

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #189 (02-03) (FIRST READING) March 3, 2002-2003

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SOUTH ANCHORAGE HIGH SCHOOL BOUNDARIES

RECOMMENDATION

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve on First Reading the following attendance boundaries for the 2004-2005 school year for the Dimond High School, Service High School and the New South Anchorage High School. (Superintendent's Scenario - Attachment A) It is further recommended that the second and final reading of the proposed boundary changes be delayed until Monday, April 14, 2003.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCENARIO

To Dimond High School

Students who reside in the area bounded on the north by International Airport Road; on the east by Minnesota Drive; on the north by West Seventy Sixth Street; on the east by C Street; on the south to follow the 2002 - 2003 Klatt/Campbell Elementary boundary; on the east by Minnesota Street; on the south to follow the 2002 - 2003 Klatt/Bayshore Elementary boundary.

To Service High School

Students who reside in the area bounded on the north by Lore Road and its extension east; to the north by West Sixty Fourth; to the east by Abott Loop; to the north by West Sixty Fourth Street; to the east by Laurel Street; to the north by West Sixty Eighth Street; to the west by New Seward Hwy.; to the north by West Seventy Sixth Street; to the west by C Street; to the south by West Klatt Road, to the west by Timberlane Drive, to the south by Huffman Road and its extension, to the east by lake Otis Road, to the south by East Klatt Road; to the east by Cange Street; to the south by O'Malley Road; to the west by Elmore Road; to the south by East Klatt Road and its extension; to the west by Birch Road; to the south by Downey Finch Road and the extension of the 2002 - 2003 Bear Valley/O'Malley Elementary boundary.

To New South Anchorage High School

Students who reside in the area bounded on the north by the 2002 - 2003 Klatt/Bayshore Elementary boundary; on the east by Minnesota Street; on the north by the 2002 - 2003 Klatt/Elementary boundary; to the east by C Street; to the south by West Klatt Road, to the east by Timberlane Drive, to the north by Huffman Road and its extension, to the west by lake Otis Road, to the north by East Klatt Road; to the west by Cange Street; to the north by O'Malley Road; to the east by Elmore Road; to the north by East Klatt Road and its extension; to the east by Birch Road; to the north by Downey Finch Road and the extension of the 2002 - 2003 Bear Valley/O'Malley Elementary boundary.

PERTINENT FACTS

The Task Force was comprised of school principals, parents and students from West High School, East High School, Service High School and Dimond High School. Also serving on the Task Force was a representative from the Minority Education Concerns Committee and a representative from ASD Special Education. Attending all of the Task Force meetings were the ASD Demographer and a representative from ASD Transportation. (Attachment B)

The Task Force began meeting on November 26, 2002. Six work sessions were held through February 26, 2002 - 2003. Minutes of those meetings are found in Attachment C.

The Task Force considered school capacity, projected growth, ethnicity, distance to school and major geographical areas in developing feasible scenarios. After listening to presentations from the demographer concerning projected residential growth in south Anchorage and after learning of the 2004-2005 school capacities (DHS - 1600, NSAHS - 1600, SHS- 2070) it was decided to place only the projected 4929 south Anchorage high school students, and not add additional students from East or West high schools by changing the southern boundaries of East or West high schools. This key decision allowed scenarios to be developed that would place 4929 students in three south Anchorage high schools that have a combined total capacity of 5270 students. It also allowed for a combined future growth in the south Anchorage high schools of 341 students.

The Task Force developed and studied three scenarios. Two were selected and the other rejected based on capacity, future growth, distance from school, ethnicity and geographical areas. The two selected scenarios were taken to the three public meetings for comment and suggestion.

Three public meetings were scheduled. Public meeting notices were sent to the homes of every elementary, middle and high school student residing in the south Anchorage area. Approximately 12,500 notices were mailed. The meetings took place on February 13, at Goldenview Middle School, February 18, at Hanshew Middle School and February 20, at Mears Middle School. The meetings began with a report on the process, a description of the two scenarios and guidelines for providing public comment. All comments were tape recorded and transcribed. (Attachment D)

A majority of the public comments recommended “more time” in making these important high school boundary decisions. Many of the public recommendations asked that feeder school boundaries be used in developing high school boundaries. In addition, many asked that their students be able to attend the school closest to their home. Proximity was also a concern of the Task force, but because of the limitations of “individual school capacities”, the concern for proximity often took second priority. The Task Force did not believe that they were authorized to exceed school capacities and to overcrowd some or one school and have ample room in another school(s). The Task Force believed that the ASD Superintendent and School Board would need to make those decisions, because each time the decision to overcrowd is made, a solution to that overcrowding problem would need to be explored. Overcrowding solutions often require additional funding.

Several recommendations from the public requested the move of the northern border Dimond High students to West High. This recommendation was made because the calculated capacity of WHS as compared to its actual enrollment shows 87% occupancy. After a room utilization study, it was found that WHS is one of the most utilized high school facilities in the district. There are a larger percentage of teachers at WHS who are required to leave their classroom during their planning/conference hour than in any other high school in Anchorage. Teachers must leave because another class and another teacher are moving in to use the classroom. It should also be noted that WHS has one of the largest percentages of Special Education, Native Education and English as a Second Language programs in the district. These programs all require smaller teacher/student ratios, therefore more classrooms.

After the final public meeting, the Task Force met to review all of the comments and suggestions and to develop a recommendation for the superintendent. At that meeting, it was once again decided to maintain room for future growth in the south Anchorage high schools (thus eliminated East and West high boundary changes). It was also reaffirmed to place primary emphasis on school capacity, not to overcrowd any of the three south Anchorage high schools. Using these principles, along with consideration for major geographical areas, ethnicity and

distance from school, the Task Force unanimously selected scenario "A" (Attachment E) as the basis to incorporate the public requests and proposals (Attachment D).

Each of the public proposals were individually rejected by the Task Force because it placed a single school over capacity, or because its boundaries were not contiguous, or because its proximity was less than a previously rejected proposal that would have overcrowded the school or because it encroached upon space reserved for future growth.

The Task Force forwarded scenario "A" to the Superintendent as the Task Force recommendation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S NOTES

The Task Force members are to be commended for their dedication and hard work. Theirs was a difficult assignment to undertake, but they accomplished it with careful thoughtfulness and a commitment to School Board policy. My decision to modify their recommendation is in no way a reflection on their individual efforts.

After a thorough review of the Task Force meeting minutes and all public comment, including testimony at the three public meetings and hundreds of e-mails and phone calls, I determined that the boundary recommendation for Dimond High, Service High and the new South Anchorage high school should take into consideration proximity to schools and elementary neighborhood boundaries.

A common theme from many of the public comments was to keep neighborhood students together as they advance to high school, and not split an elementary or middle school boundary between two or more high schools. While this is not possible to do in every situation, I felt it was an important consideration, especially with our increased emphasis on developing parent networks and encouraging active, long-term family participation in school activities.

This recommendation will send all students within the Bayshore Elementary School boundary to Dimond High School. All students in the Klatt Elementary School, Huffman Elementary School, and Bear Valley Elementary School boundaries will be within the new South Anchorage high school boundary. All Kasuun and Abbott Loop elementary school boundaries will be within the Service High School boundary.

With this recommendation, the three high schools in south Anchorage would

have the following enrollments:

	Projected Enrollment	Capacity	% Capacity
Dimond H.S.	1904	1600	119%
Service H.S.	1733	2070	84%
New H.S.	1549	1600	97%

The new Dimond High School was constructed with a teacher workroom in each house. The teacher workrooms in the new Dimond High will allow each classroom to be in use for a full six periods a day. With effective classroom scheduling and some roving teachers, it is anticipated that Dimond High School will be able to accommodate 1900 students without using relocatables or the old building.

I further recommend that the second reading of this memorandum be postponed until the April 14, 2002 - 2003 School Board meeting to allow more time for public review and comment.

CC/JC/MH

Prepared by: Carol Comeau, Superintendent
Mike Henry, Executive Director, High School Education

Approved by: Carol Comeau, Superintendent
Jan Christensen, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction