

I. PRELIMINARY

Cook called the February 7, 2008, meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

Matt Cook, president
Jeanette Carmany, vice president
Jane Barber, secretary
Peter Cukale, treasurer
Judith Edberg, director
Mary W. Lewis, director
Amy Prince, director

Also meeting with the Board of Education were:

John L. Barry, superintendent of schools
Anthony Van Gytenbeek, deputy superintendent
Lisa Escárcega, chief accountability and research officer
Kari Allen, chief personnel officer
William Stuart, chief academic officer
Anthony Sturges, chief operating officer
Tonia Norman, assistant to Board of Education

Pledge of Allegiance

Cook led the Board and audience in the pledge to the flag. He then welcomed visitors to the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

The February 7, 2008, agenda was approved as written.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Education held January 22, 2008, were approved as written.

Opportunity for Audience

II. INFORMATION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Reports from the Board of Education

Barber participated in the Read Along Program sponsored by Rotary on Saturday, Feb. 2. Each child that attended was read to and received a new book. This is a wonderful program that Rotary sponsors.

Barber attended Family Night at North Middle School. It was a cold snowy night, but a lot of families were present. We have some great kids at North.

Carmany attended Family Math Night at Kenton. She was impressed with the number of students and families in attendance. She also thanked staff at sites

that hosted presidential caucuses on Feb. 5. A lot of time and effort went into organizing and ensuring buildings were ready to host caucuses.

Lewis thanked principals for signing certificates in honor of School Board Recognition Month. She also thanked the Aurora Education Association Board for cookies given to Board members in appreciation of School Board Recognition Month.

Lewis attended the Key Community Response Team meeting for the city of Aurora. She had a chance to hear a presentation from the police department on tabletop exercises of possible scenarios conducted at elementary schools. The officer that spoke was very complimentary of APS staff and the district for implementing changes and suggestions as a result of findings.

Lewis attended a Positive Behavior Support presentation with Dr. George Sugai. She shared that many Colorado school districts were represented at the presentation. It is amazing how far ahead APS is with the positive behavior support model in comparison to other districts.

Lewis encouraged the audience to take a look at the APS Community Report highlighting students, staff and accomplishments in 2008.

Edberg announced that she is the proud grandmother of a new grandson, Joshua Daniel. Joshua was born on Feb. 4.

Items of Current Interest

Cook invited Tim Ehgotz, dean of students at Pickens Technical College, to the Board table as he read a proclamation to proclaim February as Career and Technical Education Month by the Association for Career and Technical Education.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, February 1–29, 2008, has been designated Career and Technical Education Month by the Association for Career and Technical Education; and

WHEREAS, profound economic and technological changes in our society are rapidly reflected in the structure and nature of work, thereby placing new and additional responsibilities on our educational system; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education provides Americans with a school-to-careers connection and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity in business and industry and contributes to America's leadership in the international marketplace; and

WHEREAS, career and technical education gives high school students experience in practical, meaningful applications of basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics, thus improving the quality of their education, motivating potential dropouts and giving all student leadership opportunities in their fields and in their communities, and

WHEREAS, career and technical education offers individuals lifelong opportunities to learn new skills, which provide them with career choices and potential satisfaction; and

February 7, 2008

WHEREAS, the ever-increasing cooperative efforts of career and technical educators, business and industry stimulate the growth and vitality of our local economy and that of the entire nation by preparing graduates for career fields forecast to experience the largest and fastest growth in the next decade;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, Pickens Technical College of Aurora, Colorado do hereby proclaim February 1-29, 2008, as

Career and Technical Education Month

in Aurora, Colorado, and urge all citizens to become familiar with the services and benefits offered by the career and technical education programs in this community and to support and participate in these programs to enhance their individual work skills and productivity.

Eghotz thanked the Board and district staff for all their support. He invited everyone to attend an Open House at Pickens on Feb. 12.

Barry reiterated that Pickens Technical College will host their spring 2008 Open House on Tuesday, Feb. 12. The public can stop by at 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 to 3 p.m. or 5 to 7 p.m. This is a great opportunity to see the exciting program offerings for the 2008-09 school year. You will also have a chance to meet the instructors and check out the great possibilities in career and technical education.

Please join us in celebration of National History Day at Rangeview High School on Friday, Feb. 15 at 3 p.m. Projects will be showcased in the commons area, documentary films will be shown in the two lecture halls, and historical performances will take place in the auditorium. If you are interested in judging any of the projects, contact Matthew Willis at Rangeview.

Congratulations to Peoria/Boston music teacher Elva Bolin for being inducted into the Colorado Music Educators Association's 2008 Hall of Fame. Elva continues to go above and beyond her expectations. Using action and deaf sign language and movement, she involves students actively in music before they have any proficiency in the English language. In addition, she has written grants to enable the business community to fund instruments for beginning orchestras and has expanded the curriculum for APS. She was recognized as a Channel 7 Everyday Hero and was included in *"Who's Who in American Education."* We are proud to have Elva on our team.

Barry observed Bolin's classroom this week and witnessed the excitement for learning in her students' eyes. He presented Elva with a coin. He thanked her for representing APS, and being an outstanding educator and great example for our children.

Barry reminded everyone that district reports are available on the APS Web site.

VISTA 2010 Update

Cook explained that each month, the Board reviews different elements of the VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan. He invited Kari Allen to the staff table to present information from the "P" section of PACE – People, Achievement, Community, and Environment.

People

Allen reviewed Goal 1, Objective 1, Action 99: Revise the principal recruiting and hiring process.

Allen shared that in the past, we posted positions, and accepted applications and interest in those positions individually. We felt that we were not targeting the most qualified viable candidates by posting this way. We have put into place some processes and tools to help identify the most talented and viable candidates in a more concentrated pool. We will hire our assistant principals and principals from that pool.

We have advertised openings for high school and middle school assistant principals and principals since December 2007. We are advertising openings on our Web site, national Web sites and in national journals. We sent letters to current assistant principals in the district and principal applicants outside of the district who applied for an opening within a year to inform them of our new hiring process. We invited applicants to complete a new online employment application form specifically tailored for school leadership. We asked each applicant to take a principal insight interview through the Gallup Organization, a researched-based tool that helps identify talents of successful school leaders by measuring the type of motivation needed to be an aspiring school leader. It provides insight to the candidate's ability to build relationships, team development, ability to arrange resources and a sense of urgency to improve the school. The interview consists of both an online and personal component to identify candidates with specified qualities.

All of the data, including the resume and transcripts, is reviewed by directors from the Division of Instruction and Human Resources. Successful applicants were invited to interview last week and we identified the concentrated pool of applicants for principalships in the district. Applicants will be selected from the concentrated pool when there is a vacancy at a school site. The successful candidate will be referred to Superintendent Barry for a final interview.

Carmany asked how many applicants invited for final interview were current district staff. Allen replied that half were district staff and half were outside candidates. We will replenish the candidate pool a couple of more times throughout the spring.

Achievement

Stuart reviewed Goal 1, Objective 2, Action 32: Work with general education/special education departments to adopt a Response to Intervention (RTI) model to better identify, support and monitor students at risk of underachieving by providing targeted academic interventions by August 2008.

Stuart shared that every school district in the state has been mandated to have an RTI model in place by August 2008. In the last couple of months, we have begun to develop an APS model utilizing many components in the VISTA 2010 Plan and practices that have been in place in APS for many years. One of the groups around the three main components of RTI is the child study team process, which has been in place for some time. School professionals identify students who are experiencing behavioral and academic difficulties. The child study team meets to determine the best course of action to address learning or behavior needs.

Progress monitoring is another group and is a critical component of RTI. This group is headed by Escárcega and is a response to intervention. We have to be

able to assess our instructional practices and gather data formatively and regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of our practices. Developing effective intervention is core.

Principals and teachers are struggling to determine next steps for kids who are not learning at the expected rate or responding to data gathered in interventions or to initiatives presented. Susan Olezene, director of student achievement, will help school sites gather effective interventions for struggling students.

Carmany asked what kinds of supports are in place for students identified as special education as we move to more inclusions into regular classrooms. Stuart replied that the primary support would be the special educator who would co-plan and co-teach with the regular education teacher. It really depends on the level of support indicated on the student's IEP. Carmany requested that data be provided to show the kinds of supports available to assist regular classroom teachers with special needs students.

Lewis asked how we ensure all kids have IEPs or supports needed for learning. Stuart shared that most RIT models are in the pyramid model. The bottom third of the pyramid is designed to address the needs of 80 percent of students. Through progress monitoring we continually review instruction to ensure needs are met and intervention strategies are in place for students.

Barber asked if intervention teams were in place at each school. Stuart replied that we have had child study teams in place in APS for some time. We need to ensure that we have a systematic model in place at each school site and we are currently working to implement a systematic model.

Community

Escárcega invited Christine Hoppe, director of risk management/security and incident response, to the staff table to present an overview of the school volunteer program. Hoppe shared that we have continually increased the number of volunteers working in our schools on an annual basis.

- 77 percent of volunteers are at elementary schools
- 10 percent of volunteers are at high schools
- 8 percent of volunteers are at middle schools
- 5 percent of volunteers are at K-8 schools

The average number of volunteers at each school ranges from 10 to 25. Laredo Elementary has 64 volunteers. We currently have 587 volunteers who are parents and 393 volunteers who are non parents. Escárcega commented that we are well on our way to meeting our target goal.

Barry explained that we have more than 600 mentors in the district. These are APS employees, but are categorized as volunteers. They have donated their time to mentor a child and I think that is commendable.

Hoppe shared that we have one-time volunteers who participate in our Leaders to Readers Program. We are running this program four times a year and we are thrilled about the steady increase of participants.

Each potential volunteer is required to complete a bilingual application form. If the volunteer is a parent of an APS student, we validate it through our student information system, request a photo ID and issue him/her a volunteer badge. If

they are a not a parent of an APS student, we run a background check before issuing a badge. Only seven applications have been denied to date.

Environment

Sturges shared that the APS Speakers' Bureau is continuing ongoing efforts to present information to a variety of APS stakeholder groups in regard to our successful bond program. The goal is to present information to five groups per month. These efforts will continue throughout the spring and summer. Community groups interested in hearing a presentation need to contact Anthony Sturges.

Lewis commented that there is a bond video on the district Web site that highlights the remodel at West Middle School and Hinkley High School. Georgia Duran, chief communication officer, shared that the video is available on the Web and is being broadcast on Channel 53 on Tuesday and Thursday at 9:15 p.m. and Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:30 a.m.

Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee Recommendation

Van Gytenbeek shared that the Board received information regarding pilot schools in October 2007. He introduced Amy Achtermann, teacher at Jewell Elementary, and Ginny Burgess, parent and DAAC member, to present an overview of recommendations from the Joint Steering Committee. He also thanked members of the Joint Steering Committee members: Brenna Isaacs, Frank O'Hara, Laurie Foster, Camille Schiraldi, Amy Achtermann, Donna Gondrez, Ed Snyder, James Scott, Ginny Burgess, Rod Weeks and William Stuart for all their hard work and efforts.

Van Gytenbeek shared that the biggest responsibility of the Joint Steering Committee is to monitor pilot schools and assign a liaison to ensure progress is smooth and successful. Other responsibilities include application review, evaluation of pilot schools utilizing REP rubrics, budget review and ensuring pilot schools have a good accountability process, and students are prepared for state mandated tests.

We posted an RFP to the district on Nov. 5 and received letters of intent by the deadline of Dec. 3, 2007, from William Smith, Fletcher, Hinkley and two developers, Lend Lease and Oakwood Homes. We are also having ongoing conversations with Vanguard Classical School.

On Dec 10, 2007, we met to formalize responsibilities. We hired a consultant to work with both William Smith and Fletcher's design teams. On Jan. 18, we received a completed proposal from William Smith High School and we met as a group to review it. On Jan. 30, we met again to review the proposal and measure it against the REP rubrics. After an extensive review, the Joint Steering Committee approved the application for pilot school status at William Smith by a two-thirds vote.

Burgess and Achtermann reviewed questions from the Joint Steering Committee that were presented to the William Smith Design Team. Some of the questions and responses include:

- Why grade level teams?
- They are flexible and based on student needs
- Expand on expectations for teacher documentation?

- Teachers use learning expeditions online to plan and document curriculum.
- How will intervention and academic support classes be structured?
- Students will be identified on a weekly basis for additional academic support and grouped by need. Content teachers will provide additional instruction and support.
- Why humanities and a math/science block?
- The humanities block has a tremendous literacy focus, is a primary vehicle for literacy instruction, and it broadens and deepens support with literacy through humanities. Literacy is also emphasized across the board in Crew/math/science/social studies.
- Why are there no students on the governing board?
- The governing board is in the process of determining if it is an appropriate place for a student voice. Crew is an ongoing place for student voice.
- Which standards are you targeting?
- Expeditionary learning is built on Colorado state standards. Learning expeditions will assist with that.
- How is “high quality student work” part of curriculum and instruction?
- Expeditions need to be presented to an authentic audience. When you plan, you backward plan from end of product.
- How will you meet specific needs of special education and ELL students?
- We will accommodate and meet the needs of students with IEP requirements and 504 plans. Small class sizes are helpful so kids do not get lost.
- Will teachers use CSAP release items for practice? What about ACT, Plan, or Explore?
- We will use each tool to prepare students for state-mandated tests.
- Explain your use of school climate surveys to measure student progress.
- We will use the district student survey to assist in student voice. Our staff communicates regularly with one another due to small size.
- What does the structure of the three hours weekly common plan look like?
- Friday mornings will be open for special projects, speakers and outside professionals to work with kids and intervention work. A block of time will be open on Friday afternoons to work in teams and prepare for expeditionary learning.
- Do you currently have a PTA?
- We are working on getting more parent involvements and a PTA group.
- Is the budget adequate or limiting?
- We have more spending flexibility due to not having to purchase all district resources.
- Develop outside partnerships and supports to expand student learning
- We will seek additional revenues from outside businesses and the community. We also charge a small activity fee for students.
- Your expeditionary learning contract is \$55,000. What do you get?
- On site supports, coach/designer, and an outside professional that comes to William Smith 38 days, eight hours a day, to help implement the program
- Highlight differences in your calendar
- Students start school on Aug. 4. We moved in-service and workdays around breaks to plan for the next quarter and review learning from the

previous quarter. We increased classroom time from 800 hours to 1084 hours. Students are able to come in early or leave late and they have options for electives. Students have opportunities for extended field work, intervention, academic support or co-curricular each Friday. Teachers will have flex time so they can teach earlier in the week for a larger block of time

- How did you get letters of support?
- We got letters of support from the community and parents. We continue to go out into the community to get support.

Some of the observations from the Joint Steering Committee include:

- continue to solicit funding through outside resources
- address the need for a PTA and continue efforts to increase parent involvement
- continue to work and refine innovations
- define ELL standards further
- work with Division of Accountability and Research to articulate growth and attendance goals
- school calendar encourages plan and addresses student needs and learning
- unanimous vote to move further
- strong AEA commitment
- teachers and staff are excited to move forward
- very innovative

Van Gytenbeek invited the design team from William Smith to the staff table to present an overview of innovations as the potential first pilot school in APS.

Jane Shirley, principal of William Smith, introduced members of Williams Smith's design team including Paul Grzybowski, language arts teacher; Kristen Wiedmaier, math teacher; Alice Sampson, science teacher; Willie Little, special education teacher; Lucas Newman, social studies; Regina Springli, school secretary; Susan Neff, parent; Pat and Jay Johnson, parents; David Roll, dean, Sharita Petrom, young parenting program; and Natalie Montecalzo, young parenting program.

Shirley thanked the Board and AEA for having the vision and courage for giving William Smith an opportunity to be the first pilot school in APS.

Grzybowski shared that having autonomy will free us in many areas including acquisition of resources and materials for students, accessing experts in specific fields and providing our students with meaningful field work and experiences.

Roll explained that William Smith is an expeditionary learning school and we will do an even better job with more autonomy. The curriculum at William Smith is based around expeditions. An expedition is a focused package of content taught during a specific time period and is built around a compelling topic. The topic is a highly, interesting focus piece of content that will serve as an entry point to understand a bigger idea. Hands-on activities are a big part of an expedition. We want students to be involved and engaged in what they are doing. They work in labs doing field work and produce products that demonstrate they have grasped the intended content goal. Pilot school status will allow us to take this to a higher level.

Sampson shared that having autonomy will help us integrate a lot of subjects into

our instruction. We are using technology in all of our classrooms as part of the learning expedition. Students have been working with communication services and doing some videotaping as an example of hands-on activities.

Wiedmaier explained that having a small school helps us connect to students. We know all of our students by name and it helps us build relationships with them and create a strong learning environment. The students remain with the teacher for four years and we get to know their goals. Having a small school helps with school safety. We can identify who does not belong at the school instantly and we are able to build a strong sense of trust and community with our kids. It also helps in the classroom. We can differentiate instruction to accommodate diverse learning styles and quickly identify and track students who need extra help with standards.

Petrom shared that pilot school status would allow us to select appropriate materials that will create a school where students are actively engaged and are willing participants in learning. We will be selective to use the right equipment to fit the expeditionary learning style and more flexibility to move kids into different groups.

Shirley shared that we did a presentation with the Board a couple of years ago and discussed the need to increase rigor at William Smith and change the expectations that some community members and students had in regard to learning and achievement. We are excited about meeting the challenge of accountability and exceeding district averages in three years. We have inducted our first full class of freshmen and they are outperforming their peers in reading, writing and math throughout the district. We have a 96 percent attendance rate and only four students have left due to relocation.

The Youth Parenting Program has two components. One component is support for prenatal education and parenting support through parent education programs. The other is a childcare center that can accommodate 40 children. We will present information to the Board regarding the young parenting program in March. The pilot school status that we are requesting will not impact that program and will still be accessible to all William Smith High School students.

Grzybowski explained that the calendar was designed to create meaningful planning time. In-service and workdays were moved around breaks to plan for the upcoming expedition and review the prior expedition. Because of our small staff, we have three grade level teams and content teams that meet regularly. We also meet regularly as a whole group. It is a tremendous aid for new teachers and a way for veteran teachers to support new teachers. In our Election to Work Agreement, each teacher will be required to develop an individual professional learning plan. The plan will be specific to the teacher's needs and content, and it will be communicated and documented with the principal.

Barber commented that she was concerned with the proposed change to a pilot school. I like the closeness of the school and the interaction seen between the kids and teachers. I am very happy that this will not affect the Young Parenting Program.

Cukale asked about the student selection process. Shirley explained that we currently have 200 students. Our program is designed to accommodate 250 students. We are looking into creating a lottery system similar to the one used at a school in DPS. We are committed to serving the same kids that have attended

William Smith and succeeded. We just want them sooner.

Cukale asked how parents would be selected from the accountability committee to serve on the governing board. Shirley explained that we are working to recruit parents of freshmen students. Johnson explained that we have created a directory and we are making personal calls to recruit parents.

Cukale asked how parent involvement will be monitored and maintained throughout the years. Shirley shared that we will first grow the parent group. We had a freshmen family night earlier in the year and we had a good turnout. We have showcase nights built into our calendar and students will exhibit their work. A parent survey distributed at the beginning of the year provided us with information on special skills that parents are willing to do.

Prince commented that she toured some of the expeditionary schools. She asked if staff had an opportunity to tour any of the schools. Sampson replied that several of the staff had an opportunity to visit expeditionary learning schools in Fort Collins and in Mapleton. We received a lot of our ideas and structures from schools that we visited and we had multiple opportunities to dialog with teachers.

Lewis voiced concerns about the young parenting program and how it will fit into the pilot school format. Shirley explained that we have multiple entry points and there will be movement in the school. We have built structures in place so students can leave for a period of time if necessary. The young parenting program is also accessed by students at Gateway and Hinkley. These students need the support of the young parenting program, but they want to remain at their home high school.

Barry shared that this is a great example of the transformational elements that are going on in APS. He congratulated the Joint Steering Committee and the staff and parents at William Smith High School.

Cook thanked presenters for all their work and efforts. This item will be submitted for action on February 19.

Deferred G Policies

Donovan explained that five G personnel policies were deferred for action after being presented as an information item to the Board on October 23, 2007.

- Two policies (GCQB: Administration Staff Reduction in Force and GBEB: Staff Conduct and Responsibilities) have been withdrawn.
- GAA – monitoring of school district property, is a new policy that gives the district authority to inspect an employee's property.
- The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution applies to government entities and it protects people from unreasonable searches and seizures. This policy operates under the amendment and that restriction of searches being reasonable.
- We currently have the power to search. The main thing we are trying to accomplish with this policy is to protect the district in case of a lawsuit. In deciding if a search is reasonable under the Fourth Amendment, the courts look at whether the employee has an expectation of privacy in the work place that is going to be searched. If we have this policy, that will diminish the expectation of privacy and help us in case of a lawsuit.
- This policy covers only property of the school district, not personal

property of an employee.

- The district has existing policies including the power to allow for searches of student lockers and the computer/e-mail policy (EGAEA).
- This is an important policy in cases of danger and we want to protect students and staff.
- By having this policy, we are placing employees on notice that such a search may occur and they are not surprised if a search is conducted for a reasonable cause.
- GCCAA – Staff Sick Leave
- This policy was revised to add language to allow for employees to use accrued leave while on workers' comp or disability in order to combine payments with sick leave to receive full pay.
- While in discussion, the issue arose regarding whether sick leave should be extended to allow for employees to use sick leave for care of a domestic partners or other family members not currently listed under the definition of "immediate family."
- The current definition of "Immediate family" in the Master Agreement with AEA is: teacher's spouse, child, father, mother, foster father or mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent, grandchild or any other relative of the teacher living in the immediate household.
- In checking with five districts, only one district allows sick leave to be use for illness of a domestic partner. Opening sick leave to a domestic partner raises the issue of whether other benefits should be extended to a domestic partner. Of the six districts that we checked, three did and three did not.
- The rough estimate to add domestic partners to health insurance would raise our rates by 2 percent, or \$400,000. It would raise our health insurance rates to roughly 4.5 percent, or \$900,000, if we covered both same sex and opposite sex partners. These are only rough estimates and not a quote from the health insurance company.
- GCCAG – new language was added to exclude employees from taking a leave of absence to pursue personal interests. The best instruction is delivered by teachers who were hired and it would have a negative effect on student achievement.
- The policy does allow for exceptions in cases of extraordinary circumstances.
- GCQF – discipline of non-licensed administrators and professional/technical employees
- The first issue is whether termination appeals of non-licensed employees should be heard by the Board or the administration. The Board currently hears termination appeals and provides final approval. The second issue is whether administrators should be authorized to accept an employee's resignation.
- The Board holds the Superintendent accountable for achieving certain goals. The Superintendent should be able to select the staff he feels is necessary to accomplish those goals.
- We sometimes have an employee who has committed some type of misconduct and he/she will offer an immediate resignation.
- Under the current policy, the resignation is not final until the Board approves.
- Licensed employees are paid 100 days after the Superintendent files dismissal charges or until a hearing officer's decision is rendered.
- GDQD – discipline, suspension, and dismissal of classified employees
- Appeals be heard by the Superintendent instead of the Board.
- The Superintendent and other administrators would be allowed to

accept employee resignations.

A number of people in the audience signed up to address the G policies presented as information.

Alice Sampson, 1235 Elm St., Denver, Colorado 80220, reviewed a written statement in regard to the GCCAA, staff sick leave. The policy states that sick leave with pay is a benefit to employees to protect their health and welfare. There are two additions that are necessary to ensure that all employees have equal and fair access to this benefit. One addition was identified by former Board member Susan Tabacheck as information in October 2007. She requested that significant other be added to the policy as a recognized family member. We wish to thank Susan for her proactive stance in recognizing domestic partners and we ask that the policy be changed to reflect this language. We also recommend that foster children be included in the definition of member of "immediate family." We hope to work collaboratively with the Board to ensure all APS employees are given equal and fair access to benefits outlined in the staff sick leave policy and health benefits that are offered to employees through the APS total compensation package. Thank you for your time and we look forward to working with you on these issues.

Scott Habermehl, 70 S. Birch St., Denver, CO 80046, addressed concerns in regard to policy GCCAA, staff sick leave. In the VISTA 2010 Plan, under the People section, Goal One, Objective Two, Action Six, states: base compensation on annual analysis of contract salary of neighboring districts to maintain competitive compensation and benefits within valued available resources.

Habermehl provided the Board with benefit policies from neighboring districts including DPS, Jefferson County, Adams Five Star and Boulder Valley. All provide domestic partner benefits and have for some time. We ask that the Board take the time to review these policies in relation to Action Item Six in the VISTA 2010 Plan. As we move to become a premier school district in Colorado, it is critical that we hire and maintain the most talented staff through a competitive and fair benefits package. APS is currently at a disadvantage. Our practices could be seen as discriminatory or inferior to neighboring districts. Many administrators in this room can support stories of quality candidates that we have lost to other districts because we were unable to interview some of the best candidates once they understood their neighboring districts offered benefits that we do not. We understand that domestic partner benefits were previously discussed in this district. We ask the Board to review those records and research related to this issue. Providing this benefit would not have a negative financial impact on the district. In order to address the challenges we face in APS, we must use every angle to attract high quality staff and personnel. We also need to include foster children in this policy. We need to do the right thing to get quality people

Lisa Toner, 3309 Gaylord St., Denver, 80205, 303-717-7890, addressed concerns in regard to policy GCCAA, staff sick leave.

This policy hinders the district's ability to recruit and obtain staff of the highest caliber. As a student in the Denver University Administrative Program, I would encourage my cohort members to consider applying for administrative jobs in APS. One of my colleagues did apply and was offered a job in Aurora. Because we do not recognize domestic partners in APS, she was forced to decline the position. In the district she works, domestic partners are recognized. It never

February 7, 2008

occurred to either of us that this would be the determining factor in keeping her from employment in APS. My colleague was the star of our cohort group. She would have been a strong addition to APS.

This policy is preventing APS from hiring the best quality employees. We would never think of hiring someone based on their single or marital status or how many children they have. This policy sends the message that an employee's marital status or domestic partner status matters in how they are treated in regard to benefits.

Morgan Cooper, 19524 E. Arkansas Ave., Aurora, 80017, addressed concerns regarding policy GCCAA, staff sick leave. Aurora Public Schools has chosen to step out on the leading edge for the education of our students with an altered calendar, fifth block and our interim assessments. APS falls short when it comes to supporting all of its employees. Other Denver metro school districts have clearly chosen to support employees with wording in contracts that state they will not discriminate for race, religion, gender or sexual orientation and have backed that with health benefits for partners. Not only has APS chosen not to support its employees with health benefits for partners, it has chosen to initially leave out wording in the definition of family that will penalize employees for taking care of their significant other. Imagine being denied a paycheck while caring for your spouse while he/she is ill. Imagine the stress of illness multiplied by mounting bills. Imagine your colleague being able to take paid time off to care for an uncle living with them, while you cannot to the same for your husband or wife.

Along with policy language that leaves out significant other, it also leaves out my daughter, a beautiful two-year old, with significant health needs that will require several surgeries. Although she has done well this year, I can be denied pay for being home with her when she is sick or needs surgery because she is a foster child. These children have already felt significant loss in their lives and have lived with neglect and abuse. Turning my child over to a sitter when she is sick will only add to her trauma. I understand that districts need to make sure that sick days are not abused and the consistent education of students in our care is of the highest importance. As a 16-year employee of APS, I would like to know that I, too, am equally valued by APS. I would also like to know that I can care for all of my family members when they need me most.

If APS is willing to step out on the educational front for our students, we should also be able to take a stand for all of our employees. For APS to recruit and keep the top educators in the state and nation, we must stand guard and actively work to protect the basic needs of all employees.

Debbie Gerkin, 671 Olathe Way, Aurora, 80011, 303-364-3794, addressed concerns regarding policy GCCAA, staff sick leave.

When John Barry became Superintendent of APS, he spoke to us about a book by Stephen Covey entitled "First Things First." The author urges each of us to define what is truly important in life and make decisions based on it. Family is truly important. We took time out earlier this evening to celebrate the birth of a grandchild. We also took time out this evening to pledge our allegiance to the flag, which stands for liberty and justice for all. We should not limit our definition of family to a traditional sense. In classrooms, we talk about our classroom community and our classroom family. APS is our family and we must take care of our family members and not deny leave benefits to certain members. When we do that, we are taking a person's ability to talk about family and love the way that means the most to them. As an administrator and principal, I know that this

February 7, 2008

will cost money. As a school district and with VISTA 2010, we have set our sights high and we want to be the best school district in the nation. Being the best is not just about student achievement. It is about Picking Up the PACE and the first letter is "P" for people. I urge you to put first things first and take care of our people by including domestic partners and foster children in our definition of an APS family.

Chris Fleming, 2867 Syracuse St., Denver, 80238, addressed concerns regarding policy GCCAA, staff sick leave.

Fleming read a letter from Jim Hogan, instructional coordinator in APS. He requested that domestic partners be included in the definition of immediate family. He has worked in APS for 18 years and feels very lucky to have had experiences that can only occur in a district as diverse and challenging as Aurora. He is proud of his work in APS and is invigorated by the work he does for the district every day. He is discouraged to think that he would not be granted sick leave to care for his partner due to illness or an accident. There is no right more basic than to care for a loved one. I, and many other APS employees, deserve this right. Other metro school districts include domestic partners in their language definition of immediate family. APS can and should be taking the lead.

