

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 29, 1999

The Anchorage School Board met in Special Session on Friday, January 29, 1999 at 10:25 a.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President Harriet Drummond presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE

Board Members Present: Harriet Drummond, Peggy Robinson-Wilson, Dave Werdal, Kathi Gillespie, Bettye Davis, Rita Holthouse and Debbie Ossiander.

Others Present: Bob Christal, Carol Comeau, Janet Stokesbary, Mark Pasier, Pat McDowell, Gail Opalinski, Norm Holthouse, Bob Penzenik, Sharon Bandle, Lee Wilson, Bob Price, Ed Conyers, Kathy Christy, Bill Mikawa, Marie Laule, Fred Stofflet, Teresa Johnson, Larry Wiget, Mary Tanghe, the press and other interested people.

The School Board opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

By unanimous consent, the Agenda was reordered as follows: ASD Memorandum #200, Memorandum #201 and Memorandum #173.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

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

ASD Memorandum #200 – Tentative Agreement/Totem Association

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the 1998-2001 Negotiated Agreement between the Anchorage School District and the TOTEM Association of Educational Support Personnel for the period July 1, 1998 through June 30, 2001.

ACTION:

Moved by Peggy Robinson-Wilson to approve Memorandum #200.
seconded by Bettye Davis

Bob Christal explained that this memorandum is being addressed at today's meeting to demonstrate to employees that the District wants to ratify this agreement and to move forward. Mr. Christal further explained that this action

ASD Memorandum #173 – Anchorage School District Instructional Technology Plan

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the Anchorage School District Instructional Technology Plan.

ACTION:

Moved by Peggy Robinson-Wilson to approve Memorandum #173.
seconded by Kathi Gillespie

Norm Holthouse introduced Bob Penzenik, Sharon Bandle, Andy Rabung and John Andrews who collectively put together the technology presentation. Dr. Holthouse reviewed the background information of the Technology Plan up to and including the status of the plan today. Compiling this plan has been an on-going effort since the 1995-96 School Year. The net increase to the operational budget for the first year will be \$1,468,000 and \$1,226,000 for the second year. The net increase to the operational budget will be \$2,694,000 annually which will be an on-going cost. The first year costs have been included in the preliminary 1999-2000 budget.

Diane Etter commented that she was pleasantly surprised and very impressed with the Technology Plan. It shows a tremendous amount of thought and a great deal of work. Ms. Etter expressed concern regarding grammar check, spell check and punctuation check noting that these are areas students need to learn through their core classes. Some basic mechanics have been neglected in the District and it's important to address this issue. Ms. Etter noted the leasing of computers component is brilliant and applauded the Administration and the committees for all their hard work on this document.

Lynn Hammond offered suggestions to the plan in the spirit of tightening up the plan in some areas. In the area of Goals, eliminate the "how to" and substitute wording that addresses that: (1) kids will be able to use current technology; (2) kids will be able to figure out how to deal with new technological challenges; (3) the District will use technology to teach rather than teaching technology; and (4) the community will know why the District is not emphasizing keyboarding, disk management, or file management (these skills will be learned, they are not significant goals). In the Focus area, Mr. Hammond suggested to eliminate voyage of the Mimi, PE, art, music and the like and to concentrate on the core. In the Integration area, the document should acknowledge curriculum strands with computer tasks embedded and to state how it will be done, what the end product will be and when it will be done. The Frameworks should show where software and technology might be used. The Assessment area talks about the use of technology to assess students; however, it is important to evaluate and assess the technology effort itself to see if it is working as it is intended. It is

important to incorporate this vital feedback loop (teachers need to be involved in this process).

Carol Comeau commented that discussions have already take place regarding imbedding the curriculum software review into the curriculum adoption process and the importance of having a technology representative on that committee from the very beginning.

Sharon Harris, Baxter Community School Coordinator, expressed support for the Technology Plan and noted that it's very important to offer technology at all grade levels and to also include training for all the people who work for the District including non-certificated employees. Ms. Harris also commented that she would like to see community access to this technology to allow parents and the general public to become familiar with computer technology.

Sharon Long commented that she was please to see such a comprehensive technology plan and strongly encouraged the Board to give keyboarding a higher priority and to classify keyboarding as a skill. Ms. Long suggested that keyboard proficiency be listed under performance indicators; i.e., Grades 4 -6 at a proficiency rating of 25 words per minute (wpm).

