

**MINUTES OF THE ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD  
SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH 3, 2003**

The Anchorage School Board met in Special Session on Monday, March 3, 2003 at 6:40 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, Mary Marks, Tim Steele, Jake Metcalfe, John Steiner, Rita Holthouse, and Harriet Drummond.

Others Present: Carol Comeau, George Vakalis, Janet Stokesbary, Mike Henry, Jerry Sjolander, Patricia McRae, Gail Opalinski, Jeff Wood, Dale Cope, Eric Tollefsen, Larry Wiget, Pam Chenier, Stan Syta, Ray Amsden, Mary Kay Sambo, the press, and other interested people.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Debbie Ossiander announced the upcoming School Board policy subcommittee meeting on March 6. There will be a continuing discussion on Section 400 and discussion on awarding an alternative diploma to those students who do not pass the high school graduation qualifying exam.

President Jake Metcalfe announced to the audience, by order of the Fire Marshall, that the overflow of people without chairs must move to the third floor and watch the meeting, which is being televised.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION:

Moved by Tim Steele to approve the agenda for March 3,  
seconded by Debbie Ossiander 2003.

The motion passed unanimously.

D. AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS

E. SPECIAL ADVISORY REPORTS

1. Student Advisory

Corey Rennell announced that he was in Juneau attending the AASB Conference with the School Board. Mr. Rennell thanked the Board for their support. He lobbied the legislature for youth court funding and reminded the public that the Board supported this in ASD Memorandum #145 (2002-2003). Mr. Rennell informed the Board of several fund raisers that have taken place at the various schools. Applications have gone out for those interested in applying for the School Board Student Representative. Those applications are due to the Student Advisory Board at the next meeting on March 20, 2003.

2. Military Delegate

LTC Peter Mulcahy was absent.

3. MECC

Mr. Johnson noted that the MECC met on February 20 to discuss the change in lottery procedures. They passed a motion to deliver a letter of non-approval to the School Board regarding the lottery procedures.

F. PERSONS TO BE HEARD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Harriet Drummond noted that the agenda was not correct as there is no time limit for those testifying under the wage re-opener negotiations for bus drivers and attendants. Carol Comeau noted that the wage opener is a separate item and those testifying will not be included in the 30 minute time limit for non-agenda items.

Tim Morgan, bus driver for 24 years, noted that other districts pay bus drivers at a higher rate of pay. He mentioned that truck drivers for ASD get paid more than school bus drivers and feels that it is inequitable; Mat-Su and Kenai school districts pay more. Mr. Morgan stated that the salary tops out after 14 years at \$16.25; his pay has gone up 19 cents in 20 years.

Nancy Sonatag has worked for the District for 29 years. She asked why the wages are so low when the responsibility of what they carry each day is so large. She is currently living at poverty level making an average of \$14,000 per year, working an average of 6.5 hours per day. She is concerned that bus washers make more money than the actual bus

drivers. Ms. Sonatag emphasized that trying to make a living is very difficult for a school bus driver.

Movita Givens has been currently employed as a bus attendant for the past 14 years and works closely with special needs children. She is medically trained to insure the safety of the children and feels that the duties are parallel with those teacher assistants in the schools. She also works a split shift, which lengthens the work day. Ms. Givens noted that due to the confidentiality, bus attendants often work without knowledge of the children's medical conditions. This makes the job more difficult and feels that the salaries between teacher assistants and bus attendants are inequitable. She noted the need to feel important and respected; they consider themselves professionals.

Theresa Finnigan has been employed for 11 years as a bus driver. They begin their day at 5:45 a.m. and complete their day at 5:30 p.m., which is a split shift of 6.5 hours. She noted that bus drivers often hold two part-time jobs without a day off.

James Roland has been in Alaska for 30 years and loves being a bus driver. He noted the qualifications of being a bus driver and how they are trained to manage students. They often carry up to 80 students and always put the safety of students first. Mr. Roland feels the salary is too low and is considered poverty level. He feels strongly that the District should look at giving them more money.

Mike Fleming is a bus driver with over 12 years experience, five years with the Anchorage School District. His observation is that bus drivers and attendants receive a low priority when it comes to salary. He appealed to the School Board to do the right thing during the upcoming negotiations. Mr. Fleming stated that an increase in salary is in the best interests of our students; there is no price for the safety of our children. The pay must be higher to attract dependable, loyal employees. Mr. Fleming read a letter from a concerned parent about the low priority given to bus drivers on salary issues.

Mimi Tinajero is the mother of three children attending ASD and relies on the school bus to transport her children to and from school. She encourages her children to respect the bus drivers because they are just as important as everyone else in the school who helps them on a daily basis. Ms. Tinajero noted that the trash man makes more money than the school bus driver. She stated that she was a bus attendant for three days and found that it was a very difficult position. She also noted that if we can't

pay a decent salary to our bus drivers then parents need to support the bus transportation.

Carl Sterritt is currently a bus driver and has been involved in the District for the past ten years as a noon duty, safety security, special education teacher assistant, and coach at East High School for baseball. He feels that the wages are not equitable for bus drivers. Mr. Sterritt stated that he saw a job listed for a janitor and noted that a bus drivers makes less than a janitor with an eighth grade education.

Harriet Drummond asked the bus drivers in the audience to stand and thanked them for coming tonight.

The testimony resumed for those wishing to speak on non-agenda items.

Jo Sanders, teacher in the District for 30 years, now teaches at Village Charter School. She thanked the District and School Board for supporting world languages. She noted that Village has the only program in the United States where kids in the first grade can learn four languages. Ms. Sanders feels that the internal squabbles can be addressed in-house. She encouraged the Board to continue supporting Village Charter School.

Linda Sharp introduced the singers from Village Charter School and they sang a song in both Spanish and Norwegian.

Caprice Musty stated that her child started out behind academically at Village and has done very well; she loves the program and wants the school to continue under the direction of Linda Sharp. She also encouraged the Board to support the calendar as well.

Meta Baxter has a child at Village and has tremendous admiration for the multi-age classes. She has seen her kindergarten student excel in the program. Ms. Baxter does not want anything to disrupt his education at the school and has high respect for the current staff and for Linda Sharp.

Jim Sharp is a parent volunteer and APC member at Village. He is not on the payroll and has not received payments, gifts, or compensation. Mr. Sharp stated that his reward for being a volunteer is seeing the children do well. He encouraged the Board to support the renewal of Village Charter School to the Department of Education and Early Development before it is too late. Village Charter School has two foreign languages, intensives, four day school week, field trips, strong music curriculum,

uniforms, encouragement, and acceptance of all races. Mr. Sharp feels they can overcome their internal problems and requested the Board put the renewal of Village Charter back on the docket for the State Board of Education.

Kathy Sue Justus has been a teacher for 12 years and is currently a parent, teacher, and APC member at Village Charter. She stated that many students are meeting the goals of the program and requested the Board support adding Village to the March docket for the State Board of Education.

Jennifer Hately urged the Board to support putting the renewal of Village back on the agenda for the March meeting of the State Board of Education. She feels that the APC can work through their internal problems.

Margo Tevault is a very satisfied parent of children attending Village Charter School. She encouraged the School Board to support the renewal of their school on the March agenda of the State Board of Education. She reminded everyone that attending Village is a choice and parents can choose to go elsewhere if they are unhappy with the school.

Toni Brewster is a teacher and a parent at Village with over 22 years of experience. She feels that she has had support from the APC and the teachers and wants the charter to succeed. Ms. Brewster noted that it has been a difficult and stressful year, the work environment has been non-supportive and hostile; she wants teachers treated with more dignity. Teachers are requesting transfers because of what is happening at the school. Ms. Brewster commented that when Mr. Poe was at the school, he was the buffer between the teachers and the administration. She stated that the concerns are not trivial.

Kenneth Brewster stated that he was a parent involved at the beginning and has support for the design. He noted that he has tried to speak to the APC and Ms. Sharp on how they are treating the staff and parents. Mr. Metcalfe reminded Mr. Brewster that there is a proper place to deal with his complaint and noted that an investigation must be completed on both sides. The School Board may ultimately have to make a decision on the complaint and all testimony must be heard in the proper venue.

John Steiner asked what the impact would be for Village if they were not on the March docket for the State Board of Education. Carol Comeau stated that when Village Charter School was unanimously approved by

the Board in August, she did not have any major concerns. When the DEED requested the charter renewal packet from Village Charter School be submitted, they found issues with the school calendar. Ms. Comeau stated that the District Administration supported the calendar and did not know it was in violation of the current law. At that time, Ms. Comeau spoke with legislators in February 2003 and feels there may be legislation coming forward to support the calendar. The Department of Education and Early Development has a number of questions, and with the change of administration and a new State Board of Education, Ms. Comeau requested a delay in reauthorization. She doesn't believe that waiting until June will delay the program from opening in the fall. Ms. Comeau also stated that a number of major concerns have been brought forward by the parents at Village.

Joaquita Martin is a parent of two students at Village. She supports the learning environment, but does have some concerns along with other parents and teachers. Ms. Martin expressed her concern over the charter not being renewed, but is more concerned that it could be denied. She does understand that the calendar is an issue, but there are other concerns being raised such as student safety. Her son was taken on a field trip with no supervision by school personnel and dropped off and picked up later in the day from the field trip location. The transiency rate at the school alarms her; over 50 percent of the teachers did not return after the 2000-2001 school year. Ms. Martin noted that in conversations with teachers, she has learned that 75 percent of them will not be returning after this school year. She feels that these issues should send up a major red flag to the School District. Ms. Martin wants serious changes made in the school.

Theresa Obermeyer encouraged the Board to review the complaint she has filed with the Alaska Bar Association. She noted that the Board broke the open meetings law by not advertising the bus reopening wage negotiations. Ms. Obermeyer also noted a conflict of interest statement on another candidate shows that he makes too much money. She announced that she is running for School Board.

Rita Holthouse asked Ms. Obermeyer not to make disparaging remarks about another candidate running for School Board. She stated that because the previous speaker noted she is running for School Board that all candidates in the audience should be introduced. Jake Metcalfe introduced all of the School Board candidates in the audience and announced the names of the rest of the candidates to the public.

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	January 13, 2003	6:30 p.m.
b.	Special Meeting	January 23, 2003	5:00 p.m.
c.	Special Meeting	January 27, 2003	4:30 p.m.
d.	Regular Meeting	January 27, 2003	6:30 p.m.
e.	Special Meeting	February 6, 2003	5:00 p.m.

2. ASD Memorandum #189 - South Anchorage High School Boundaries (First Reading)

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.

3. ASD Memorandum #173 - Revisions to School Board Policy 332.3 Lottery Procedures (Second Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve on Second Reading, the proposed changes to School Board Policy 332.3, Lottery Procedures. (Attachment A)

4. ASD Memorandum #145 - ASD Student Advisory Board Resolution #4: Sustained Support and Funding for Alaska's Youth Courts

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board support the Anchorage School District Student Advisory Board's resolution for sustained support and funding for Alaska's Youth Courts.

5. ASD Memorandum #188 - Resolution in Support of Restructuring the School Day and/or School Year to Allow Flexibility for Professional Development

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board support a resolution to lobby the Alaska State Legislature to approve structural change in the daily schedule for schools, which would allow schools within the State to "bank time" or establish other forms of flexibility in a school day and/or school year.

6. ASD Memorandum #204 - Revision of School Board Policy Section 400: Students and Student Personnel Services (First Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve on First Reading, the proposed changes to School Board Policy 400-432, Students and Student Services. (Attachment A)

7. ASD Memorandum #184 - Software Sole Source Request

It is the Administration's recommendation that the Plato Learning software service be selected to provide credit recovery and focused learning in the areas of math, science, reading and writing to assist students in acquiring the necessary skills to pass the Alaska State High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. The total cost will be \$64,680 for 45 software licenses for the Continuation School and Benny Benson, three servers to deliver the software, training days and on-site support setup for the servers.

8. ASD Memorandum #165 - Prior Approval of Discretionary Grant: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers - Alaska Community Learning Careers Program

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for a five-year grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development for after-school and summer programs, through the Alaska Community Learning Centers Program.

9. ASD Memorandum #205 - 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: Minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 13, 2003; Minutes from the Special

Meeting of January 23, 2003; ASD Memorandum #189, Memorandum #173, Memorandum #204, Memorandum #185; and Memorandum #205.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander  
seconded by Mary Marks

to approve minutes of the Special Meeting of January 27, 2003; minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 27, 2003; minutes of the Special Meeting of February 6, 2003; Memorandum #145; Memorandum #188; and Memorandum #165.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Approval of Minutes:

- |    |                 |                  |           |
|----|-----------------|------------------|-----------|
| a. | Regular Meeting | January 13, 2003 | 6:30 p.m. |
| b. | Special Meeting | January 23, 2003 | 5:00 p.m. |

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander  
seconded by John Steiner

to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of January 23, 2003 - 5:00 p.m. with the following revision.

Debbie Ossiander commented that during the discussion at the Special Meeting of January 23, 2003 regarding the increase of student meals price by 10 cents rather than 15 cents proposed, she voted in the affirmative and the minutes reflect that she voted in the negative. Ms. Ossiander distinctly remembers voting yes and asked the Board if they will accept the motion and pass it unanimously.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

Harriet Drummond stated that she had some concerns with comments in the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 13, 2003 and will discuss them with the Board clerk. They will be revised and returned at a later meeting for approval.

ASD Memorandum #189 - South Anchorage High School Boundaries (First Reading)

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.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander                      to approve Memorandum #189.  
seconded by Mary Marks

Carol Comeau thanked the Boundary Task Force, Mike Henry, and Ophelia Dargan-Steed for their work on the Boundary Task Force. She noted that this is a very compelling and emotional issue for parents and students and commended the public for their passion for their schools. Ms. Comeau stated that she had 930 e-mail messages on her computer; over 700 were comments on the boundary change. Many of those messages were thoughtful, compelling, and in support of their neighborhood schools. She stated that the Boundary Task Force was given certain criteria to work with and did an excellent job coming up with the recommended boundaries. However, Ms. Comeau emphasized that after looking at the maps, she had to bring forward a recommendation to change the Task Force recommendation. She knew that there would be disappointed people, Dimond High School would be overcrowded, but it was clear that the parents who live adjacent to Dimond were willing to live with relocatables on that site if the enrollment continues to grow in that area. Ms. Comeau also looked at small pockets in the Bear Valley area and also feels that they have been addressed. She commented that she feels overall that the Administration has addressed the major issues in bringing this recommendation forward. Ms. Comeau stated that the second reading for the boundary change will occur on April 14, 2003, which will allow time for people to think about it and reflect on the recommended changes.

Mike Henry, Chair of the Boundary Task Force, gave a brief history of when the Task Force was developed, criteria used, and who served on the Committee. He commented that after much discussion on the Committee, they decided to only look at Dimond, Service, and South Anchorage Area High Schools for a boundary change. The Task Force considered school capacity, projected growth, ethnicity, distance to school and major geographical areas in developing feasible scenarios.

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 three public meetings for comments and suggestions.

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.

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. It was also reaffirmed to place primary emphasis on school capacity and not to overcrowd any of the three south Anchorage high schools. The Task Force unanimously selected scenario "A" to be forwarded to the Superintendent as their recommendation.

Mike Henry commended the Task Force members and noted that the Superintendent's decision to modify their recommendation is in no way a reflection on their duties. The Committee tried to consider proximity as well as feeder school boundaries to keep students together; it was not possible to do. With the Superintendent's recommendation, Dimond will serve 1,904 students with 119 percent capacity; East will serve 2,121 students with 100 percent capacity; Service will serve 1,733 students with 84 percent capacity; and the new South Anchorage Area High School will serve 1,549 students with 97 percent capacity.

Mr. Henry noted an error in ASD Memorandum #189 in the Superintendent's notes that states all Klatt Elementary students will be within the new South Anchorage High School boundary. He stated that this statement is not completely true. The eastern portion of Klatt as defined by the Hanshaw boundary will attend Service High School.

Maureen Johnson has three children in the school system and supports the Superintendent's recommendation, Modified Scenario A. She believes that we should keep the communities together and feels they belong in the Service community.

Jay Johnson has three children who attend Kasuun and supports the recommended Modified Scenario A, which encompasses the majority of the public testimony.

Fred Stutzer, resident in the Bayshore community, believes the task force did an excellent job and thanked them for their sincere efforts. He thanked Carol Comeau and her staff for his requests for information. Mr. Stutzer noted that the Superintendent's proposal allows for neighborhoods to go to their neighborhood school and feels that Bayshore parents will be an asset to any school their children attend. He urged support for the recommended scenario, which will keep communities together and allow parents an opportunity to be involved in their schools. He believes that even though we are overcrowding Dimond, the community can live with it. Mr. Stutzer thanked the Board for the extension to April 14 for the final decision on the boundary recommendation.

John Sedor, parent in the Bayshore community, supports the Superintendent's recommendation. He noted that the proposal is not perfect, but we don't live in a perfect world. Mr. Sedor stated that the task force went forward with their prime target being capacity, which he finds reasonable. Fortunately, the Superintendent put the overlay of the community on her decision. He urged the School Board to review all of the e-mails as they are legitimate comments when they are pondering a decision. Mr. Sedor urged the Board to error on the side of community.

Mary Lou Perry, Bayshore resident with three children, thanked the Superintendent for her recommended boundary change. She feels that Ms. Comeau put a great deal of thought and energy into her recommendation. Ms. Perry stated that the Task Force did a great job, but this new recommendation will benefit 900 students, keep students in their neighborhood school, and is a safety issue. She feels that the new high school will be too full if Bayshore students attend.

Debbie Ossiander commented that she appreciates Mr. Sedor's comments on community and asked if he looked at the elementary or middle school boundaries. Mr. Sedor responded that all three of his children are in elementary school so that was the only issue he looked at.

Linda Anderson thanked Carol Comeau for listening to the Bayshore community. She stated that this is about the quality of life for students and appreciates her connection to the community.

Jeanne Funatake, home owner in Bayshore, feels a strong tie to Dimond and supports Modified Scenario A. This will allow students to attend the closest school to their home and maintains the neighborhood concept. She thanked the Task Force for their scenarios, but believes that the Superintendent's scenario is an improvement. This will also alleviate the long travel to South Anchorage Area High School.

Sheryl Zerda, Bayshore parent, noted that no one spoke about the overcrowding at Dimond at the public hearings except the Bayshore community. They preferred the overcrowding rather than going to a school outside their neighborhood. She thanked the Superintendent for opening her mind and heart and recommends the Board accept the Superintendent's recommendation.

Brian Seitz lives in the Klatt area and noted that legitimate concerns have been raised. The proposed modification has created pockets within the area. He understands that lines have to be drawn and it is not possible to keep communities together, but does not understand why small pockets of students have been created. Mr. Seitz feels this is disruptive to the student educational experience as it splits the Klatt Elementary School attendance area. He commented that the issues raised are valid such as minimizing busing time, but we should be considering the consistency of friendships and community. Mr. Seitz urged the Board to look at high school boundaries city-wide. He noted that the situation has improved Bayshore, but has worsened the area along Klatt. He urged the Board to reject the Superintendent's recommended scenario.

Debbie Ossiander commented that the continuity of relationships is more important between middle and high school rather than elementary. Mr. Seitz stated that he does not agree; he attended Bartlett High School and those people that he met still have strong relationships with their kindergarten classmates. He believes consistency is important.

Melissa Anderson noted that the Bayshore parent community is very tight and urged support of Ms. Comeau's recommendation. She believes that the School Board members are strong listeners and urged the Board to look at the entire high school boundary issue. Ms. Anderson would like the District to look at the entire school district and keep elementary

schools with the middle schools that feed into the high schools. She also volunteered to be a part of that committee.

Penny Snow stated that she feels welcome in the community and is impressed with the school system and school personnel. She noted that she was upset when they learned that they would be split off from Dimond High School. She has nothing against South Anchorage Area High School or Service High School, but they are not in her community. Ms. Snow thanked the Superintendent for rethinking the recommendation. She also noted that she is a clinical social worker and it is very detrimental to remove kids from their friends.

Todd Clark, Bayshore resident, is here due to the proximity and time issue. He noted that students could spend an extra 800 hours on the bus during their high school years. Mr. Clark stated that most comments heard during the public hearings were about proximity and about 99 percent of the people were griping about the scenarios; now he is hearing there is 99 percent approval on the recommended change. He sees the public system is working and the Superintendent has wisdom and cares about kids. Mr. Clark stated that he supports the relocatables rather than extra time on the bus. He encouraged the Board to give extra time to parents to come up with a different scenario if they choose to reject the Superintendent's recommendation before them tonight.

Don Castle, Bayshore parent, urged support of the modified scenario. He commented that he has sent off a few e-mails and letters and appreciated the responses.

Brian Vanderwood, Bayshore resident, urged the Board to consider bringing Klatt area into the Dimond area. He supports the Superintendent's recommendation on modified scenario A.

Stacy Oates, Bayshore parent, thanked the Superintendent for listening to parent concerns, especially on the proximity issue. She knows that Dimond will be overcrowded, but feels that relocatables will be acceptable. She urged support of the Superintendent's recommendation.

The School Board recessed at 9:05 p.m. and returned to session at 9:20 p.m.

Debbie Ossiander commented that she heard from a family on Shelly Marie Circle where the elementary students attend Ocean View, middle school students attend Goldenvue, but the high school students will be

split between Service and South Anchorage. She asked Mr. Henry and Ms. Dargan-Steed to look into this. Ms. Dargan-Steed responded that this involves over 100 students in this area.

Mary Marks thanked the parents for their testimony and hopes that with all of the community involvement the students' academics will improve. She also inquired where the Girdwood students would be attending. Carol Comeau responded that they will be attending the new high school.

Tim Steele inquired how Dimond High School will handle the new school when it opens at 119 percent capacity. Guy Okada responded that it will not be much different from what they currently operate with. He feels that the layout is different so it will be easier to accommodate the overcrowding. Mr. Okada appreciates the well connected community and will continue to offer good strong academics as well quality sports programs.

Tim Steele commented that he has been told that one of the benefits in dealing with a larger number of students is that the teacher planning areas are better situated and the classrooms can be utilized for all of the periods. He also noted that a long-term solution would be to build an addition on to Dimond High. Mr. Okada did note that the additional students will have some impact on the smaller learning communities. He stated that it will create some challenges, but believes they can make it work. Tim Steele thanked Mr. Okada for his positive attitude.

Rita Holthouse commented that using a classroom for six periods a day does sound like good, efficient use of a classroom, but does have some educational downsides. Teachers can't set up the classroom or go back into their classroom, and it could put teachers on carts. She asked if there has been some discussion with the Dimond community if they would prefer to have some relocatables on-site or have their teachers on carts. Carol Comeau responded yes, the community has indicated they would rather have relocatables on-site. She stated that the new classrooms have team planning rooms adjacent to the classroom, which is very different. Teachers will have their files in the planning room rather than the classroom, which will free up the classroom for additional use.

Harriet Drummond expressed a concern if there were enough science classrooms at new Dimond. Guy Okada responded that they currently have 11 classrooms and at the new facility, they will have ten classrooms serving fewer students.

Debbie Ossiander expressed a concern that the capacity was looked at differently for West High than the other schools. Mike Henry responded that there is much unusable instructional space at West compared to other schools and that is the reason for the disparity. Mr. Henry noted that there is a high number of special education, Native education, and ESL students at West and typically, the student ratio is smaller in these types of programs. Ms. Ossiander stated that her biggest concern is with the lack of consistency in that approach. She stated that when information is not provided to her on other schools, it does not allow her to adequately handle these types of decisions for the public.

Carol Comeau stated that it is a challenge for West in that it is an old building with wide corridors and lots of unusable space. She also commented that it is different because of the smaller programs, but some decisions had to be made. Ms. Comeau stated that it made no sense to move the Dimond boundary north because Bartlett and East are both at full capacity.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #173 - Revisions to School Board Policy 332.3 Lottery Procedures (Second Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve on Second Reading, the proposed changes to School Board Policy 332.3, Lottery Procedures. (Attachment A)

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander                      to approve Memorandum #173.  
seconded by Mary Marks

Carol Comeau noted that this is the second reading on the revisions to the lottery procedures that will bring us into compliance with the directive from the Office of Civil Rights. She further commented that legal counsel to the District have indicated that by not complying with the directive will likely cause us problems with the Federal government. She feels strongly that she cannot recommend the District do something illegal. Ms. Comeau spoke with Mr. Sell from OCR and asked him to

discuss two issues: 1) the ramifications to the District should it decide not to eliminate the minority preference, and 2) any recommendations OCR could provide regarding race-neutral criteria that could be incorporated in the future into a permissible policy that would promote our goal of diversity. Mr. Sell responded on the first issue that he would be directed by OCR headquarters to issue a letter indicating that the District's policy violates Title VI. It is his anticipation that we would be given a specified timeframe (probably 30 to 90 days) to correct the violation or OCR would begin steps to withdraw federal funds. He also explained that there are two options for enforcement available to OCR, an administrative hearing or a suit filed by the Department of Justice to enjoin our practice of granting minority preference. On the second question, Mr. Sell repeated his earlier guidance that a lottery with no preference is clearly permitted by Title VI. Additionally, he indicated that other race-neutral factors could be considered in an attempt to promote diversity, such as geographic or socio-economic factors. Ms. Comeau stated her interest in pursuing this type of policy in the future and inquired whether Mr. Sell had sample policies from other districts. Ms. Comeau noted that he was unaware of any, but Mr. Sell committed to provide further guidance to the Anchorage School District as may be necessary.

Ms. Comeau stated that she would bring another recommendation back through the policy subcommittee that would increase diversity in our alternative programs. Her recommendation stands that we still need to be in compliance with the OCR order. Ms. Comeau strongly urged the Board to pass the recommended changes to the lottery procedures on second reading and allow the Administration to work with OCR.

Andrenna Stone, legal counsel to the District, stated that the Superintendent did a very good job of summarizing her conversation with Mr. Sell. She agreed that OCR would most likely move toward an administrative hearing if the District was not in agreement with the compliance order.

Tim Steele asked how the administrative hearing would differ from the negotiations that occurred with them earlier before coming to this conclusion. Ms. Stone responded that it would be a hearing where OCR would present our case and we would move forward and define our position. She noted that based on our review of case law, it violates the law.

Art Davidson stated that he senses this is a difficult issue because diversity is important and adds to a child's educational life. He encouraged the Board to vote for what they feel in their heart. If you vote your conscience, you are sending a message that diversity is important. Mr. Davidson suggested that the District take three years to lay out a plan before a change is made. OCR needs to be convinced by the District that they need time to ease through this major change. He encouraged the Board to expand the alternative programs that have wait lists and develop a transportation plan. Mr. Davidson feels that this law is wrong and encouraged the Board to send a message to OCR.

Dorothy Oetter urged the Board to not support the lottery change and look at a socio-economic preference. The staff at Steller has worked diligently to have a diverse school. Ms. Oetter reminded the Board that March 14, 2003 is the next lottery date and this decision will impact the school for the next year.

Rita Holthouse asked the Superintendent if it was her understanding that socio-economic and geographic location can be considered for preference. Ms. Comeau stated that we must be very clear what the criteria is and make sure it is applied correctly. Ms. Comeau believes that we need to do more recruiting and establish more alternative programs closer to our Title I schools. She commented that we need to make sure we are legal, but we must create diversity among our programs. Ms. Comeau believes that we can do something prior to the August lottery.

Rita Holthouse believes that it is philosophically wrong to drop the minority preference and hopes that everyone on the Board understands her position. Because she is not running again for School Board, she does not need to pay attention to the political fall-out from her decision. Ms. Holthouse commented that for 11 years, she was able to see the benefits of a diverse environment for students. She saw an improvement in the school due to racial diversity. Ms. Holthouse has been a public educator for 43 years and supports encouraging and assisting diversity of all types. She is concerned that people see nothing wrong with gender, socio-economic, sibling, etc. and became outraged at the thought of racial preference. Ms. Holthouse noted that minority preference was instituted to correct situations within our alternative programs. The elimination of minority preference ignores the soundness of students being educated in a diverse environment. She feels that our programs will become more Caucasian without the minority preference. Ms. Holthouse feels that sibling preference should also be eliminated if we have to lose racial

preference. She is not going to recommend a change, but does not want this to be viewed as a lack of support for Superintendent Comeau.

Debbie Ossiander stated that it is her responsibility as a Board member to follow the law, not waste public monies, and follow through with the contracts entered in to by the Superintendent. She knows as an elected official and from advice from multiple attorneys, the District would put themselves into jeopardy by losing an enormous amount of money if the contract is not followed. Ms. Ossiander appreciated Ms. Holthouse's comments, but it is the responsibility of the Board to follow the law. She suggested that there are other ways to look at increasing diversity. She will have to support and vote for the Superintendent's recommendation.

Harriet Drummond stated that not one person has asked her to change this policy; many have told her that they support her vote on first reading. Ms. Drummond read an article by Bob Herbert that was published in the Anchorage Daily News on March 1, 2003 titled Right-Wing War Against Diversity Must Be Challenged.

Mary Marks noted that she is the only minority and the first Tlingit woman to be elected to the Board. She stated that she was elected to make sound decisions on behalf of all students and supports the recommendation of the Superintendent.

Jake Metcalfe stated that his position has not changed since the first reading. He feels that we can make changes to this policy by changing the language to make sure the public supports diversity in our schools. He further commented that we can get involved in litigation in many laws that we don't like and spend thousands of dollars in legal fees and we need to look at putting that money into the classrooms. Mr. Metcalfe stated that we need to review the policy to make sure everyone can get into schools of choice and provide transportation to make the schools more accessible. He stated that this is a difficult decision and goes against everything he believes in. Preferences must be reviewed and a change in language must be made to promote diversity. Mr. Metcalfe disagrees with the Superintendent, but must support her so the policy can be changed to support our overall goal.

Tim Steele stated that this is a tough decision because our programs are better since we have had racial preference. He feels that we must obey the law and it would be irresponsible to put District funds in jeopardy. Mr. Steele further stated that we tell students that you can't pick and

chose the rules you want to follow. He committed himself to continue to work on a policy that will work for all students.

John Steiner stated that he fundamentally believes that a policy that chooses between two children based on the color of their skin is not right. All children must be treated fairly. He stated that we currently have a program that allows participation for people with more money; this gives preference. Mr. Steiner believes that it is our responsibility to follow the legal advice, but we should not close the door on this issue. He stated that we have programs that do provide some hurdles, and it makes good sense to look at them to make sure they are not just for the well-to-do.

AMENDMENT:

Moved by John Steiner  
seconded by Rita Holthouse

to add to 332.3 (e): Concurrently with the adoption of this policy, the Superintendent is directed to develop and bring to the Policy Subcommittee legally acceptable means and criteria to gain the participation of socio-economically disadvantaged students in alternative programs on a basis proportionate to the enrollment of such students to the District.

Mary Marks stated that she has a problem with this amendment and wants to make sure MECC is involved with this policy. Carol Comeau stated that MECC will be involved in this discussion and she also plans to go out and talk about this in the community.

Jake Metcalfe stated that the Superintendent will look at the socio-economic language that is part of the motion and make some recommendations to the Board. Ms. Comeau will work with outreach and legal counsel, but would also like lots of suggestions.

John Steiner commented that he meant for this to come back to the Board Policy subcommittee for discussion prior to going to the Board.

Harriet Drummond suggesting adding geographic area to the amendment because she does not want to limit the Superintendent.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

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

Nays: Marks

AMENDMENT TO THE MAIN MOTION PASSED

VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:

Ayes: Ossiander, Marks, Steele,  
Metcalfe, Steiner

Nays: Holthouse, Drummond

MAIN MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED

ASD Memorandum #204 - Revision of School Board Policy Section 400:  
Students and Student Personnel Services (First Reading)

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve on First Reading, the proposed changes to School Board Policy 400-432, Students and Student Services. (Attachment A)

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander to approve Memorandum #204.  
seconded by Tim Steele

Debbie Ossiander commented that the School Board Policy Subcommittee really worked hard on this policy. The main intent of the committee was to clarify the language and bring it into alignment with current practices.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #184 - Software Sole Source Request

It is the Administration's recommendation that the Plato Learning software service be selected to provide credit recovery and focused learning in the areas of math, science, reading and writing to assist students in acquiring the necessary skills to pass the Alaska State High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. The total cost will be \$64,680 for 45 software licenses for the Continuation School and Benny Benson, three servers to deliver the software, training days and on-site support setup for the servers.

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander to approve Memorandum #184.  
seconded by Tim Steele

Mike Henry stated that he responded to questions from Ms. Ossiander earlier in the day and assured her that it is based on and aligned to Alaska State standards.

Rita Holthouse asked why Benson was involved and not SAVE. Mike Henry stated that this is a pilot project and they are limited with the program. Ms. Holthouse inquired where the Continuation School is located. Mike Henry responded that it is located on International Airport Road and the grand opening will be scheduled very soon.

Carol Comeau noted that the Plato program will be at the Continuation School, Benny Benson, and the MOST program at Wendler. She cautioned the Board that the Administration needs to know the results of the program before coming back to request an expansion of the program.

John Steiner asked if this is a sole source for the software. Mike Henry responded yes and there is an annual cost for upgrades that run from about \$12,000 to \$15,000 per year.

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

ASD Memorandum #205 - Personnel Report

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

ACTION:

Moved by Debbie Ossiander to approve Memorandum #205.  
seconded by Mary Marks

VOTE:

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

Nays: None

MOTION PASSED

H. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. ASD Memorandum #202 - Facility Change Order Report and Completed Projects for the Month of January 2003

The monthly Facility Change Order Report for the month of January 2003 is attached. There are no exceptions to report this month.

2. ASD Memorandum #201 - Project Status Report

This is a report of activities and project status changes in Major Capital Projects during the period of, January 28, 2003 through February 14, 2003.

3. ASD Memorandum #180 - Second Quarter Suspension/ Weapons/Expulsion Report FY 2002-2003

Information regarding suspensions and expulsions for various offenses, including weapons, is collected from the elementary, middle, and high schools each quarter. The information is shown in the narrative information below and as Attachments A-F.

Second Quarter Suspensions

Total second quarter suspensions for the 2002-2003 school year increased at all three levels compared to second quarter last year. Elementary suspensions went from 172 to 231, middle school suspensions from 666 to 797, and high schools from 769 to 803. Elementary schools showed increases in fighting/assault (82 to 102), harassment (1 to 5)), and sexual harassment (0 to 8), while weapons incidents decreased (6 to 4). The only areas in middle schools showing a decrease were drugs/alcohol (47 to 31) and tobacco (3 to 2). Suspensions at the high school level increased for fighting/threats (97 to 120) and smoking (6 to 12); however, suspensions were down slightly in other areas.

Second Quarter Expulsions

Sixteen middle school students and 37 high school students were expelled by the School Board during the second quarter of the 2002-2003 school year. No elementary students were expelled during this time. The 53 students expelled during second quarter

this year compare with 37 students expelled during the same period last year. Action by the School Board is pending for four middle school students and nine high school students who are accused of violations during the second quarter.

#### Discipline Reports

The elementary, middle, and high school discipline summaries follow. These show elementary schools second quarter by school and category (Attachment A & B), middle schools second quarter by school and category (Attachment C & D), and high schools second quarter by school and category (Attachment E & F).

In Discipline Reports (attachments B, D and F), "other" is the final category choice for recording offenses. At times, this descriptor has been used when a more definitive category would have been preferred. Instructional division leaders have committed to working with schools to restrict the use of the "other" category to times when none of the 13-19 specific labels are suitable.

The second use of an "other" category has been in the quarterly suspension and expulsion memorandum where highlighted offenses that are tracked over a three-year period do not explain a significant portion of the suspension statistics. In this memorandum and successive reports, this category titled "other" will be followed by narrative summarizing these pertinent suspension areas.

Carol Comeau noted that there was an increase at all levels. Patricia McRae stated that the suspensions have increased, but she is not certain why. Ms. McRae commented that we are teaching students the rules and what is expected. She believes that this plus other efforts have made a positive change in our schools.

Gail Opalinski stated that middle schools are looking at a few new things such as the Clark Aggression Training Program, which she hopes to be an intervention program for those students who have been suspended for violent related offenses.

Carol Comeau commented that she absolutely believes that the world tension is hitting this community and that there is a general state of tension in our schools.

Mike Henry stated that the Continuation School is up and running with 19 middle and high school students attending. He mentioned

that once a student is expelled by the School Board, he/she is called to enter the program so he/she can continue their academic program. He is also going back one year and inviting those expelled students to attend. Mr. Henry commented that parents have inquired about the program and want their children to enter prior to Board action on recommendations for expulsion.

Carol Comeau thanked the School Board for their support of the Continuation School Program.

John Steiner stated that it would be useful to get a sense of the percentage change between quarters to see if we are getting worse or better. He wonders if the reason for the increase is tolerance or just being able to catch the students. He would like information on the possible reason for the increase.

Tim Steele stated that he is not sure percentages would be helpful, but likes the three year comparisons in the report.

4. ASD Memorandum #185 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap: January 31, 2003

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 January 31, 2003.

5. ASD Memorandum #206 - End of Month Membership Summary for January 2003

The end-of-month membership report for January 31, 2003 is attached (Attachment A). The total active enrollment at the end of January was 49,473. This represents an increase of 260 students when compared to the December 20, 2002 total of 49,215, and a decrease of 10 students from the January, 2002 enrollment.

Rita Holthouse is concerned that we lost 213 students last year and 556 students in 2002-2003. Carol Comeau commented that the Demographic Department is looking into this, but some people are leaving town and others may have dropped out due to attendance. Students from military families may be attending elsewhere due to their family's deployment.

Mike Henry noted that he has seen fewer students leave this semester than the first semester of 2002-2003. Gail Opalinski and Patricia McRae commented that they have seen growth in the middle and elementary areas. Jerry Sjolander has seen an increase in pre-school and elementary students.

Rita Holthouse commented that she hopes the decrease in students is not in relation to the high school graduation exit exam. She cautioned the Administration to keep a close eye on the senior high students.

John Steiner noted that the at-risk students are those that are getting suspended and expelled. He further noted that the Administration needs to watch these students to see if they are returning to school.

6. ASD Memorandum #186 - Operating Budget Transfers-January Monthly Report FY 2002-2003

The attached report of budget transfers for the time period of January 2003 that were processed in the Integrated Financial Accounting System (IFAS) includes the following:

Attachment A: Report of Budget Transfers Over \$5,000 – Report for individual transfers of more than \$5,000, which includes summarized justifications.

The schedule of monthly budget transfers processed for the month of January 2003 and the budget transfer forms and related information for all of the transfers are available in the Budget Department office for review by the School Board and members of the public.

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

The Special Meeting of March 3, 2003 adjourned at 12:00 a.m.

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Jake Metcalfe, President

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Mary Marks, Clerk

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Mary Kay Sambo, Recording Secretary

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Date Minutes Approved