year Capital Improvement Plan for July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2018.
3. ASD Memorandum # 221 - School Board Policy Revisions: Sections 841, Political Activities in the School; 841.1, Political Candidacy and Public Offices; 842, Gifts (First Reading)

It is the Policy Subcommittee's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board adopt on First Reading the proposed revisions to sections 841, Political Activities in the School; 841.1, Political Candidacy and Public Officers; and 842, Gifts.

4. ASD Memorandum # 219 - Prior Approval of Discretionary Grant: Project Ki'l

It is the Administration's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Alaska Native Education Program. The preliminary budget estimate is \$300,000 per year for three years.

5. ASD Memorandum # 227 - Prior Approval of Discretionary Grant: Carol M. White Physical Education Program

It is the Administration's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools' Carol M. White Physical Education Program. The preliminary budget estimate is \$350,000 per year.

6. ASD Memorandum # 228 - Budget Transfers: Everyday Math and Handwriting Without Tears Curricula Purchase

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to process a budget transfer from under-expended accounts in the amount of \$271,000 to complete the purchase of Everyday Math and the 1st grade level of Handwriting Without Tears.

7. ASD Memorandum # 198 - Award of Contract: 403(b) Consulting Services

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Woodside Financial Partners to provide 403(b) Consulting Services in a fixed fee amount of \$50,000 for the period through December 31, 2008 to provide consulting services for plan design, provider RFP; investment analysis and selection, and vendor implementation; and \$50,000 per year for on-going plan and investment evaluation consulting services for the periods of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010 for a total fixed fee amount of \$150,000; with an option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods in the amounts of \$50,000 per year.

8. ASD Memorandum # 216 - Award of Contract: Student Transportation Facility Reroof and Structural Upgrades

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract for the Student Transportation Facility Reroof & Structural Upgrades to Universal Roofing of Alaska, Inc. for the Base Bid award amount of \$210,000.

9. ASD Memorandum # 226 - Sale of Surplus Property

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to dispose of the listed surplus property by sealed bid sale or public auction in accordance with Board Policy 732.1. Prior to the sale, these assets will be offered to the Municipality of Anchorage for extended public use.

10. ASD Memorandum # 184 - Personnel Report

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

Mr. Friedman requested that Memorandum #221, School Board Policy Revision: Sections 841, Political Activities in the School; 841.1, Political Candidacy and Public Offices; 842, Gifts (First Reading) and Memorandum #198, Award of Contract: 403(b) Consulting Services, be pulled for discussion.

Ms. Comeau requested that Memorandum #215, Graduate Survey Report, be pulled from the Superintendent's Report for a presentation.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman
Seconded by: Macon Roberts

To approve the Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 25, 2008, and Memoranda #204, #219, #227, #228, #216, #226, and #202.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Comeau commended the Facilities Department and the Demographics staff for the exceptional work on the Capital Improvement Plan. She believes that it will be well received by the Assembly.

The board went into recess at 7:50 p.m. The meeting was called back into session at 8:00 p.m.

ASD Memorandum # 221 - School Board Policy Revisions: Sections 841, Political Activities in the School; 841.1, Political Candidacy and Public Offices; 842, Gifts (First Reading)

It is the Policy Subcommittee's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board adopt on First Reading the proposed revisions to sections 841, Political Activities in the School; 841.1, Political Candidacy and Public Officers; and 842, Gifts.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman	To adopt on First Reading the
Seconded by: Mary Marks	proposed revisions to sections 841,
	Political Activities in the School;
	841.1, Political Candidacy and Public
	Officers; and 842, Gifts.

Mr. Friedman presented three technical changes. He moved to change the word "of" to the word "or" in section 841, paragraph 2; to change the word "expressed" to the word "express" in section 841, paragraph 3; and to delete the word "related" in section 841.1, paragraph 2. The motion was seconded by Crystal Kennedy. These three technical corrections were approved by unanimous consent.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman	To change the second sentence in
Seconded by: Crystal Kennedy	section 841.1, paragraph 1 to read:
	"Employees are not prohibited from
	serving on the Assembly,
	Community Council Boards, or local
	Service Area Boards."

