

**MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 6, 2003**

The Anchorage School Board met in Special Session on Thursday, February 6, 2003 at 5:05 p.m. in the Board Room at the Anchorage School District Administration Building. President, Jake Metcalfe, presided.

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, FLAG SALUTE

Board Members Present: Debbie Ossiander, Rita Holthouse, Mary Marks, Tim Steele, John Steiner, Harriet Drummond, Jake Metcalfe.

Others Present: Carol Comeau, George Vakalis, Jan Christensen, Janet Stokesbary, Mike Henry, Jerry Sjolander, Patricia McRae, Gail Opalinski, Jerry Sjolander, Jeff Wood, Dale Cope, Bob Henry, Ray Amsden, Stan Syta, Steve Kalmes, Todd Arndt, Mike Price, Corey Rennell, Robin Siegfried, the press, and other interested people.

School Budget Advisory Commission: Kevin Waring

Carol Comeau announced upcoming events and meetings.

Ms. Comeau thanked the School Board members for all they do for the District and read a proclamation from the Mayor. March is School Board Appreciation Month. Ms. Comeau commented that the District's Administration and community appreciate all the Board does for the District and students.

Debbie Ossiander updated the Board on her Legislative visit to Washington D.C.

John Steiner commented that according to the legislative update from Larry Wiget one of the myths is that NCLB mandate is unfunded. Rita Holthouse stated that when the Board members travel to Juneau they will have to talk about the myths regarding the funding.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

1. ASD Memorandum #170 - FY 2003-2004 Proposed Financial Plan (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 2003-2004 Proposed Financial Plan as set forth in the

projected revenue and expenditure schedules included in the Preliminary Financial Plan and budget revisions made by the School Board during the first reading on January 23, 2003 (Attachment A). The total budget recommendation is \$481,137,785. This includes individual fund budgets currently projected as follows:

	Proposed FY 2003-2004 <u>Financial Plan</u>
General Fund	\$ 369,700,400
Food Service Fund	13,043,000
Debt Service Fund	58,394,385
Local/State/Federal Projects Fund	<u>40,000,000</u>
Total – All Funds	<u>\$ 481,137,785</u>

The total of local tax contribution to be requested is \$142,804,000.

It is further recommended that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to adjust the budget expenditure ceiling and taxes above in accordance with any change to additional Charter Schools, State approval of debt retirement projects, the upper limit of the local tax cap limitation and any education-related ballot proposition that may be approved in the April 1, 2003, Municipal Election.

ACTION:

Moved by Harriet Drummond to approve Memorandum #170
seconded by Tim Steele

Carol Comeau encouraged the Board to avoid adding additional cost items at this particular time. The Administration built assumptions in and are optimistic, but until the funds are determined they cannot be guaranteed. The Administration did bring forth a balance budget and are comfortable with the revisions made at the last Board meeting on January 23, 2003. The District has many unmet needs and would like to use them when speaking to the legislators regarding NCLB, IDEA, Student Aid, and the ability to have safe schools. Ms. Comeau wants to use the remaining needs to advocate for additional revenues.

Speaker Jean Masure spoke to the Board regarding the 21st Century Learning Centers. The speaker's child attends the program at Ptarmigan Elementary. It is a plus for any student involved. For two hours after school her child is being nourished academically and socially. Ms. Masure also stated that her daughter's math skills have improved.

Beth Snyder spoke to the Board regarding the effect of the 21st Century Learning Centers Program on homeless children. The total number of homeless children this year in the District is 101.

Debbie Ossiander asked the speakers to consider calling Senator Stevens, Senator Murkowski, and Representative Young since this is a federally funded grant.

Mary Marks added that the program has done more than give students academics. It gives them self-esteem, validation, and the feeling of being connected with their community. Harriet Drummond stated that the Board doesn't have the ability to increase funding of the program because it is part of the grants budget. It's up to the federal government to continue the funding. That is why it is important for the community to contact the legislators.

James Apone has six children who have moved to Rogers Park, Inlet view, and Fairview Elementary Schools. The speaker stated that he has observed that the education at Rogers Park and Inlet View was of a higher quality because of fewer distractions. The speaker stated that there are more socioeconomic problems in Fairview. The speaker thinks the schools with socioeconomic problems need assistant principals, whose main purpose would be discipline. The speaker also feels there is a need for a psychologist on board at the schools as well as a caseworker for the abuse, neglect, and social problems. This would free up the staff to do their job.

Marshal Reed spoke to the Board regarding the air rifle program. Mr. Reed stated that UAF and ASD are unable to agree on the language on the agreement allowing his 4-H Club to rent space. Mr. Reed stated that the Service High air rifle team is being left out of the competition because they cannot use space to practice. Carol Comeau informed the speaker that Mr. Vakalis would review the situation and get back to the Board and Mr. Reed with the results.

Debbie Ossiander stated to Mr. Apone that the Board will be looking at the needs of high need students. Carol Comeau also stated that they would be looking at this issue and appreciated the speaker's advocacy for these issues.

Sherry Roach, a Special Education Teacher's Assistant at Muldoon Elementary School, stated her concerns to the Board about the 21st Century Learning Centers programs being cut. Ms. Roach spoke about two students who have benefited from the program.

Peggy Robinson thanked the Board for the building that the District leased for the Success by Six Crossroads program. The program currently has about 50 girls pregnant or parenting. However, they do not have food service. They are working with Bean's Cafe who is bringing meals for them. They are contributing .25 per meal if they can afford it.

Rita Holthouse asked Ms. Robinson if the students are being allowed to work at Bean's Cafe. Ms. Robinson stated that the girls would be involved in some projects, such as an Easter egg hunt that they are planning.

Tim Steele asked what the teacher/student ratio is for the 21st Century Learning Center programs. Bonnie Hardy stated that it is a one-to-ten ratio. There are 100 students and ten staff members. Parents also come in and volunteer to do some one-to-one tutoring. Tim Steele asked if some type of partnership could be put together with other organizations for this program. Carol Comeau stated that she will have a meeting with the Community Education Advisory Committee and they will discuss this idea. Tim Steele suggested that the School Business Partnership organization might get involved also. Ms. Comeau added that she has spoken to the organization about this possibility.

Rita Holthouse commented that she feels the Board should leave the budget as presented and will not support any amendments.

Mary Marks stated that she would support the budget as presented tonight. Ms. Marks feels the Board has put "some things on the burner" for a while. Ms. Marks appreciates the hard work the Administration has done in putting the budget together as well as the responses to the requests for information.

Harriet Drummond stated that she would also support the budget.

Debbie Ossiander stated that she read the information about the noon duty issue and would not support the \$10.00/hour increase, but if there is an interest in the .25/hour raise she would support it.

John Steiner agrees that it is important to have a balanced budget and not dig into the fund balance to fund ongoing needs because the money won't be there in the future.

Tim Steele stated that he agrees that this budget is a great budget - given the constraints. The District does not have money to fulfill all desires. It is

unclear what the federal government will give with changes to IDEA and with funding for NCLB. Mr. Steele thanked the Administration for information on the noon duties. Mr. Steele stated that he would like to see TA's receiving full time benefits by helping in other areas along with the noon duty area, but this will cost over a million dollars. Planning time for the high schools is another issue. Mr. Steele would like to see the continuation of the 21st Century Learning Centers program, a modification of it, or partnership providing that type of assistance. There is a need for a library coordinator and a full time librarian at Girdwood. Elimination of the writing assessment is also a concern. Mr. Steele will not make amendments to the budget and feels it is a good budget.

Jake Metcalfe stated that he supports the budget as proposed and thanked Carol Comeau as well as the staff that participated in bringing it forth. There are a number of issues that would be nice to fund. Mr. Metcalfe stated that he supports a wage increase with benefits for noon duties and feels that all employees should make a wage to live on and also have benefits. Mr. Metcalfe feels the District is better-off waiting to see what the legislature does as far as funding. We need to be conservative in our budget estimates and present a budget that will help diminish the achievement gap and focus on Title I schools. We need to advocate to the legislature that we need additional funds for more counselors, psychologists, and librarians.

Kevin Waring commented that he thinks this budget is the product of foresight. When suspected there were shortfalls ahead, it was prudent to save as much of the budget reserve as possible. The District did a good thing when it refinanced debt at a lower rate and it gave a tax savings to the community. Mr. Waring would be supportive when the Commission gives its report to the Assembly.

Corey Rennell stated that after the first reading of the budget, the Student Advisory Board met and discussed their concerns. Their priority was the issue of the student/counselor ratio being at 1/320. This is a serious concern for the students and Mr. Rennell asked the Board to consider this issue for the next budget.

VOTE:

Ayes: Ossiander, Marks, Steele,
Metcalfe, Steiner, Holthouse,
Drummond

Nays: None

MAIN MOTION PASSED

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

The Regular Meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:35p.m.

Jake Metcalfe, President

Mary Marks, Clerk

Robin Siegfried, Recording Secretary

Date Minutes Approved