Fleming shared that most of our school leadership has participated in NISL, National Institute for School Leadership training. NISL has a unit that focuses on trust, climate and ethical leadership. It teaches that schools should be just, fair and caring communities. It further teaches that those actions should start with leadership. We have invested a lot of money in the training and we should not contradict it.

As school leaders, our dealings with employees should be respectful and caring. We must ensure our schools and communities are governed by a system of fairness. It would be hypocrisy for our Board not to model that same effort to build a just, fair and caring community. As a supervisor, I would find it difficult, if not impossible, to adhere to a policy that does not reflect a fair, just and caring community. I ask that you not put any of our school leadership in this position.

I am reminded of another book that Superintendent Barry spoke to us about entitled "Tipping Point" by Malcolm Gladwell. The book talks about how little things can make a big difference. I continue to believe that we are at a tipping point in APS. This may seem like a little thing to you, but it makes all the difference to some of our employees. People will work harder when their basic needs are met and they feel involved. This is an opportunity for the Board to do something little to help propel and move us forward.

Suzanne Morey, 10571 E. 28th Place, Denver, 80238, 720-270-7372, addressed concerns regarding policy GCCAA, staff sick leave.

Morey exclaimed what's right is right. What is the right thing to do to ensure all of our employees are treated fairly? Is it fair that a first-year teacher is able to take paid sick leave to care for an uncle, grandfather, mother or husband but another colleague who has been in the district for some time can not take paid time off to care for a lifetime partner? This does not feel right to me. It also does not feel right that a single parent who has opened up their heart to care for a foster child does not have the option of taking paid sick leave to care for that child. APS has put diversity at the heart of who we are and we state that it is part of our strength. We also say in policies and theories that we will not discriminate against any employee or student. In fact, the Board approved the discrimination policy

revision in November. Policy GBAA states that APS will not discriminate against anyone including for sexual orientation. When the Board approved the policy it was the right thing to do. Make the smart decision to ensure we have a competitive benefits package to attract the best teachers and employees for our district. This is the right thing for all employees and by doing this, we will not lose. Rewrite the policy to include domestic partners and foster children and add domestic partners as eligible dependents to our benefits package.

At the end of Superintendent Barry's e-mail is a quotation from John F. Kennedy and is relevant to this topic: "There are risks and cost to a program of action, but they are far less than the long range risks and cost of comfortable inaction."

Georgia Field, 747 Norfolk Way, Aurora, 303-341-0783, addressed concerns regarding policy GAA, monitoring of school district property.

Field is an APS volunteer, parent, taxpayer and former classified employee. She spoke on behalf of friends and many classified employees that did not want to speak for fear of retaliation.

We understand that all district policy and procedures need to be updated and evaluated periodically. However, it should be done systematically and all employees should be made aware of changes before approval. Tonight's review of classified policies shows a lack of "trust and teamwork," which is in direct conflict with the Superintendent's VISTA 2010 Plan. We are concerned that a few are being allowed too much decision making authority and the Board is not providing adequate direction.

Laurie Foster, 19127 E. Progress Ave., Centennial, 303-690-8880, addressed concerns regarding policy GAA, monitoring of school district property.

Foster is an art teacher at Kenton, district resource teacher and also serves on the AEA Board. She shared that the language in policy GAA is unclear and may be open to a wide range of interpretations without having specific parameters or procedures in place. She requested clarification on the following questions:

- What if the equipment being searched was purchased by a staff member? Many of us purchase equipment including file cabinets for our work space.
- What constitutes a school official? The policy does not clarify who a school official is.
- What does "as needed" mean in the policy? What are the guidelines?
- Could this be included in a staff member's evaluation?
- Will the staff member be notified that a search in their area was conducted?
- Will there be any written findings or documentation that a search will be done or has occurred?
- Can the staff member be present during the search?

Frank O'Hara, 7481 S. Clarkson St., Centennial, addressed concerns regarding GCCAG, staff leave of absence.

Over the years, there has been a change of practice regarding leave of absence without pay. The district has tightened the reins in that area and less leaves without pay have been granted. Some examples presented by Donovan were perfectly appropriate to tighten up. However, there are some other areas that the language should be given more flexibility. One example would be a teacher who

wanted to take leave to pursue a master's course, return to school or needed time off for burn out. These are the types of areas in the past that the district has been more accommodating to provide leave. In the current language, those leaves could still be approved due to "extraordinary circumstances." The term extraordinary is problematic and needs to be clarified.

O'Hara also addressed concerns with policy GCQF, discipline, suspension and dismissal of non-licensed administrators and professional technical employees. In this district, we have teachers who get frustrated and may resign on the spot due to a difficult, emotional situation. If a resignation is written during a stressful period, there is a grace period before the Board acts upon the resignation. If a resignation is given to the Superintendent, will there be a grace period to give a teacher an opportunity to think through a decision made during a stressful period?

Lee Ann Gott, 16695 E. Tennessee Ave., Aurora, 80017, 720-427-2623, shared support for colleagues who expressed concerns regarding policy GCCAA, staff sick leave and include domestic partners and foster children in policy language.

Gott expressed concerns regarding policy GAA, monitoring of school district property. She shared that when she became aware of policy GAA in November, she was informed it was a common policy in many school districts and was a matter of safety, specifically if an employee was in possession of a dangerous weapon. She completed research to determine if similar policies were in place in more than a dozen districts in Colorado and the nation including Denver, Jefferson County, Cherry Creek, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles and New York. She found policies in regard to monitoring and inspecting of student private property that specified who could inspect and under what circumstances. She did not find a similar personnel policy regarding monitoring and inspection of employee property. If there were a reasonable suspicion that an APS employee was in possession of a weapon or a threat to safety, public law enforcement should be contacted, not just school officials. Is there a reason to suspect APS employees are more likely to present a threat to safety than school employees in other districts? This policy is an attempt to set up extraordinary expectations that APS employees have no rights to privacy in the workplace. We are expected to lock our personal property inside of district property at school sites. This leaves open the possibility that an employee's personal property could be inspected. I ask that the Board consider this as an unnecessary policy that undermines the policy of "trust and teamwork."

Cook asked Donovan to address concerns in regard to policy GCCAA to include foster children and domestic partners in policy language. Donovan shared that the definition of immediate family in the current Master Agreement includes "or other relatives living in the immediate household of the teacher." Allen confirmed that the policy is interpreted to include foster children. Donovan will specify that foster children be included in policy language. He asked that it be addressed through contract negotiations of the Master Agreement.

In regard to policy GAA, Donovan explained that the search needs to be limited in both reason and in scope. Most of the concerns will be addressed on a case by case basis. The definition of a school official would be a school administrator.

The term "as needed" was intentionally ambiguous. For maximum legal protection, we are stating not to keep anything in the work place that you do not want found. If a search is conducted it will not be included in an employee's evaluation. Documentation of the search could be provided and an attempt to

have the employee present could be arranged. In some cases, an employee may be put on leave and would not be present during a search.

This is not a common policy as stated in an earlier statement. This policy will provide APS with added legal protection. Law enforcement will be contacted if time permits.

In regard to policy GCCAA, Allen explained that it depends on the length and circumstance of the request for leave. We have many employees who participate in a master's program or other learning opportunities after work hours. An employee can take a short-term leave for 30 days for health reasons without Board approval. A doctor's excuse would have to be provided. Each application is reviewed and approval is granted on a case-by-case basis.

In regard to policy GCQE, if a teacher resigns under pressure, we would consider re-employment. In cases of employee misconduct, a resignation could be accepted on the spot and it would alleviate further financial obligations from the district. Cukale requested that a distinction be included in policy language. Donovan explained that a distinction can be included, but we would like to maintain administrative flexibility to determine an employee's status after a resignation. Cook agreed that policies usually contain ambiguous language.

Prince asked that "extraordinary circumstance" be changed to "justifiable" in policy GCCAA.

Barber shared that policy GAA smacks of homeland security and employee civil rights are being eroded. We do not need that in APS. In regard to GCCAA, many people voiced concerns and I agree with many of the comments from staff. In regard to GCQF, the Board of Education provides "checks and balances" for employees. This will not occur if we turn this over to the administration.

Lewis would be comfortable with policy GCQF if the employee could change their mind in a stressful situation. Donovan explained that policy language could be changed to add "at the administrator's discretion."

Carmany agreed with Barber in regard to comments regarding policy GAA. We do not need this in APS. She also proposed that the Board not deal with policy GCCAA until after negotiations so they have time to add language to include step kids, foster kids and significant others. She also requested that policy language be revised in policies GCCAF and policies GCQF be deleted. It is the responsibility of the Board to approve resignations via the consent agenda.

Cukale and Edberg also requested that the definition of immediate family be revised and domestic partners and foster children be included in language.

Cook asked that clarification be provided on policies and be presented as information on Feb. 19.

Cook moved and Prince seconded to table information agenda items B1 and F1 to a future Board meeting.

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Edberg, Lewis, Prince #7963

Approved on a vote of 7-0

New America Charter Renewal

February 7, 2008

Donovan invited Dominic DiFelice, superintendent of the New America School, to the staff table to present information in regard to the New America Charter Renewal.

DiFelice shared that the New America School is seeking a three-year renewal. He shared that the application was not submitted in time and thanked the Board for considering the late renewal request.

More than 63 percent of student at New America School are over 18 years of age and it is their last chance to obtain a high school diploma. Most of the students will get two or three years of English acquisition even if they do not receive a diploma. More of the students are minorities; 91 percent are Hispanic. In most cases, a significant interruption has occurred in their education; they have very few credits and are working below grade level. About 42 percent of students have been in the country less than three years and more than 50 percent have been in the country for five or fewer years.

More than 93 percent of our kids are English language learners and out of the statistic, 54 percent are non English proficient. About 30 percent are limited English proficient. More than 51 percent of New America School students live outside of our attendance boundaries. Eighty-five percent of the students are considered high risk by state calculations. Twenty-four percent are parents or pregnant women.

Eighty-five percent of our students that attend 75 percent of the time show one year's growth on the CELA test. We have interventions in place to ensure our students have credits necessary to move to grade level and eventually graduate.

Our greatest challenge is our mobility rate and we are starting to show improvement. At the end of second quarter of this year, we are holding 71 percent of our kids.

We are looking at a first language assessment to test our student's literacy level in their native language next year. We also will have our students take a math and science MAP test in order to provide a better baseline for teachers. Students also receive personal interviews to determine backgrounds, language and risk levels. We have introduced common assessments to determine how students are doing with teacher instructional methods.

The CELA results from last year indicate that 53 percent of our students showed one year's growth. We were two students short of meeting the state's target goals.

The New America School provides a day and night schedule for students. Students can start classes from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. We have a four-day school week so students can work part-time jobs if necessary. We provide a \$200 per child, per month reimbursement for students with kids. They must attend class and maintain a C average to qualify for the reimbursement. We provide an extensive ESL course offering for students. Our staff is committed to New America School and they welcome the diversity it provides.

Cook asked DiFelice to explain how staff missed the renewal deadline.

DiFelice explained that we dropped the ball. It was not part of our compliance target because we were unaware. We contacted Donovan to ask about the

process and were informed that we had missed the deadline. He requested that we complete a renewal package for the Board to consider.

Cukale asked how behavioral issue would be addressed. DiFelice replied that we have assigned a dean of students to look at attendance and behavioral issues. Given our demographics, more than 25 percent of our students have behavioral issues. We deal with our attendance and security concerns. Campus security and staff are in place to address concerns.

Lewis asked how many students were enrolled at the New America School. DiFelice shared that about 465 students attend New America School.

Cook asked about the current role of Jared Polis in the New America School system. DiFelice replied that he has replaced Mr. Polis as superintendent of the New America School. Polis was recently elected as a board member.

Cook asked DiFelice to explain a transfer of \$475,000 to their parent organization. DiFelice asked Craig Cook, chief of business operations, to explain the transfer of funds. Cook shared that the transfer occurred over a period of two years. In the fall of 2006, we implemented a number of changes in the accounting practices and put in some internal controls. When we receive a bill, I review it first and send it to the principal for approval. When it is returned, it is coded, entered, and returned to me for final approval. No one person has control of the checkbook. Duties have been segregated and reviewed by external auditors.

Over the course of two years, the previous contract accountant moved cash from the Lowry Campus to the parent group. The fund was unrestricted and unbalanced. The New America School is a system of campuses. When I saw how this was handled, I asked BKD to help us straighten out accounting records and record the movement of unrestricted fund balances. The unrestricted fund balance was used for expansion purposes in Jeffco and Eagle as well as other expenses within our school system.

Cook thanked the presenters. This item will be submitted for action on February 19.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

Accreditation Report

Tabled

DIVISION OF FINANCE

No Items

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

No Items

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

No Items

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

District Athletics and Activities Report

Tabled

Construction Update

Sturges invited Jim Bittle, director of construction management and support, and Nancy Williams, principal of Quest K-8, and Rob Schmedeke, director of transportation, to the table to provide a construction update to the Board. Williams will provide an instructional update of Aurora Quest K-8 and Schmedeke will provide a transportation update for students scheduled to attend Aurora Quest K-8.

Bittle updated the Board on the following construction projects:

- Quest K-8 building is 57 percent complete
- Structural floor on the first floor of the classroom addition at Rangeview is down
- Boston Elementary replacement project is 42 percent complete
- The Intercept/Transition building project began in October and is not as far along as the other structures – a recognizable structure and roof is in place

All four projects are scheduled to be completed in June. We had delays on the Quest K-8 due to issues regarding the property deed when it was received from Buckley Air Force Base. We had delays at Boston due to the City of Aurora's approval process. The Boston, Quest, and Rangeview projects are all on budget. We have the potential budget issues regarding the Transition/Intercept program due to asbestos found on the site. We may need to request additional funds from the Board to complete the project.

Architects from RTA and MOA have been selected for the new high school, which the Board authorized in October. This is the same group that did the Hinkley remodel. We have selected a different architect, Slater, Paul and RBB, for the design of the P-8 school. Slater, Paul has completed several projects for the district including the Peoria Elementary design, and RBB is from Fort Collins and is responsible for several elementary school designs in the Poudre Valley School District. A design advisory group of teachers and community members has been formed for both the high school and P-8 school. .

Amy Spatz will review the master plan for the 100-acre site where the high school and P-8 school will be built at the next meeting.

Aurora Quest K-8

Nancy Williams, principal of Aurora Quest K-8, thanked staff for all their work and efforts over the past two years.

They reviewed the application review process. We have a committee of nine consisting mostly of teachers that have reviewed 471 applications over a period of five days. Our cutoff date was in December. We have accepted 178 applications but numbers are expected to increase due to applications received but need to have more information. We currently have 240 students. We have received 50 applications for kindergartners. We are in the process of determining protocol for our kindergarten students.

We have worked with a consultant in regard to professional development, acceleration and flexible grouping as part of our program design. We want to work on developing community service projects for next year and integrate independent learning activities into the curriculum. We will have foreign language and our primary students will be able to participate in the course. We want to expand in the fine arts area beyond art and physical education to incorporate all the talents of our students. Integrated technology will be incorporated in all classrooms as they work on projects.

We will continue to use interim assessment and evaluation, but we also plan to implement portfolios to provide more authenticity to parents and give them a better understanding of student progress and grades.

We have a full-time counselor and we will be developing career options with students for high school and beyond.

Lewis requested the overall capacity for Aurora Quest K-8. Williams replied that the school will accommodate 600 students. We will process more applications in March or April. We are close to our projection. Lewis asked how many students have applied from outside the district. Williams replied that 80 students have applied from outside the district.

Schmedeke shared that we will be working together to bus students from different areas in the district. Satellite pick up points will be added in different quadrants in the district.

Cook thanked all of the presenters.

III. CONSENT AGENDA - ACTION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

No Items

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

No Items

DIVISION OF FINANCE

No Items

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Classified Personnel

Licensed Personnel

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

No Items

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

No Items

Cukale moved and Lewis seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Edberg, Lewis, Prince #7964

Approved on a vote of 6-1

Barber voted not to approve the consent agenda.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

No Items

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

No Items

DIVISION OF FINANCE

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Transition Program

Allen shared that there was no specific recommendation after the discussion from the January 22 Board meeting regarding the employee transition program.

Frank O'Hara shared that the Board received a survey from teachers regarding the transition program. Veteran teachers who are close to retirement look at the program as a benefit of service. Many area districts have an early retirement program and we will be in a minority if the program is eliminated.

Cook commented that the district has had the transition program traditionally for nine years. The Board decides two years in advance if the program will continue. We could determine at a later date to bring the program back.

Allen explained that the Board can re-visit the decision to reinstate the program in December if it is not approved to continue.

Cook moved and Cukale seconded to withdraw the employee transition program effective for the 2009-10 school year with the intent to revisit it in December if the budget allows.

Carmany shared that this is a valuable program that allows experienced teachers to work with new teachers.

Cook shared that PERA is a valuable retirement plan. The transition program is a benefit when we can afford it.

Lewis shared that veteran teachers should be helping teachers. This is a recognition of service. We have to put money in the classroom to help students.

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Edberg, Lewis, Prince #7965

February 7, 2008

Approved on a vote of 4-3

Barber, Carmany, and Prince voted against the motion to withdraw the employee transition program.

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

No Items

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

No Items

IV. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Opportunity for Audience

Correspondence

Next meeting date

The next business meeting of the Board of Education will be held February 19, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the Dr. Edward and Patricia Lord Boardroom.

Adjournment

The regular meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

President

ATTEST

Secretary