Debbie Ossiander expressed concern that many of the high schools have minimum connectivity and inquired as to what is being looked at to bring our high schools up to an acceptable level.

Norm Holthouse explained that the current plan is to follow the East High School model and to build in an extensive network. Service is planning their Net Day in February and the other high schools are planning their Net Day also.

Kathi Gillespie inquired if the high schools will be brought up to the standards with the new machines first.

Norm Holthouse responded that the intention is to distribute computers to those schools with the most needs. The plan does not distinguish doing high schools, middle schools or elementary schools first. It's important to look at all the schools and see who has the highest needs.

Kathi Gillespie commented that it's important to prioritize the high schools first to bring them up to the standards, then the middle schools, then the elementary schools.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson asked if the computers were distributed first to all the high schools at a 1:5 ratio, and working on down, how far could the District get the first year.

Kathi Gillespie asked if every classroom teacher will have a computer in their classroom with Internet access.

Norm Holthouse responded that yes, that is the plan.

Sharon Bandle explained that the first priority is to make sure there is access in each classroom and then to place the computer in the most effective area for learning.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson inquired about the electrical circuitry to support the computers in the middle and elementary schools.

Bob Christal noted that there were some districtwide electrical upgrades but they didn't solve all the problems.

Carol Comeau explained that there has been on-going communication with the Fire Marshal regarding this issue. There are not enough electrical outlets and it's important to stop using extension cords for electrical connections. When the fire department inspects each school, classroom by classroom to see what is needed, they will make a note of the classrooms that have adequate power. More labs may be needed until all of the schools are brought up to code.

Norm Holthouse noted that most of the schools have adequate power in the building; the problem is with the number of outlets in the classrooms. Most classrooms have the ability to have a couple computers but there are some schools that will need to have outlets put in and more resources will be needed to address this issue.

Kathy Christy explained that the high schools are in relatively good shape; the elementary schools are a little more problematic.

Debbie Ossiander commented that she would rather proceed with this major expenditure when the infrastructure can support it. Ms. Ossiander stated that she would rather put the funds initially in supporting the infrastructure and then acquire the hardware boxes.

Dave Werdal commented that perhaps it is necessary to wait six months to a year to make sure this plan is successful. People will want this technology in every school and if there are electrical problems, there will be delays which will create more problems.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander
seconded by Peggy Robinson-Wilson

that this plan be prioritized to meet secondary school needs first (starting with 1:10 ratio for high schools, then 1:10 for middle schools, then 1:10 for elementary schools as far as it goes only in Year 1).

Debbie Ossiander explained that kids who get access to technology want more and in hearing that there isn't enough technology in Year 1 to go all the way around, prioritization is going to be implicit in the plan where there are greater needs.

Dave Werdal commented that he would like to see more prioritization at the high school and middle school level but noted a concern if the elementary schools get nothing.

Rita Holthouse inquired as to which schools have no computers.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson inquired as to how many additional computers are needed to meet this ratio at the high schools and at the middle schools and how many would be left for the elementary schools.

Bettye Davis questioned all the discussion concentrating on the secondary level and noted that the standards being set are not just for high school students, but for students at all levels. Ms. Davis further noted that high school students have more access to computers than younger students. The recommendation is to place them where they are needed and the overall goal is a 5:1 ratio in a five-year process.

Rita Holthouse noted that it's important to take into consideration that the schools that do not have computers may be in a low socio-economic area of the community.

Recessed at 12:30 p.m.

Reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

Norm Holthouse explained to the Board that to achieve a 1:10 ratio the high schools would need 537 additional computers, the middle schools would need 332 additional computers and the elementary schools would need 1,231 additional computers.

VOTE:

Ayes: Robinson-Wilson

Nays: Ossiander, Werdal, Drummond,
Gillespie, Holthouse, Davis

AMENDMENT FAILED.

Norm Holthouse announced the ratio of students to computers at the following schools: High Schools: West: 9:1; East: 11:1; Dimond: 21:1; Service: 24:1; Bartlett: 32:1; Chugiak High: 52:1. Middle Schools: Romig: 14:1; Clark: 18:1; Mears: 19:1; Gruening: 23:1; Hanshew: 25:1; Wendler: 37:1; Central: 66:1. Elementary Schools (starting from the low end of the list): Girdwood: 49:1; North Star: 53:1; Sand Lake: 58:1; Baxter: 58:1; Eagle River: 65:1; Airport Heights: 68:1; Bowman: 75:1; Muldoon: 81:1; O'Malley: 81:1; Polaris K-12: 81:1; Bayshore: 95:1; Homestead: 98:1; Willow Crest: 135:1; Gladys Wood: 175:1; Spring Hill: 183:1; Susitna: 276:1; Tudor: 279:1; Aurora: 279:1; Rogers Park: 297:1; and Chugiak Elementary: 522:1. The following elementary schools do not have any computers that meet the standards: Orion, Ravenwood, Inlet View, Kennedy, Birchwood, and Chugach Optional.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander
seconded by Kathi Gillespie

that this plan be prioritized with
secondary schools first.

Debbie Ossiander asked the Administration if they received this direction how they would proceed with this plan.

Bob Christal responded that it needs to be very clear that schools at 500:1 will need some attention. The Administration will not mislead the Board that schools that are at either zero or an impossible ratio would be ignored. Emphasis on high schools is important. It is important to pay attention to the schools that are marginal and then it is necessary to factor in the electrical issue.

Debbie Ossiander commented that she could probably go along with just knowing the Administration hears that the Board's concern is to meet the needs of the secondary schools first. There is a limited amount of dollars and the plan cannot be implemented as it is written and therefore it needs some prioritization.

Kathi Gillespie commented that there is a direct correlation between the quality of instruction and computer technology and would like to see some changes in student achievement. Ms. Gillespie noted that she supports this amendment and that many kids will be missed if this isn't done in a planned way.

Peggy Robinson-Wilson commented that she does not favor this motion as it is currently written because there is nothing in it addressing latitude. If the

intention is to allow the Administration to have some latitude then it needs to be stated in the motion.

AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT:

Moved by Peggy Robinson-Wilson
seconded by Kathi Gillespie

that the prioritization allows latitude for Administration discretion, based on electrical capabilities of buildings, existing technology resources, and other professional judgements.

Rita Holthouse pointed out that if the plan is left as it is written, it accomplishes the prioritization this amendment addresses. Dr. Holthouse stated that she supports the thought behind the amendment but will not support the amendment.

Kathi Gillespie commented that there is a difference in what this amendment proposes and the original plan and supports this amendment.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT:

Ayes: Ossiander, Werdal,
Robinson-Wilson, Drummond,
Gillespie

Nays: Holthouse, Davis

AMENDMENT TO AMENDMENT PASSED.

Dave Werdal commented that he is comfortable that the Administration will give proper attention to the high schools.

Harriet Drummond stated that if the language in the amendment makes the Board more comfortable in leaning towards prioritizing secondary schools first then it should be approved.

Bob Christal stated that the District is on the right track either way. Kids exiting the system need the skills and the Administration needs the ability to make some adjustments as needed.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

Ayes: Ossiander, Robinson-Wilson
Drummond, Gillespie

Nays: Werdal, Holthouse, Davis

AMENDMENT PASSED.

Debbie Ossiander requested that the Administrative responses to Lynn Hammond's suggestions be incorporated in the Technology Plan.

Harriet Drummond commented that skills for keyboarding need to be adequately taught and the document needs to be reviewed annually or more often if needed. Ms. Drummond further commented that computers need to be used for what they are best at and it's important to limit the number of different kinds of applications that are allowed to be installed on computers. It is important to give kids a good basic grounding in this equipment. Students need to be able to integrate what they know in the business world. Ms. Drummond noted that she would like to use a per student ratio for the hardware and software standards as listed on page 54 and to make sure every school gets the correct number of pieces of equipment.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED:

Ayes: Ossiander, Werdal,
Robinson-Wilson, Drummond,
Gillespie, Holthouse, Davis

Nays: None

MAIN MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED.

- C. EXECUTIVE SESSION – (PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATION)
- D. SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS
- E. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Meeting of January 29, 1999 was adjourned by unanimous consent at 1:40 p.m.

Harriet Drummond, President

Dave Werdal, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved