

**MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2001**

The Anchorage School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, September 24, 2001 at 6:30 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, Harriet Drummond, Jake Metcalfe, Tim Steele, Rita Holthouse, Debbie Ossiander. Dave Werdal was excused from this meeting.

Others Present: Carol Comeau, Janet Stokesbary, Pat McDowell, Mike Henry, Gail Opalinski, Patricia McRae, Jerry Sjolander, Lee Wilson, Michelle Egan, Stan Syta, Mike Price, Bob Henry, Bill Mikawa, Robin Siegfried, the press and other interested people.

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

A special performance of the Star Spangled Banner was presented by the Chugiak High School Choir. Also, Chugiak High School student Vanessa Grant sang "God Bless the USA."

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

School Board President, Peggy Robinson, announced the upcoming meetings.

Superintendent, Carol Comeau, announced that the second School Board meeting of each month would include a musical presentation.

Ms. Comeau also expressed her appreciation to John Tracy and the staff at Channel 2 News, as well as several ASD students, for doing an outstanding job during the television presentation of students and community leaders discussing the events of September 11, 2001. Ms. Comeau also mentioned the District's concern over the vandalism at Mike Maad's business and the fact that there is a "Not In Our Town" fund that the community could donate to in support of Mr. Maad's family.

Rita Holthouse briefed the Board on her visit to the Mirror Lake Open house and King Career Center, where she spent the day.

Tim Steele announced the workshops that he and other Board Members recently attended. Mr. Steele also mentioned the tour of the ASD annexes with Jake Metcalfe, and thanked George Vakalis for arranging and directing the tour.

Debbie Ossiander briefed the Board on the Large District Forum, which included Board Members from Juneau, the Mat Su Borough, Fairbanks and Kenai. The advocates for education centered on challenges of funding for school districts.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as printed.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

1. ASD Memorandum #29 - Denali Award Recipients, Spring 2001

Twice each year, a committee of Anchorage School District employees selects six co-workers and one team of colleagues who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to our mission of educating students for success in life. These committed employees are given Denali Awards.

Peggy Robinson presented awards to the following recipients: Leslie McNally, of Baxter Elementary, Linda Smith of Dimond H.S. and Kim Ramharter of Kasuun. Yong "Sam" Kim of Klatt Elementary and Pat Syta of Kasuun. Also, Betsy Nichols with Student Nutrition. Tom Bronga, Lou Chandler, and Bill Ennis at East H.S.

E. PRESENTATION

1. Partners in Education Symposium

Jim Utter and Josh Wilson briefed the board on the Partners in Education Symposium and explained the information in the folder

provided to them at this meeting. Business and Education leaders from across the U.S. and the world will be present at the symposium.

## 2. School Business Partnerships

Pat McDowell introduced Terrence Shanigan and Sharon Sellens. Mr. Shanigan briefed the Board on the mission and goals of the School Business Partnership program, which includes increasing the number of partnerships and the quality of the partnerships. They also hope to provide activities for students and more training for teachers and students, as well as the businesses involved. Mr. Shanigan stated that he would like to work with the District to develop a partnership with the businesses in order to establish criteria to measure success and to look at meaningful data to see if the program is positively impacting employability and academic success beyond high school. In regards to the School-to-Career program, Mr. Shanigan stated that he would like to look at the current program and begin to develop a School-to-Career program with the schools and businesses. Carol Comeau also stated that she, Pat McDowell and the School Business Partnership Board talked about bringing the Career Technology Program, School Business Partnership and School-to-Career Program into better communication so they are working together. The expectation of the business community is for the District to work closely with those entities. The curriculum tie-in is very important, as a number of students are moving on through the system, and they need to see those connections as well as the partnerships with the businesses and the non-profits in this community.

## F. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

### 1. Student Advisory:

Corey Rennell announced the SAB mtg. will be this Friday 9:00 - 11:00, Sept. 27th.

### 2. Military Delegate:

Lt. Col. Mulcahy stated that it has not been business as usual since September 11, 2001. Lt. Col. Mulcahy thanked the Anchorage

community, ASD Administration and staff. He has met with District Administration, as well as principals at Bartlett and on-post schools. Carol Comeau mentioned the meeting last week regarding access to the base and post. They continue to work through the issues of getting on and off base in a safe and timely manner.

3. M.E.C.C.:

Mary Marks stated that the MECC met on September 20, 2001, where they recognized three new committee members. At that meeting, Theresa Johnson helped the committee focus on their mission and goals, and they look forward to bringing them to the School Board for approval soon. Ms. Marks also introduced several of the members to the Board, which include: Victoria Parham, James Allen, Marilyn Anderson, Reality Kante and Richard Benevides. Ms. Marks stated that the committee looks forward to being a voice for minority families and friends of ASD and supporting School Board.

G. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Sharon Lind, President of the Aleut Foundation and Paul Untagut, Project Co-Director of the Alaska Native Curriculum and Teacher Development Program at UAA briefed the Board on the first Alaska Native Education Summit 2001, which will be held in Anchorage on November 30th and December 1st. Through the summit, they will strive to provide Alaska Native solutions to issues that have existed in education for Alaska Natives for many years.

Robert Hayes spoke to the board regarding the book "It's Perfectly Normal." Mr. Hayes would like to see the Board reconsider the decision of the Controversial Issues Committee. Mr. Hayes also mentioned the renovations to Bartlett High School and his concern that the Bartlett pool was leaking water on the electrical panel. There is an air pack in the chlorine room to rescue anyone who would be overcome by fumes. Mr. Hayes was concerned that someone else would not be able to rescue that person without being overcome by the fumes. Debbie Ossiander requested the Administration to check into these issues and report to their findings to the Board.

Thomas Obermeyer spoke to the Board regarding Theresa Obermeyer's trespass violation and asked that the Board would look at the violation again and reconsider it.

Mr. Obermeyer is also concerned about the construction at East H.S. and the plywood that is in the hallways. Mr. Obermeyer feels the construction is a disruption to the school day. Mr. Obermeyer also expressed his feelings regarding the chain-linked fence around Wendler Middle School.

#### H. CONSENT AGENDA

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

##### 1. Approval Of Minutes:

- |    |                           |                   |           |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| a. | Regular Meeting (Amended) | August 13, 2001   | 6:30 p.m. |
| b. | Special Meeting           | - August 27, 2001 | 4:30 p.m. |
| c. | Regular Meeting           | - August 27, 2001 | 6:30      |

p.m.

##### 2. ASD Memorandum # 58 - A Resolution In Support Of The Alaska Junior Theater's 20th Anniversary Season

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the attached resolution in support of the Alaska Junior Theater's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season.

##### 3. ASD Memorandum # 45 - Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year 2000-2001

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2001 and authorize the Superintendent to forward this report to the Commissioner of Education, State of Alaska, and the Anchorage Assembly.

##### 4. ASD Memorandum # 44 - Alaska Association of School Board's Resolutions

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt the Association of Alaska School Boards' (AASB) 2001 Belief Statements and Core Resolutions including the changes and additions proposed by the School Board (Attachment A).

Suggested Anchorage School Board (ASB) proposed resolutions and amendments are highlighted both in the table of contents and within the document.

5. ASD Memorandum # 53 - Acceptance Of Grant Award: Foreign Language Assistance Grant: Project Voces

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual and Minority Languages Affairs, Foreign Language Assistance program, in the amount of \$147,768 for the first year of a three-year project.

6. ASD Memorandum # 54 - Acceptance Of Continuation Grant Award: Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept a continuation grant from Reading is Fundamental, Inc., in the amount of \$17,488

7. ASD Memorandum # 55 - Acceptance Of Continuation Grant Award: Rare-T HIV/Aids Prevention

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to accept grant funds from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services for the RARE-T HIV/AIDS Prevention project in the amount of \$18,000.

8. ASD Memorandum # 56 - Prior Approval Discretionary Grant: Environmental Education Grants Program

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for grants from the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

9. ASD Memorandum # 46 - Personnel Report

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

The following items were removed from the Consent Agenda: ASD Memoranda #58, #45, and #44.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander  
seconded by Harriet Drummond

to approve: the minutes from the Regular Meeting of August 13, 2001; Special Meeting of August 27, 2001; Regular Meeting of August 27, 2001; ASD Memorandum # 53; Memorandum #54; Memorandum #55; Memorandum #56; and Memorandum #46

VOTE:

Ayes: Ossiander, Steele, Holthouse  
Robinson, Drummond,  
Metcalf,

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 58 - A Resolution In Support Of The Alaska Junior Theater's 20th Anniversary Season

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and adopt the attached resolution in support of the Alaska Junior Theater's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season.



independent audit. The report did not identify any conditions or weaknesses. The books and records balanced and reconciled. Documentation was provided. Mr. Miller appreciated the department's cooperation. Bill Mikawa gave a brief presentation of the CAFR to the Board and answered questions.