Mr. Friedman indicated that he had initially asked why Community Council Boards were left out of this policy when local Service Area Boards were included. The administration checked with the district's attorneys

who found that there is a state law that specifically states that district employees can not be prevented from serving on their Assembly, which is contradictory to Municipal ordinance. Ms. Gardner noted that our attorney had found that there was a second amendment to the Municipal Ethics Code in August that puts this exception into the code to put it into alignment with state law. Ms. Comeau indicated that we will be asking the Municipal Clerk to make sure the district is notified anytime they make any amendment to the Ethics Code so that we can incorporate it into our training materials.

Mr. Steiner questioned whether the Community Council Boards needed to be included in light of the fact that member selection is not done through the formal elected process. Mr. Friedman believed that we should recognize that Community Councils are in integral part of our municipal government. Ms. Comeau noted that our employees are appointed to and participate in all kinds of other boards and commissions. She felt that the message is that the district wants its employees to be able to participate. Ms. Gardner added that the reason the original policy only isolated the Local Service Area boards is because that is the only one that was mentioned in the actual Ethics Code. Our attorney saw no problem with adding Community Council Boards.

VOTE on AMENDMENT:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

VOTE on MOTION as AMENDED:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 198 - Award of Contract: 403(b) Consulting Services

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Woodside Financial Partners to provide 403(b) Consulting Services in a fixed fee amount of \$50,000 for the period through December 31, 2008 to provide consulting services for plan design, provider RFP; investment analysis and

selection, and vendor implementation; and \$50,000 per year for on-going plan and investment evaluation consulting services for the periods of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010 for a total fixed fee amount of \$150,000; with an option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods in the amounts of \$50,000 per year.

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeff Friedman
Seconded by: Mary Marks

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Woodside Financial Partners to provide 403(b) Consulting Services in a fixed fee amount of \$50,000 for the period through December 31, 2008 to provide consulting services for plan design, provider RFP; investment analysis and selection, and vendor implementation; and \$50,000 per year for on-going plan and investment evaluation consulting services for the periods of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010 for a total fixed fee amount of \$150,000; with an option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods in the amounts of \$50,000 per year.

Mr. Tollefsen explained that this recommendation is coming forward because the IRS changed the regulations on 403(b) plans. The district used to be merely a conduit that passed money from employee's paychecks to different vendors that had been selected. The law changed effective January 1, 2009 and we will now be required to have a plan document. In addition, there are a number of regulations governing such things as how money is transferred from one plan to another and monitoring of loan provisions and limits that will become district responsibility. The board had earlier approved a consult. The RFP has gone out and Woodside Financial Partners has been selected.

Mr. Friedman noted that the tabulation of the proposals, under experience and qualifications, neither proposer scored very high. There is a lot of money at stake and, potentially, a lot of liability on the part of the school district. He was concerned that the district was hiring someone who did not have the necessary qualifications to do this work. He had raised this

question earlier and received an explanation that he believed would reassure all board members. He asked Mr. Tollefsen to share his earlier response. Mr. Tollefsen explained that the reason why neither proposer scored very high because nobody has really done this type of work before. They have done it in the 401(k) arena or maybe the 457 arena. These are very similar with the same type of investment advisor and investment analysis that we need. Nobody has really taken a district through this process yet. Woodside Financial Partners has a good list of clients and had good references. They also have a lot of experience with 401(k) plans.

Mr. Steele voiced his concern with the liability in terms of the district getting in the middle of our employee's investment dealings. Mr. Tollefsen noted that concern is one of the reasons that the district needs a consultant. The most recent advice we have received is that while the district may not initially have specific fiduciary liability with respect to the 403(b) program but that the government will continue to make them look more like the 401(k) and we will have fiduciary liability with them.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum #203 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of January 31, 2008 through February 13, 2008.

2. ASD Memorandum # 215 - Graduate Survey Report

The Graduate Follow-Up Survey for the class of 2006 was designed and implemented as a joint effort between the departments of Assessment and Evaluation and High School Education. The purpose of the survey was to gain useful information on the status and satisfaction of our students after graduating from the Anchorage School District (ASD).

