

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #20 (98-99)

August 10, 1998

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION/CONTRACT EXTENSION

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the School Board's recommendation that the Anchorage School Board and Robert Christal as Superintendent of the Anchorage School District enter into a new contract for the period of July 1, 1998 through June 30, 2001. The salary for the 1998-99 school year is established at \$115,000.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The Superintendent has completed his sixth year as the educational leader of the state's largest school district and the 80th largest school district, out of over 15,000 school districts, in the nation.

This new contract extends through June 30, 2001. The School Board completed the Superintendent's annual evaluation during a Special Meeting on July 8, 1998. The School Board, in recognition of Mr. Christal's services to the Anchorage School District, has offered to increase his salary to \$115,000. This increase will place Mr. Christal in the lower one third of Superintendents in school districts of comparable size across the United States. The Superintendent was evaluated in seven areas. The results of the evaluation are as follows:

RELATIONSHIP WITH BOARD

One of Mr. Christal's strongest assets is his continued ability to maintain a strong working relationship with the School Board. He is publicly supportive of School Board policy and clearly views himself as part of a leadership team with the Board. He refrains from any public criticism of the Board even when his recommendations are not followed. Mr. Christal conscientiously puts in many hours and attends every event where the Board is represented. A new staff configuration has

significantly expedited follow-up on the many issues brought to his attention. He has also improved the timely publication of Board memos.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE DISTRICT

The Superintendent is a strong administrator who prioritizes issues and brings matters before the Board in a timely fashion. He follows through with well-developed procedures when implementing Board policy. He has made a strong effort to visit more schools, employee groups, and departments. The Board appreciates this increased presence. We encourage him to continue expanding opportunities for increased employee contributions during decision making. We are looking forward to his continued efforts to establish an atmosphere of openness and trust throughout the school district. Under Mr. Christal's leadership, the District has received national and statewide recognition for a cutting-edge teacher and administrator evaluation process. The Board looks forward to continued refinement and expansion of this evaluation process to all levels of the District. We commend the Superintendent for the increased staff recruitment efforts, one result of which has been an increase in minority hires. The Board is pleased to see the progress made toward implementation of the new business system.

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Superintendent has established respect, trust and credibility for the district. This accomplishment contributed to unanimous Assembly support of the presented budget, the groundbreaking rewrite of the state foundation formula, and the strong approval rating the public gave this year's school bonds. He is recognized throughout the community for his high personal standards of integrity. We value his increased involvement in community affairs. Mr. Christal is professional at all times even when under intense pressure. The Board appreciates the public relations audit and looks forward to the implementation of its recommendations.

### STAFF AND PERSONNEL LEADERSHIP

The task of leading almost 5,000 employees toward educational reform is a challenging one. The Superintendent has done an exemplary job managing labor negotiations resulting in significant cost avoidance and savings for the district. Restructuring of staff development is proving beneficial. A more focused and strategic staff development program has begun, but its continuation and expansion remain critical for the success of the District. ASD staff continue to perform at high levels, even though morale remains a concern. The Superintendent has taken some steps to improve morale, and the Board is looking forward to his continued efforts in this area.

## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Under Mr. Christal's leadership, the District continues to improve in measurable student achievement. The District has begun a strong and vital effort to increase student reading and spelling skills. ASD is completing the transition to middle schools, has begun Graduation Support Services and high school counseling reform, and has initiated major curriculum improvements. The Board looks forward to improved evaluation of educational programs and initiatives, as well as expansion of successful educational programs. As this demand for building space increases, the District needs to improve the current system of evaluating space for programs.

## FISCAL MANAGEMENT

The Board appreciates the advice and recommendations the Superintendent has provided on the District's financial situation. His advice on the various financial options before us has proven invaluable. We would still like to see more concrete and updated information in order to improve our financial planning. We anticipate some improvements in this area with implementation of the new business system. We appreciate the follow through on the recommendations made in external and internal audits.

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The Superintendent is commended for his efforts in garnering community support for the large building effort and renewal of older facilities the District has undertaken in recent years. This year's opening of three new schools and the renewal of our older buildings are the culmination of years of effort. The District's efforts in preventative maintenance were recognized by the state Deferred Maintenance Task Force. Some of our facilities have received national and international commendations for design and construction. The Board looks forward to more comprehensive planning for future facilities through increased community input and better coordination with municipal and state planning agencies. The Board commends the Superintendent for his strong leadership in construction and facilities management.

HD/mt

Prepared and Approved by: Harriet Drummond, School Board President