

MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

SPECIAL MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2000

The Anchorage School Board met in Special Session on Monday, January 24, 2000, at 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room, at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President Peggy Robinson presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE

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

Others Present: Bob Christal, Carol Comeau, Janet Stokesbary, Carolyn Buckley, Marie Laule, Patricia McRae, Gail Opalinski, Pat McDowell, Robyn Rehmann, Fred Stofflet, Norm Holthouse, Ed Conyers, Steve Kalmes, Teresa Johnson, Ellen Montague, John Alexander, Bill Mikawa, Stan Syta, Lee Wilson, Brent Rock, Neal Black, Darlene Irons, Michelle Egan, Tom Bibeau, Ed Blahous, Jim Taylor, Ray Amsden, Earl Tucker, Ray Fenton, Russ Ament, Heather Wagner, Hans Bernard, Mary Tanghe, the press and other interested people.

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

Debbie Ossiander welcomed two boy scouts from Eagle River Troop 230.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

ASD Memorandum #175 - FY 2000-2001 Proposed Financial Plan (Revised) (Second Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to prepare the Anchorage School District's FY 2000-2001 Proposed Financial Plan as set forth in the projected revenue and expenditure schedules included with this memorandum and the budget revisions made by the School Board during the first reading on January 18, 2000 (Attachment A). The total budget recommended is \$418,505,754. This includes individual fund budgets currently projected as follows:

<u>Proposed FY 2000-2001 Financial Plan</u>	<u>Percentage Increase Over FY 1999-2000 Revised Budget</u>
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General Fund	\$342,202,954	4.34%
Food Service Fund	10,650,000	6.50%
Debt Service Fund	39,652,800	1.63%
Local/State/Federal Projects Fund	<u>26,000,000</u>	23.81%
Total – All Funds	<u>\$418,505,754</u>	5.15%

The total of local tax contribution to be requested is \$125,516,049.

It is further recommended that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to adjust the budget expenditure ceiling above in accordance with any education related ballot propositions that may be approved in the April 4, 2000, Municipal Election.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander to approve Memorandum #175
seconded by Kathi Gillespie (Revised) (Second Reading).

Bob Christal presented a brief review of the FY 2000-2001 Financial Plan highlighting the major areas of the budget. Mr. Christal also highlighted the fiscal year comparison of all the funds within the budget.

Reverend William Greene emphasized the importance of adding the Multicultural Specialist position to the 2000-2001 budget noting that since 39 percent of the students in the Anchorage School District are minority students, it is paramount that the District reinstate this position. Reverend Greene urged the Board to support the Multicultural Specialist position and to also transfer funds in the amount of \$36,000 for operational expenses.

Andree McLeod commented that she has strong concerns about the minority concerns in the District schools but noted that there is only so much the taxpayers are willing to pay. Ms. McLeod suggested that the District reevaluate and reprioritize what is important and what is being taught in the District schools. Ms. McLeod further suggested that the District look at Federal Domestic Assistance Grants explaining that non-profit groups can work well in this area.

Bettye Davis stated that everyone should be responsible for their own sharing of their diversity and that the Anchorage School District is also responsible for everyone in the District irregardless of the color of their skin and this cannot all be done by non-profit groups.

James Patlan commented that the Multicultural Specialist is a very vital position that needs to be put back into the budget. Mr. Patlan further commented that this position needs to work closely with the

various groups and agencies throughout the city. Mr. Patlan urged the Board to reinstate this position for the good of all students.

Dr. Robert Peoples stated that it is vital to look at what is really important for all people noting that some people who pay taxes are the same people not getting what they need from the school system for their children. A key element is to learn other people's values and to deal with people from all walks of life and all areas of the world. Dr. Peoples urged the Board to reinstate the much needed position of the Multicultural Specialist.

Lynn Hammond, Chairman of the School Budget Advisory Commission, reminded the Board that if the tax cap initiative passes this coming fall, one half of the \$36 million falls on this budget tonight if the deficit is not dealt with at this time. Mr. Hammond reiterated that the deficit problem will not go away and needs to be addressed.

Bob Christal stated that the M.E.C.C. met in an emergency meeting on Friday, January 21, 2000 and voted unanimously to support the reinstatement of the Multicultural Specialist position in the amount of \$57,000 and to provide adequately for supplies and resources for this position in the amount of \$36,000. (It was suggested that the \$36,000 could be funded out of federal funds within the Bilingual program.) Mr. Christal noted that the Multicultural Specialist position was eliminated in the mid-90's through a series of budget reductions. Mr. Christal further noted that he did meet with Fred Stofflet, Maxine Hill and Carol Comeau to discuss the key issues regarding this position that are currently missing but are still needed.

Fred Stofflet explained that the Multicultural position had been combined with the Bilingual Supervisor position for approximately five years. Activities are continuing in the area of curriculum review and curriculum activities. Committees made up of staff and community members as well as representatives from the Bilingual program and the Indian Education program, look at the frameworks and the selection of specific multicultural materials. Events are also offered at the Asian Cultural Center. The District does offer the *Dignity With Diversity* course and maintains a Multicultural Library which includes materials relevant to a number of cultures for loan to schools and teachers. Dr. Stofflet also noted that the District has initiated the Newcomer Center which is housed at the King Career Center. The District has also added bilingual counselors at the secondary level to assist with counseling students who have other than English as a language.

Joy Green-Armstrong, M.E.C.C. Chairperson, commented that the whole intent and purpose of the M.E.C.C. is community based but it is

also a committee to look at minority concerns in the Anchorage School District. It is very clear that the Multicultural Specialist position is critically needed. Teachers need to be made more aware of multicultural issues. Ms. Green-Armstrong strongly urged the Board to reinstate the Multicultural Specialist position.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by Bettye Davis
seconded by Rita Holthouse

that \$57,000 be added to the budget expenses for a Multicultural Specialist and that the Superintendent and his staff identify a \$57,000 reduction in expenses.

Bettye Davis stated that there shouldn't be any undo duress in finding the money for this position within the budget. This position could be combined into a Multicultural/Bilingual position. Ms. Davis further stated that she would like to see \$36,000 allocated for the needed resources for this position (these funds could come out of the federal funds in the Bilingual program). There is a very real need for this position and as long as the District has students who have a need for special attention, the District has a need for this multicultural position.

Debbie Ossiander stated that she would like the funds identified before voting for this amendment. Ms. Ossiander explained that years ago the Board had to cut positions and lay people off and ever since then she has been very watchful when positions are being discussed to be added to the budget. Ms. Ossiander further explained that she recognizes the needs in this area but would feel more comfortable and supportive if funds could be more identifiable.

Rita Holthouse commented that the District has coordinators in so many different areas. The entire support system in the administration is built on having someone to coordinate efforts and watch over particular programs and to keep them focused. There must be an inherent belief for people to be responsible and to make sure things are done. Currently, there isn't anyone whose primary focus is multiculturalism in the District. There seems to be a lot of people doing a little, but there needs to be someone coordinating these efforts. Dr. Holthouse urged support for this position.

VOTE:

Ayes: Drummond, Robinson, Holthouse,
Davis

Nays: Ossiander, Werdal, Gillespie

AMENDMENT PASSED.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by Rita Holthouse
seconded by Bettye Davis

that the \$251,400 currently included in the budget for nine middle school Career Resource Aides be re-designated at \$251,400 for either Career Resource Aides or Middle School

Administrative Interns, to be determined by the Administration after the 1999-2000 evaluation of the Middle School Career Resource Aide Program is concluded.

Rita Holthouse explained that this year is the first year that the middle school resource aides are in the general budget. When the change was made from the Federal budget, the District was going to evaluate this program to see whether or not it should continue. Dr. Holthouse further explained that she is not advocating in either way whether or not this program should continue. However, if there is a decision to eliminate some or all of the middle school career resource aides, some of the money left over could be used for administrative interns in the middle schools. Any left over money would go to whatever number of interns could be afforded. Dr. Holthouse further explained that this is aimed at only the middle schools because they would be losing some support personnel if the program goes away and this action would be adding some support personnel. Also, the District has some very large middle schools that if they were high schools they would have additional assistant principals.

Dr. Holthouse noted that this amendment is not intended to change at all the type of decision the Administration will make on this program. It will be up to the Administration whether to make a blanket decision on the program. If, in making a decision, some or all of the career resource aides were eliminated, this motion would dedicate those funds, as much as possible, to administrative positions in the middle schools.

Bob Christal commented that the program in place first needs to be evaluated and then a system-wide analysis would have to take place. Mr. Christal stated that what he is hearing is that if the evaluation program is not successful, then the funds for the career resource aides at the middle school level would be realigned and used towards administrative interns for middle schools. Mr. Christal further stated that this will all be discussed with principals, administrators, teachers, students and parents as to the value of the career resource aide program.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

AMENDMENT PASSED.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by Harriet Drummond
seconded by Rita Holthouse

that the School Board identify a
line item in the budget of \$8,000
for snowplowing and removal

on

Rockridge Road from O'Malley
Road to O'Malley Elementary
School. The funds are already
within the Maintenance budget,
either in 3010 (page 142), MOA
False Fire Alarm Charges, or
3070 (page 143), School Snow
Removal-Emergency Services.

Harriet Drummond explained that funds are already in the Maintenance budget. This would be for short-term emergency winter maintenance of Rockridge Road. This expenditure is necessary to cover a safety situation as well as to show support for capital appropriation from the State. Ms. Drummond stated that she did not expect this expenditure to be in the budget forever but it is a beginning to assure the winter safety of this road for school use.

Bob Christal explained that this would be for short-term winter emergency maintenance which the District would undertake with diligence and care. Mr. Christal recommended that the School Board allow the Administration to keep the \$12,000 originally budgeted for increases to fire alarm fees and allow the Budget Department to move it to the Maintenance Department budget but not as a budget line item. If it is necessary to access the funds for emergency snow removal, the District Maintenance Department could do so without formal School Board action or if the School Board desires, it can make a motion to direct the Administration to move the funds. Either way the District would not assume road maintenance responsibility but could do emergency snow plowing as deemed necessary with the available funds. Mr. Christal further explained that there was a possibility of an increase in fire alarm fees. The Assembly did not take action to increase the fees so funds are available from this area that could be used for emergency snow removal services.

A friendly amendment was made by Debbie Ossiander and agreed to by the maker of the motion to add the word "emergency" before the word

“snowplowing” in the amendment. The amendment would read: “That the School Board identify a line item in the budget of \$8,000 for emergency snowplowing and removal on Rockridge Road from O’Malley Road to O’Malley Elementary School. The funds are already within the Maintenance Budget, either in 3010 (page 142), MOA False Fire Alarm Charges, or 3070 (page 143), School Snow Removal-Emergency Services.”

Peggy Robinson inquired as to the department that would be responsible for regular winter maintenance of this road if the District only does emergency snow removal in the winter.

Bob Christal explained that an outline will need to be compiled as to the scheduling for snow removal by the Maintenance Department. The original intent to satisfy the requirements of the State to allocate funds for a road upgrade is to have someone assume the overall routine maintenance of this road. Discussions at the municipal level still need to take place. The District will only be doing emergency snow removal.

Harriet Drummond commented that if this motion is passed, it will trigger the movement of the capital appropriation for the road upgrade. Also, this will let the Municipality know that they need to get serious about upgrading the road to make it safer for the community.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

AMENDMENT PASSED.

Kathi Gillespie expressed concern that the District plans to fund its operation out of the District’s emergency funds. Ms. Gillespie stated that she supports the Superintendent and fellow Board members but is very concerned with the basic philosophy of how the District will be funding this budget and will therefore not be voting in favor of this budget.

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:

Ayes: Drummond, Ossiander, Werdal,
Robinson, Holthouse, Davis

Nays: Gillespie

MAIN MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED.

C. SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS

D. EXECUTIVE SESSION - (PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS/
LITIGATION)

E. ADJOURNMENT

The Special Meeting of January 24, 2000 was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:40 p.m.

Peggy Robinson, President

Rita Holthouse, Clerk

Date Minutes Approved