Ms. Comeau introduced Ms. Laurel Vorachek, Ms. Kristine Liebner and Dr. Xiaogeng Sun of the Assessment and Evaluation Department.

She thanked Ms. Varachek and her staff for doing such a thorough job on this report.

Ms. Liebner and Dr. Sun reviewed the findings of the Graduate Survey conducted over the past year on the Class of 2006. The survey had a 23.5% response rate. Some of the major findings include 71% of graduates are attending postsecondary education with 91% of those students attending 4-year college or university. The majority of the graduates reported attending postsecondary schools in Alaska with 43% attending UAA and 2% attending UAF. In addition to those enrolled in postsecondary education, 18% of graduates reported employment as their primary activity after graduation and 5% reported military services as their primary post-graduation activity.

Graduates gave high marks to the education they received in ASD. Of those graduates who reported being employed after graduation, 73% gave the English preparation for their employment a grade of B or better. Math preparation and electives were given a grade of B or better by 73% and 65% of the employed graduates, respectively.

Of those graduates who were pursuing further education after graduation, 81% rated their English preparation for further education a B or better. Math preparation was rated B or better by 73% of the student graduates. Seventy-one percent of the student graduates gave the sciences preparation a grade of B or better.

Ms. Kennedy noticed that the areas of respondents suggesting what types of further course work they would have liked to have every group indicated math as the first or second choice. That indicated to her that the district should have more math courses available to students. She particularly noted that these results were different than those of the 2001 Graduate Survey. That survey took place before the HSGQE requirement and Ms. Kennedy wondered whether that requirement helped students focus on the fact that they really needed math and English. Ms. Vorachek noted that the HSGQE is an essential skills test. She really did not believe that it has a tremendous impact on the survey results. Ms. Gardner believed this result has more to do with the fact that students, through their experience, are seeing the real value that math and science courses have to their future earning potential. Data gathered from other sources also indicate that students are really making this connection and are taking more and more higher level math and science classes.

Ms. Comeau indicated that this also reflects recognition that math and science skills are essential for everything related to career and technical education and workforce development. There is a much greater recognition on the part of young people that those skills are connected to just about every employment opportunity they will have.

3. ASD Memorandum #190 – Monthly Update Student Information System - Zangle

The Zangle Student Information System implementation continues to move forward.

4. ASD Memorandum #206 – Status Report: submission of Discretionary Grants, Second Quarter 2007-2008 School Year

This report listing all of the grants submitted for funding during the second quarter of the 2007-2008 school year.

J. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

K. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Steiner reflected on the implication made by one of the speakers early this evening that this board does not support the graduation rates of students of color. He reviewed a lengthy list of activities and efforts that the board supports which impact graduation rates. He noted that it is not only high school activities support the graduation rates. In the budget process the board has supported the re-adoption of the Everyday Math and the Elementary Reading Initiative. Everything from the Student-Led Conferences at the middle school level to the Continuation School and other efforts to reduce the amount of class time lost as a result of disciplinary issues have a direct impact on graduation rates. The credit recovery efforts targeting students who are struggling with credits and helping students to pass the HSGQE once they get their credits up have also positively impacted graduation rates. While the district may not be doing some of the specific things that the speaker would like for us to do, Mr. Steiner indicated that we have been doing a lot with the specific consciousness that students of color are more highly represented as a proportion of students who have struggled historically, including the number of dropouts. Mr. Friedman and Mr. Steele added to the lengthy

list of programs that the board supports specifically targeted to help at risk students.

Ms. Kennedy reported that the Chugiak Eagle River Chamber of Conference will hold their annual Teacher of Excellence Awards luncheon on Wednesday. She invited other board members to attend.

Mr. Roberts reported that he will be attending the Council of Great City School Legislative Session in Washington, D.C. later this month.

L. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS
LITIGATION

M. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of March 3, 2008, was adjourned by unanimous consent at 8:55 p.m.

Tim Steele, President

Crystal Kennedy, Clerk

Johanna Lee, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved