

**ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

MINORITY EDUCATION CONCERNS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

March 17, 2005

The Minority Education Concerns Committee met on Thursday, March 17, 2005, at 12:00 in Room #202 in the ASD Administration Building.

Kay Bennett, Coordinator for Training and Professional Development, spoke to the Committee about recruiting and retaining teachers for the Anchorage School District. The specific areas of concern are beginning teachers, Indian Education teachers, and bilingual/multicultural teachers. She said that too often minority teachers don't feel a part of the community. Her department is working on a project to retain minority teachers and she asked the Committee for any suggestions or assistance they could give in helping minority teachers.

Diane Heard asked what percentage of ASD teachers are minority teachers and where they come from. How many of those teachers does the District retain?

Ms. Bennett said she didn't have the exact figures to answer Ms. Heard's questions, but she would get that information for her. She did say that ASD has a 98 percent retention rate for first year teachers, but the rate drops after the second year. It was suggested that some teachers look at coming to Alaska as an experience and don't plan to stay longer than two or three years. Other factors include the long winters, the darkness and the distance from families in the lower 48. Training & Professional Development is developing an exit survey this year, which will be sent to those teachers who left last year.

Ms. Heard feels we ask too much of our teachers. She said support for minority teachers should come from other minority teachers.

Mr. Roberts suggested that the principal help make the connection with a new person and someone from the same geographic area or ethnic/cultural group, or at least the person with longevity at the school.

Mr. Johnson supported the idea of a mentor/sponsor to help new teachers with the transition. The principal should have a base of support members. ASD needs to market the pluses of Anchorage. Ms. Bennett said the recruiting teams have done an excellent job of promoting Anchorage.

Mr. Roberts asked about a social for new hires. Ms. Comeau said that most schools have a Back to School Picnic in the fall for everyone to get together.

Ms. Comeau suggested that the Training and Professional Development staff share the results of their survey with AEA. She also recommended compiling a list of organizations and churches that could be given to potential candidates and new hires.

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL

William Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:14 p.m. A quorum was deemed to consist of five members, due to the March resignation of Angela Jimenez and the absence of Richard Benavides who is a staff member for the state legislature and is currently in session in Juneau. This brings the total membership to nine and makes the simple majority five votes.

Members Present

William Johnson
Atisa Logo
Diane Heard
Helen Sharratt
Alfredia Tyler

Excused

Skip Hrin
Richard Benavides
Jesse Vizcocho
Phyllis Morrell
Charlene Gibbs

Others Present

Carol Comeau, Superintendent
Macon Roberts, School Board Member
Kay Bennett, Coordinator, Training/Professional Development
Marsha Haas, Executive Secretary, Instruction

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION

Moved by Helen Sharratt to approve the agenda for the
Seconded by Atisa Logo March 17, 2005, meeting

VOTE

Motion passed unanimously.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION:

Moved by Alfredia Tyler to approve the minutes from the
Seconded by Atisa Logo March 17, 2005, meeting as amended

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

4. MECC MEMBERSHIP BOUNDARY

ACTION:

Helen Sharratt moved and Diane Heard seconded the following motion to revise the MECC Guidelines, Section 2) B. CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP

e) Priority will be maintained for those with a vested interest in the Anchorage School District:

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE NAME CHANGE

After much discussion, it was decided to table this item until after the MECC meets with the School Board (see following item)

ACTION:

Diane Heard moved and Alfredia Tyler seconded the following motion:

It is recommended that the Chair and Vice Chair of MECC meet with no less than two School Board members to review the charge and the duties of the Minority Education Concerns Committee relative to the demographic changes of the student population. Questions in that discussion should include - What is the role of the Committee and whom do they serve?

VOTE:

Motion passed unanimously.

6. MECC GUIDELINES / ATTENDANCE

The Committee had a lengthy discussion about commitment to MECC and the members who have had several absences during the year. Even though some of the absences have been excused, it impacts the group when there is no quorum. According to the guidelines of MECC, "If a seat is unrepresented for three consecutive unexcused business meetings, or a majority of the business meetings in a fiscal year, the incumbent member shall be replaced."

After reviewing the attendance records, the Committee agreed that Mr. Johnson should write letters to Charlene Gibbs, Jesse Vizcocho and Skip Hrin advising them of the termination of their membership based on the above guideline.

HOUSEKEEPING CHANGES TO GUIDELINES were reviewed and approved (attached)

Meeting adjourned at 2:20