

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING OF August 10, 2009

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, August 10, 2009, at 6:35 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, John Steiner, presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE, John Steiner Presiding

Board Members Present: John Steiner, Jeff Friedman, Pat Higgins, Jeannie Mackie, Kathleen Plunkett and Tim Steele

Crystal Kennedy was excused

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Ed Graff, Leslie Vandergaw, Mike Henry, Linda Carlson, Enid Silverstein, Jerry Sjolander, Eric Tollefsen, Heather Sawyer, Mike Abbott, Chad Stiteler, Pam Chenier, Ellsworth James, Brian Griggs, Mike Price, Laurel Vorachek, Marie Laule, Vanessa Blake, the press, and other interested people.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Friedman noted that there was an addendum to the Personnel Report.

The agenda was approved with the addendum by unanimous consent.

C. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Comeau informed the Board that teachers report on August 13<sup>th</sup> and would have intensive in-services, along with setting up their rooms. School starts August 19<sup>th</sup> for grades two through twelve and August 25<sup>th</sup> for kindergarten and first grade. She emphasized how important it is that all immunizations are up to date including Varicella or students will be excluded from school. A very intense campaign was launched to emphasize to the community how important it was to have these vaccines current as school gets closer to starting. On another note, football started. Everyone is looking forward to an exciting season.

Mr. Steiner re-emphasized that the immunization for Varicella was something new and it is vital that the students are up to date.

Ms. Comeau mentioned that the new policy had been in place for a year and it is for grades K-6. Two doses are required which could pose a challenge. The state has been asked to clarify if a student who has had the first vaccine would be allowed to attend class until the time that the second vaccine was required. It is a very critical state regulation and there are still a lot of students that need to receive their immunizations.

Mr. Steele asked if there was anyone doing clinics the first day of school for those people that showed up without their vaccinations.

Ms. Comeau replied that there would not be clinics at the schools.

Mr. Sjolander commented that the main places to be vaccinated would be a doctor's office or one of the public health clinics.

Ms. Comeau stated that there had been heavy advertising in the paper and on TV. It was recommended that people with questions contact the Municipal Health Department.

Mr. Steiner introduced family members from California.

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory Board

The Student Representative was not present.

2. Military Delegate

Mr. Griggs, liaison for the military reported that many, many families had arrived over the summer and more would be arriving during the next four to six weeks. He welcomed Jena Bienia, a new school liaison for Elmendorf Air Force Base. The liaison team of four members works to serve and help relations between the military and the school district.

Ms. Bienia thanked the Board and mentioned that she had been in Alaskan for many years and lived in Eagle River.

Ms. Comeau appreciated the great relationship that the District has had with the military over the last few years. With the number of deployments and guard families in the community, as well as, at Fort Rich and Elmendorf, the new liaison is a huge help in making the district aware of military transitions. She concluded by welcoming Ms. Bienia.

3. MECAC

Dr. James commented that it had been great summer. And that the MECAC was looking forward to a great year. The new web interface system worked wonderfully. They had received many comments from parents all summer. A full agenda for their first meeting was anticipated because the public had been able to get their thoughts and comments to them through the web.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD NON-AGENDA ITEMS

G. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Friedman announced that the Policy Committee had met. They continued to work on the Instructional sections and the next meeting was scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Higgins said that a follow up meeting for Audit Committee would be sometime in near future.

Mr. Steele mentioned that Legislative Priority Committee needed to get together soon.

Mr. Steiner wondered if all Board members had received the draft of AASB Resolutions. It appeared that not all had.

Ms. Comeau asked for electronic copies to be emailed to all Board members.

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. Regular Meeting - May 4, 2009
- b. Regular Meeting - June 8, 2009
- c. Regular Meeting - June 22, 2009
- d. Special Meeting - June 22, 2009

2. ASD Memorandum #11 Adoption of Tentative Agreement: Anchorage Council of Education (AFL-CIO) 2009-2012

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the collective bargaining agreement between the District and Anchorage Council of Education/AFT (AFL-CIO) which will establish terms and conditions of employment for ACE employees during the period between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2012.

3. ASD Memorandum # 10 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Fred Meyer

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a cash grant from Fred Meyer Stores in the amount of \$21,066.

4. ASD Memorandum # 12 - Acceptance of Grant Award: McLaughlin WIA Youth Program

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the State of Alaska, Workforce Investment Act-Youth Program, in the amount of \$67,586.

5. ASD Memorandum # 34 - Acceptance of Grant Award: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a McKinney-Vento grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development in the amount of \$46,346 for the first year of a two-year project, and to accept additional McKinney-Vento funds in the amount of \$100,172 awarded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

6. ASD Memorandum # 9 - Alaska Department of Education and Early Development FY 2011 Grant Applications

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to submit the following

projects, in priority order, to the State of Alaska, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) by September 1, 2009, for the FY2011 Capital Improvement Project grants program.

School Construction & Major Maintenance Grants	
Service High School Renovation	\$50,000,000
Girdwood K-8 School Design	1,000,000
Districtwide Fire Alarm Upgrades	1,200,000
Districtwide Traffic /Site Improvements	6,750,000
Districtwide Roof Replacements	2,500,000
Districtwide Electrical Upgrades	4,000,000
Districtwide Mechanical Upgrades	3,400,000
Districtwide General Building Renewal	750,000
Inlet View School Design	750,000
Gladys Wood School Design	750,000
Districtwide Track & Athletic Field Upgrades	22,500,000
Districtwide Security System Upgrades	1,250,000
Districtwide Code/Sprinkler Upgrades	1,250,000
West High School Renovation Design (Phase 1)	1,500,000
Romig Middle School Renovation Design (Phase 1)	<u>1,500,000</u>
Total All Grants	\$99,100,000

7. ASD Memorandum # 28 - Amendment To Professional Services Agreement for Districtwide Educational Specifications

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to approve an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with BrainSpaces in the amount of \$45,150 for developing revisions to separate districtwide educational specifications for each level: elementary, middle and high school.

8. ASD Memorandum # 33 - Award of Contract: Food Staples

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to award a contract to Food Services of America to furnish Food Staples in the estimated amount of \$190,548.

9. ASD Memorandum # 4- Personnel Report

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

Ms. Mackie requested that ASD Memorandum # 34, Acceptance of Grant Award: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth be pulled for discussion.

Mr. Steele requested that ASD Memorandum # 11, Adoption of Tentative Agreement: Anchorage Council of Education (AFL-CIO) 2009-2012 be pulled for discussion.

Ms. Comeau requested that ASD Memorandum # 7, Adequate Yearly Progress Update FY 2008-2009 from the Superintendent's Report be pulled for discussion.

ACTION:

Moved by: Pat Higgins  
Seconded by: Jeff Friedman

To approve the Minutes of the Regular Meetings May 4, 2009, June 8, 2009, June 22, 2009, Minutes of the Early Meeting June 22, 2009 and Memoranda #10, #12, #9, #28, #33, and #4, with addendum.

VOTE

Ayes: Jeff Friedman, Pat Higgins,  
Jeannie Mackie, Kathleen Plunkett, Tim Steele,  
John Steiner

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 11 - Adoption of Tentative Agreement: Anchorage Council of Education (AFL - CIO) 2009-2012

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the collective bargaining agreement between the District and Anchorage Council of Education/AFT (AFL-CIO) which will establish terms and conditions of employment for ACE employees during the period between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2012.

ACTION:

Moved by: Tim Steele  
Seconded by: Jeff Friedman

To approve and adopt the collective bargaining agreement between the District and Anchorage Council of Education/AFT (AFL-CIO) which will establish terms and conditions of employment for ACE employees during the period between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2012

Ms. Comeau commented that she was very pleased that the two negotiating teams were able to reach a tentative agreement and that the ACE bargaining unit ratified the agreement with strong support. She thanked the district's negotiating team, as well as, the ACE team for keeping at it until the tentative agreement was made.

Mr. Tollefsen appreciated the work that ACE put in to the negotiations. It was a fairly long, fairly tough negotiation. The members of ACE appreciated and strongly ratified the tentative agreement.

Ms. Comeau thanked Duane Moran for his leadership along with the team and the executive board.

Mr. Steele stated that the district has great employees and it was always nice to get one of the contracts ratified. He understood the negotiation was a good one. He noted that staff on both sides of the table had done a great job.

Mr. Tollefsen answered a question regarding the ACE bargaining group. He explained that there were a wide variety of job types in the union. They include IT, Safety/Security, Supervisory, Payroll, Accounting and Audio Visual.

Ms. Comeau added that facilities were also included, as well as, project managers, mid-management, supervisors, instructional support and support to the entire district. The list of jobs can be found on pages 41-45

of the contract and on-line. ACE is considered a critical union; one that district could not do without.

Mr. Tollefsen said that the union continued to grow as more and more jobs were categorized with ACE.

Mr. Steele again congratulated both sides of the bargaining team for a job well done.

Mr. Steiner complemented ACE as part of the glue that holds the district together.

VOTE

Ayes: Jeff Friedman, Pat Higgins,  
Jeannie Mackie, Kathleen Plunkett, Tim Steele,  
John Steiner

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 34 - Acceptance of Grant Award: McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a McKinney-Vento grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development in the amount of \$46,346 for the first year of a two-year project, and to accept additional McKinney-Vento funds in the amount of \$100,172 awarded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

ACTION:

Moved by: Jeannie Mackie  
Seconded by: Jeff Friedman

To approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a McKinney-Vento grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development in the amount of \$46,346 for the first year of a two-year project and to accept additional McKinney-Vento funds in the amount of \$100,172 awarded

through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

Ms. Mackie asked if the additional McKinney-Vento funds in the amount of \$100,172 were through ARRA, how were they different from the stimulus money that was already requested on the application to the state.

Mr. Graff explained that ARRA funds were specific to grants that were already established, the McKinney-Vento grant was one that was given year after year. There were four grants that were along the same vein, and are considered ARRA grants. The McKinney-Vento grant is one of those. There are also IDEA, Title II-D, and Preschool Special Ed grants that all fall under the ARRA. Another one is the State Fiscal Stabilization grant and that one is the \$34 million. These are all lumped together under the ARRA funding. Notification for the McKinney-Vento grant had been received and needed to be accepted separately. The other grant awards had not been received yet.

Mr. Steiner verified that the McKinney-Vento grant would not affect the overall spending limit because it was within the state and local grants and would not affect the federal funding.

Ms. Comeau agreed that that was correct and the federal funding had been taken to the assembly for authority to use it.

VOTE

Ayes: Jeff Friedman, Pat Higgins,  
Jeannie Mackie, Kathleen Plunkett, Tim Steele,  
John Steiner

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum # 5 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of June 9, 2009 through July 15, 2009.

2. ASD Memorandum # 8 - Monthly Update Student Information System - Zangle

Zangle was “turned up” in a final, production environment in ASD on July 7, 2009. Training for district staff continues according to the Zangle training plan. All district staff with access to Zangle will be trained before school starts on August, 19. Teachers will be trained on Zangle Gradebook/Attendance on August 17 and 18. Contact information is being collected from parents/guardians during registration. At the start of registration, 70% of district families did not have contact information in Zangle. All contact information received before school starts will be available in Zangle. Additional contact information will continued to be entered as it becomes available. ASD Summer school marks were successfully converted to the production Zangle database, which eliminated the need for manually entering approximately 4000 summer school marks (grades).

3. ASD Memorandum # 30 - Update on the Award of Contract for Eagle River High School Roof Stabilization

4. ASD Memorandum # 7 - Adequate Yearly Progress Update FY 2008-2009

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires states and districts to report on the progress of schools based on an accountability measure known as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Under this measure schools have to meet as many as 31 targets related to student participation in testing, proficiency on standards-based assessments in language arts and math, and either attendance or graduation rates, depending upon the grade level of the schools.

Ms. Comeau reported that she and Mr. Steiner and Ms. Mackie attended the press conference on August 5<sup>th</sup> to announce the AYP results for No Child Left Behind compliance. The meeting was held because it is required by statute to provide parents notice fourteen days before the start of classes which schools need to offer school choice. The district is very pleased with the increase in the graduation rate. It was a significant effort on the part of everyone. The graduation rate was almost 70%, a considerable increase from the

previous year. She gave kudos not only to all the high schools and all their staff but to everyone who pulled together including the families and the students who made an effort to focus on graduation rates. There was a slight decrease in Language Arts and Math scores which is a disappointment. In reviewing the information from the state it was noticed that they also had a flat or declining scores across the board. The district's graduation rate is significantly higher at 69% than the state average at 65%. The dot chart was mentioned as a tool for Board members to use when talking to principals of the affected schools. In many cases, schools missed meeting AYP by one or two categories. The next month would be spent assisting schools by looking at their data to see how close they were to proficiency and what areas need more staff development. The stimulus programs and training planned over the next two years will have a real impact on these schools. The report showed that there was some work to be done, especially for students with disabilities. Mr. Sjolander and the Special Education staff would be working with General Ed through the Response to Instruction to help more students with disabilities meet proficiency. Overall, AYP is based on three days of testing and there is so much more to judging successful schools. That is the message that Ms. Comeau wants to send. Meetings were planned for principals of the schools that are required to offer choice. A letter was drafted to send to the State Commissioner to request that Clark Middle School be considered a reconstructed and reconstituted school so it would be allowed to start over with the state AYP. School choices were listed for those parents and students who would wish to change schools. Past experience has shown that most do not use the school choice option because they wish to stay at their home school.

Mr. Graff added that elementary, middle and high school principals had been working with executive directors to discuss data and look at what would be done within their divisions to support students. This was a process that was done every year regardless of the AYP results.

Mr. Steele commented that the chart was a good visual representation of AYP and it was published in the paper. AYP was made in 39 out of 94 schools. Fifteen schools missed by one category out of a possible 31. Thirteen schools missed by two categories. There are a lot of schools doing a lot of good work, even by NCLB criteria. He felt it was important for people to understand NCLB is all "stick and no carrot". The national requirement is that all children will meet these

standards by 2014 and it will become more and more difficult. He felt that the schools were doing amazingly well. Mr. Steele noted that there were a couple of schools that had trouble getting the kids to school to take the test, specifically Family Partnership, COHO, and other continuation programs. These schools need to get students to take the tests. All in all, the schools were doing a great job. He offered his congratulations on the graduation rate increase. A high number of units are required to graduate and it is tough for the best students to complete. The philosophy has always been that the District wants students to graduate even if it takes a fifth year or if they have to do online studies or summer school. Mr. Steele asked how students were accounted for in the graduation rate if they went to summer school or attended a 5th year.

Mr. Henry answered. Fifth or sixth year seniors are counted in the graduation rate the year that they earn their diploma. Everyone has focused on the graduation and the drop rates without reducing or lowering the standards. Work was started on this graduation rate four years ago when the students were 9th graders. It is difficult to hold on to students to improve the drop out rate. Another difficult task is to then move them toward graduation. All of the extend year programs, freshman academies and summer school classes added to the increase in graduation rate. It is a team effort and high school principals are held accountable for their drop out rate and graduation rate. It is not just the high school principals and the staff that have worked toward this goal, elementary and middle schools have also played a large part. Students are expected to stay in school and graduate. It is an expectation through all the grades.

Mr. Steele noted that the drop out rate has gone down every year since NCLB was enacted. Mr. Steele asked how the principals were held accountable for their drop out rates even though the state allows students to drop out at 16.

Mr. Henry replied that the district staff including the administrators were a no nonsense bunch that did not make excuses. Every single student is expected to stay in school, pass the HSGQE and graduate.

Ms. Comeau added there has been a big shift over the last few years. The district has testified and would continue to testify in support of

increasing the compulsorily age to 18 or a high school diploma. The district does not feel it okay to drop out of school at age 16. A lot of work was being done to diversify the curriculum by adding more career and technical education courses. Career guides would be added to middle schools to find out what students' long range interests were and then come up with a plan. She congratulated all the schools that have worked so hard.

Mr. Steele wished to congratulate the board, the administration and the staff of the alternative programs that are designed to save students. Every student that graduates is a success story.

Ms. Plunkett mentioned Clark Middle School and the fact that it was a "new" school and had not been active for two years. She understood the letter would be sent to the Commissioner to ask that it be considered a reconstituted school, but what if parents or students wished to go to a different middle school due to the AYP status. She added that Clark is a gorgeous school and she believed that instruction wise it will be really positive.

Ms. Comeau responded that at this point, school choice would be offered because of Clark's current status. However, past experience has shown that many parents do not want their students leaving their neighborhood school.

Dr. James commented that contact and communication were extremely important. In the past, he had the opportunity to work with a number of the principals. When issues were brought to their attention they addressed it and were very willing to work with parents and students to increase communication. He also told a story of rural Alaska when he ran a wellness center. He did a lot of testing for the local school. There was a 16 year old female that wanted to take a test. She was off the charts in math and science. He told her that she could go anywhere she wanted to for school. She could have been an engineer, a pilot or anything she wanted to be. But no one had ever told her that. She started to cry because she was pregnant. If she had known her potential beforehand she had she could have chosen a different path. Communication is what is important. The child needs to know what is going on and that someone cares about what happens to them. Dr. James felt that the district was already on

track with that. Every state and city is different and unique. There is always something behind these reports. He believed from being out in the communities that the district is going in the right direction

Mr. Higgins voiced his concern that NCLB is about numbers and statistics and not about people. The district did have cause for celebration however, there were issues that needed to be addressed. He was pleased in March there had been the opportunity to look at a comprehensive plan regarding drop out and graduation rates. It is difficult to look at numbers by themselves because there are people behind those numbers. It is an important issue to the board. The outreach that was done with the Alaska Natives is important. There are so many stumbling blocks that have to be overcome; some in the communities and some in the schools. We need to partner better with the parents, guardians and community to find ways to be more successful. The state should play a role; Mr. Higgins agreed that 18 should be the drop out age. There should be more accountability when students younger than 18 do not go to school. It is up to the district to keep the students more interested in their classes. The number one reason students are dropping out is boredom. Vocational/Technical classes can help that issue. He appreciated the job that employees had done to get to the current status but did not want to diminish the effort that was still needed.

Ms. Mackie asked where the public could go to find the 31 targets that need to be met.

Ms. Comeau responded that a school by school report could be found on the district website under the Assessment webpage. However, with specific questions parents should ask their principal about their specific school. PTA and parent groups would be told about the school's improvement plan. She further explained that at the end of September, beginning of October there would be a work session to review profiles of performance which would show the full picture for each school. There would be more information available such as climate and connectedness surveys, attendance rates, mobility rates, and school goals.

Mr. Steiner clarified the dot chart.

Ms. Comeau added the chart is also available on the website. She explained that it is possible for a school to be under by just one point in one category and the school would fail AYP. There should be recognition of progress and growth in a meaningful way to recognize the work that is being done. It is not comparable to test last year's fourth grader and this year's fourth grader because they are not the same student. The profile of performance shows how the students have progressed through their growth in the district. Students that stay in the system consistently do better than if they move in and out. There were a lot of transient students last year.

Ms. Mackie thanked Mr. Steiner and Ms. Comeau for the clarification. She commented it was important that the public know what was looked at when the test results were reviewed. At first glance it could appear to be bad news but further investigation showed where things were progressing, as well as, areas to be improved.

Ms. Comeau pointed out as Mr. Steele had at the press conference that a number of students were in multiple columns. They might be Alaska Native/American Indian, from rural Alaska, economically disadvantaged and may or may not be a student with a disability. That student would be in three different categories. It is important to have meaningful discussions at the school level where staff can better explain it for their particular grade level or students.

Mr. Friedman pointed out that one positive thing that NCLB had done was remind everyone very clearly that every child matters. As Dr. James stated earlier, when every child can be reached and every child knows that that they are cared about, then dramatic results will be seen. He felt that the district had made big strides but had a long way to go and he appreciated all the hard work by staff at every level from the bus drivers to the principals. People are working hard to show that every child matters.

Mr. Steele agreed with Mr. Friedman and Dr. James. The stimulus money invested in the schools would make things more relevant. He believed that there would be some changes to NCLB in the next few years. He said it defied logic to assume that all children in the nation

would be proficient and at grade level by 2014. The district has made terrific strides in ELL, the program is outstanding and progress has also been made for students with disabilities. It is a tough struggle but progress will continue to be made.

Mr. Steiner made some points about statistics. The state statistics showed that on a percentage basis fewer schools made AYP than those in Anchorage. Anchorage is 40-some percent of the total state student population. AYP results do not show what is really going on in education. It only tells if the threshold was crossed but it doesn't show increases from year to year. AYP results seem to have very little meaning other than as a measure for NCLB. More data analysis needs to be done. The goal and the challenge will still be for AYP results to go up. Mr. Steiner reiterated that the district's mission is to educate all students for success in life, not for all schools to meet AYP. The district's goal is to be more comprehensive and holistic. Progress has been made. The detailed profiles of performance will be key in showing true progress.

5. ASD Memorandum # 6 - Facility Contract Modification Report and Completed Projects for the Month of June and July 2009

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of June 9, 2009 through July 15, 2009.

J. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

K. COMMUNICATIONS & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Steele communicated that the legislature was in town.

L. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS LITIGATION

M. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of August 10, 2009 was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:30 p.m.

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John Steiner, President

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Jeannie Mackie, Clerk

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Vanessa Blake, Recording Secretary

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Date Minutes Approved