Theresa Obermeyer spoke on the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Ms. Obermeyer also mentioned that the auditors that audited ASD also are the auditors for the Permanent Fund. Ms. Obermeyer was concerned that she could not view a copy of the CAFR at the meeting. Ms. Drummond clarified that the copies are sent to the State of Alaska, the Mayor's office and the Assembly. Ms. Stokesbary added that the copies are available through the Public Affairs department.

Robert Hayes commented on the CAFR and his concern that the audit showed there was no inappropriate spending. Mr. Tim Steele informed Mr. Hayes that they were not auditing expenditures but auditing procedures and accounting preferences.

VOTE:

Ayes: Ossiander, Steele, Holthouse  
Robinson, Drummond,  
Metcalf, Werdal

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum # 44 - Alaska Association of School Board's Resolutions

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt the Association of Alaska School Boards' (AASB) 2001 Belief Statements and Core Resolutions including the changes and additions proposed by the School Board (Attachment A).

Suggested Anchorage School Board (ASB) proposed resolutions and amendments are highlighted both in the table of contents and within the document.

ACTION:

Moved by Tim Steele  
seconded by Rita Holthouse

to approve Memorandum #44.

Carol Comeau introduced Debbie Ossiander and her committee. Ms. Ossiander thanked Harriet Drummond and Jake Metcalfe for their efforts. Debbie Ossiander reviewed the proposed resolutions and amendments.

Robert Hayes stated his opinion that things are better in the District and he wanted to remind the Board members that they are here to represent the students and community.

Theresa Obermeyer stated that she would like to see a resolution that United States senators have recall and time limits.

Peggy Robinson requested back-up information on the compulsory school age report. Debbie Ossiander stated that the information is forthcoming. At this point they have some information, which includes the numbers of students that come into the District without prior experience in the educational setting and anecdotal comments from educators with their personal experiences. The committee feels they will be able to take a stronger position in the future once they complete their research. Harriet Drummond explained that much of the data will come from the Developmental Profile and that once the data builds over the next few years, they would be able to make a stronger case.

Debbie Ossiander mentioned this is an ongoing process of the Board. They will still debate and discuss it at the conference and then push forward the resolutions that come forth at that point. Peggy Robinson added that they do see movement and approval of the resolutions brought forward by the Board.

Carol Comeau commented that she will be gathering research from the different districts at the Large District Forum, on parental notification with regard to surveys and how that is impacting the five large districts' ability to get accurate and up-to-date data. That information will go along with the priority mentioned above.

VOTE:

Ayes: Ossiander, Steele, Holthouse  
Robinson, Drummond,  
Metcalfe,

Nays: None  
MOTION PASSED

I. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

ASD Memorandum # 47 - Enrollment Status Update For FY 2001-2002

Enrollment figures as of September 17, 2001, the tenth day of school, indicate that the Anchorage School District has exceeded the September 30, 2000 actual membership by 91 students. The September 17, 2001 total of 49,611 students is the largest active enrollment in the history of the Anchorage School District.

Carol Comeau stated that the enrollment is anticipated to be in the range of 49,600 to 49,700. The Administration continues to monitor the numbers and held back teaching positions that haven't met projection. They are making final adjustments at this time. Ms. Comeau commented that it was a very smooth start as far as the allocation of teachers. Early activation in elementary schools has helped. Harriet Drummond commented that she did not receive any phone calls regarding class sizes being too large. Ms. Drummond stated that the Administration did a good job. Peggy Robinson added that there were more middle school and senior high school students while there was a decrease in elementary and kindergarten age students. Carol Comeau stated that she believes the increase in middle school students is a signal that people realize the District has a strong program and is continuing to improve.

ASD Memorandum # 48 - Facility Project Report And Change Order For The Month Of August 2001

The monthly Facility Project Report Update and Change Order Report for the month of August 2001 is attached. There are no exceptions to report this month.

ASD Memorandum # 49 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of August 28 through September 20, 2001.

Debbie Ossiander requested information on the cost impacts of asbestos at East. Ray Amsden stated that the information would be available before the next meeting. Chugiak High School cost has been resolved relative to the issue.

ASD Memorandum # 57 - Major Task Forces/Committees For 2001-2002

The Administration is providing a list of the major task forces/committees/studies/projects to the School Board that are known at this time. The intent is to complete this work as shown on the timeline, though many of these dates may be adjusted if other priorities materialize.

Carol Comeau stated that this memorandum contains a list of committees that will be working on very important issues. Pat McDowell will chair the School Starting Time committee that will continue throughout the year. The Elmendorf School Boundary Change committee will be added to the list. Ms. Comeau feels this list is a good indicator that the District is trying to involve the public before decisions are made on these issues. There are several committees that will be soliciting input from the community. Debbie Ossiander mentioned that she has been contacted by teachers in the Gifted Education program. They have requested that the District reformat the gifted program. Ms. Comeau stated that she is aware of that issue and would like input from teachers and parents of the students. Ms. Comeau added that the District would tie several major issues together in a survey. This survey will also be available on the Internet.

The Board recessed at 8:15 p.m. and reconvened at 8:33 p.m.

ASD Memorandum # 50 - Profile Of Performance: 2000-2001

The enclosed Profile of Performance: 2000-2001 reviews some of the achievements of the Anchorage School District for last year. The analysis has two sections. Part A displays and discusses Districtwide data and the extent to which the District reached the achievement-related goals set by the Board. Part B includes detailed information regarding each school.

The Profile focuses on academic outcomes and success in meeting local goals. It also includes results for State Benchmark Tests, the State High School Graduation Qualifying Exam and High School Advanced Placement Tests.

Carol Comeau stated her appreciation for all of the work the Assessment and Evaluation and Instructional departments have done on this report. Ms. Comeau feels the staff is working hard to deliver the best educational program possible. Ms. Comeau stated that she is very pleased with the progress made and knows that the District will continue to increase performance even more. Dale Cope introduced Ray Fenton, who began the presentation by reporting that the Anchorage School District remains in the top 1 percent school districts in the country in size. Programs for bilingual, migrant, low income, and Native American/Alaska Native students served more than 14,000 students. Tom Straugh reported on student achievement on tests and assessments. Dr. Ray Fenton briefed the board on secondary student grades and credits; attendance and drop out rates; and parent, student, and staff attitudes regarding the District. Mr. Fenton added that he feels that by the end of the year we will have a stronger system that will provide more information after the school report card and information from the State is made available.

Debbie Ossiander stated her concern regarding Table 23 (Page 30) that breaks down the HSGQE achievement scores by ethnicity. The breakdowns are different than in past reports. Ms. Ossiander noticed that it breaks Alaska Native heritage separate from American Indian heritage. Tom Straugh stated that the State will begin breaking them out in these categories and it was felt that the District needed to do the same. Mr. Straugh stated that in the past it was more appropriate to combine them than separate them because of difficulties in the classification. Ray Fenton explained that when we talk about Natives in Alaska, some of the groups go under one category of Eskimo and Aleut and some go under the other category of American Indian. That is why, for a number of years, we have combined those groups knowing that some of the people who were classified there as American Indians had another heritage other than Alaska Native heritage. Peggy Robinson questioned why the choice was made to pull out the Filipino heritage into a category alone. Tom Straugh stated that it should have been included with the Asian Heritage category. Carol Comeau suggested recombining Filipino with the Asian Heritage category and reissuing Table 23 in a consistent set of categories that everything else is in. The Board agreed.

Jake Metcalfe stated that he would like to see more input from the community on how they would like the categories to be broken down. Tim Steele questioned if the breakouts are valid numbers. Mr. Steele wanted to be sure they are coded correctly as well as adequately highlighted or identified. Rita Holthouse would like this table to stay in

(as Table 23 B) as well as the other table. Tim Steele stated that if the rest of the report has the categories listed the other way, the categories in Table 23 should to be the same as the rest of the document. Peggy Robinson agreed that consistency is important.

Ms. Robinson requested that the report should put Filipino with Asian and leave American Indian and Alaskan Native separate. Carol Comeau stated that the District's data should be consistent with the State's data. Ms. Comeau also recommended adding Filipino back with the Asian category.

Debbie Ossiander commented on the number of dropout students based on ethnicity and the fact that the student dropout rate is one of the School Board goals. Jake Metcalfe noted that the Alaska Native dropout rate is twice the rate of the rest of the ASD population and asked for a clarification on the percentage. The Administration will provide the information at a later date.

Debbie Ossiander expressed her concerns with the pre-algebra qualifying exam, which also relates to one of the School Board goals. Rita Holthouse requested the number of students who take pre-algebra.

Tim Steele commented that the Board continues to move towards meeting its goal of identifying students struggling and providing a number of different options for helping them. When looking at the different options, they need to analyze the programs to see which ones work. Carol Comeau agreed and mentioned that that is one of the requirements of the Learning Opportunity Grant.

Rita Holthouse commented on the High School Credits. The Board discussed the need for the report to include a broader picture of credits attempted and the number earned. It also needs to include alternative program credits and grades.

Rita Holthouse asked the Board to review the Migrant Education report. Last year 1500 students were eligible to receive Migrant Education services and only 700 received the services. Carol Comeau stated that some students who are eligible chose to not accept the services. Tim Steele stated that it is nice to have a program to assist those transient students who may need some additional assistance. Ms. Robinson asked if there are special efforts made in regard to transience. Ms. Comeau stated that the Child in Transition program has done a significant outreach to students from pre-school age and up. Patricia McRae added

that there is funding to provide gas vouchers for parents in order to allow their students to stay at the same school they were in before they had to move. Gail Opalinski stated that the middle schools encourage them to stay in the same school. Mike Henry also mentioned that the high schools try to provide an opportunity for students to stay in the same school. Harriet Drummond commented that 35 of the 64 elementary schools had an increase in mobility. Eleven of the 18 secondary schools showed an increase as well. Ms. Drummond read some suggestions for discouraging students from moving during the school year. Ms. Drummond stated that the Board should consider asking the Assembly, Chamber of Commerce, and Landlord Association to help reduce mobility.

Rita Holthouse commented on the statement on Page 73 that states "continuity of standards, books, instruction, and teacher expectations all work to minimize disruption and foster greater achievement." Ms. Holthouse asked if the District is starting to move towards more standardization. Ms. Comeau stated that the standards movement has brought more consistency and focus to the instructional program in the last few years. Due to the standards, the schools are moving towards more standardization of textbooks. It is a big issue and there needs to be more discussion on this. Patricia McRae mentioned that the elementary principals have been discussing this issue and feel that the database they are building will be very helpful when a student moves from one school or program to another. Mr. Steele mentioned his concern with standardization and how it would effect the optional programs.

Debbie Ossiander spoke about the information reported on the AP classes and other information that would be helpful. Ms. Ossiander would like to see the availability of classes and the percentage of students that take advantage of the classes. The Board continued discussion on this subject.

Rita Holthouse commented on the statement on Page 27, which states that there is an inconsistency in the levels of performance required to meet standards in reading, writing and math at different grade levels. Tom Straugh explained the statement. They found a tremendous range in the percentile rank from test to test and grade level to grade level.

Tim Steele stated that the HSGQE is a work in progress. Debbie Ossiander added that it is a potential legislative action item. Carol Comeau mentioned that it is a State regulation and State Board of Education action also. Harriet Drummond stated her concern that we're only testing in grades 4 and 7. Carol Comeau assured the Board that there would be more testing in other grade levels, including grades 9 and 10.

Debbie Ossiander noted the numbers of schools that increased in their test percentages as well as the schools that had challenges. Ms. Ossiander is looking forward to more data in the future, which will include the testing results from more grade levels.

Peggy Robinson reported the drop in the number of special education students and commented that she would like to think it is attributed to the increased reading emphasis. The number of emotionally disturbed students dropped as well. Jerry Sjolander stated that he would be doing more research in this area.

ASD Memorandum # 59 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap: August 31, 2001

The attached report consists of two parts: the Treasurer's Report and the Financial Recap. The Treasurer's Report and the Financial Recap are presented on a monthly basis with year-to-date information as of August 31, 2001.

- J. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS
- K. COMMUNICATION & SCHOOL BOARD COMMENTS
- L. EXECUTIVE SESSION –  
(PERSONNEL/FINANCE/NEGOTIATIONS/LITIGATION)
- M. ADJOURNMENT

The Regular Meeting of September 24, 2001 was adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:55 p.m. September 24, 2001.

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Peggy Robinson, President

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Harriet Drummond, Clerk

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Date Minutes Approved