

I. **PRELIMINARY**

Carmany called the December 2, 2008, meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

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

The following member was absent:

Judith Edberg, director

Also meeting with the Board of Education were:

John L. Barry, superintendent of schools
Tony Van Gytenbeek, deputy superintendent
Lisa Escárcega, chief accountability and research officer
Rod Weeks, chief finance 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

Carmany led the Board and audience in the pledge to the flag. She then welcomed visitors to the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

The December 2, 2008, agenda was approved as written.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the regular meetings of the Board of Education held November 11, 2008, and November 18, 2008, were approved as written.

Student Performance

The Aurora Central High School Trojanaires, under the direction of Donella Iverson, performed two musical selections at the December 2 Board meeting. Barry presented Iverson with a Superintendent recognition coin for her leadership of the talented musical ensemble.

Opportunity for Audience

Silvia Marquez, 906 Macon Street, 303-367-1116, addressed the Board in regard to security and safety at APS schools.

Marquez shared that 12 parents formed a committee to review safety and security at district schools. The committee met with city officials who presented information on what was important in regard to security and safety at school sites. Twelve schools were targeted for security efforts as a result of research. The overall goal and focus of the committee is to have security measures at more APS schools. Peoria Elementary now has flashing lights as a result of the committee's efforts.

The parent committee met with Jay Pierce, senior planner with the city of Aurora, and Joshua Hensley, planning coordinator, who suggested that information be shared with the Board. Marquez invited Board members to the monthly parent meeting held in Hoffman Heights to hear information about security and safety at school sites. Jose Paz, coordinator of language services, provides interpreting services for the parent group. Marquez concluded that any resources that the Board could provide to help with the committee's endeavors would be appreciated.

II. INFORMATION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Reports from the Board of Education

Barber attended a performance at Virginia Court in which fifth grade students did a dance from the Philippines. Becky McGurk, music teacher, and Jack Hubbell, physical education teacher, hold a performance for each grade level at least once a year. They both do an amazing job and should be commended.

Prince had a chance to tour the technical services building with Jason Braddy, technical services manager. She thanked Braddy and the technical services staff for the tour.

Prince noted student artwork on the wall in the boardroom. She thanked students that provided artwork and teachers that organized the display.

Items of Current Interest

Barry shared that the APS Board of Education approved two proposals to create two new Pilot Schools in APS. Fletcher Elementary School, currently a K-5, will open in the 2009-10 school year as two separate schools sharing the same facility: Fletcher Primary School (grades K-3) and Fletcher Intermediate Science and Technology School (grades 4-8). Please join our celebration on Wednesday, December 3 at Fletcher Elementary School at 10 a.m.

Congratulations to Crawford Elementary School for meeting the Superintendent's reading challenge. Every student read 25 books. This is the second year in a row that every Crawford classroom has met this challenge. The school celebrated with a pizza party sponsored by the Aurora Public Schools Education Foundation.

Congratulations to Kenton Elementary School Physical Education Teacher Donna Carey for earning the "Colorado Dance Educator of the Year" award by the Colorado Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

Each year Carey organizes a winter musical program that showcases the musical and dance talents of approximately 300 students. The program is always a big hit with parents and community members. Carey also organizes the annual Read, Run and Race Field day, a two-day event for K-5 students where each station is based on a piece of literature. In addition, she co-hosted the first ever art, music and physical education In-service for APS and has presented at numerous district In-services on how to best incorporate dance into the curriculum.

We thank Carey for her dedication to our students, staff and community and for creating a safe environment where students feel free to enjoy expression through movement. She has demonstrated the importance of quality physical education, and has taught students and staff that dance is a life-long activity resulting in a healthy lifestyle that has the power to bring people together.

Vista 2010 Update

People

Allen provided an update on highly qualified requirements for teachers and instructional support classified staff. Data is collected throughout the fall and submitted to the Colorado Department of Education on December 1 of each year. Data collected from the 2007-08 school year showed that 98.4 percent of teachers were highly qualified and 98.34 percent of instructional support classified staff were highly qualified. For the past two years, CDE has reported percentages of highly qualified teachers in high to low poverty schools and compared data to the state average. APS has beaten the state average of highly qualified teachers in high poverty schools for the last two years. Approximately 98.55 percent of highly qualified teachers work in high poverty schools in APS compared to the state average of 96.98 percent.

We offer a five course training program to meet highly qualified requirements for new paraprofessionals and educational assistants. Each course has three to four class meetings and classified employees receive foundation training to support instruction in APS as well as literacy, math and reading. Classified instructional support employees are assessed and must demonstrate proficiency levels equivalent of two years of college before being deemed highly qualified. APS is one of the few districts that provide this type of instruction. We feel it is the right direction to ensure our staff is highly qualified.

Carmany asked what the most difficult positions to fill were. Allen replied that special education, high school math, science and ELA were the most difficult positions to fill.

Barber asked if NCLB training for classified support staff was in-house and whether we had qualified instructors. Allen shared that we contract with retired teachers and part time teachers to provide NCLB training. We are also planning to revise our diverse learners course to incorporate diversity training that is being developed by school services.

Achievement

Stuart reviewed Action 44: Meet annual measurable achievement objectives for English language learners. The AMAO is an academic indicator of achievement that we are required to report on. Our three targeted goals were to increase the

number of ELL students who scored advanced on the CELA test by 60 percent; increase the percentage of students who become proficient in English; and make adequate yearly progress. We met goals one and two but we did not make AYP. We are expecting similar results this year.

Community

Escarcega reviewed Action 64: Increase the number of home visits by 10 percent annually. The objective has changed in that we are no longer asking teachers to make home visits. Home visits will now be conducted by district truancy specialists. The metric is to increase home visits by 10 percent annually. During the October Count period, truancy specialists made 226 home visits; 53 home visits were made prior to the October Count. Our goal is to increase home visits by 55 this year. In the 2007-08 school year, we made 339 home visits. We have developed a home visit guide for staff and training has begun with administrative staff on protocol and guidelines for home visits. We have asked school sites to make this an ongoing task and are working with them to support a large scale home visit initiative at the beginning of the year.

Environment

Sturges invited Joshua Hensley, planning coordinator, to the staff table to review student enrollment projections in the E-470 corridor. Hensley reviewed a graph of actual and total projected student enrollment growth in new developments along the E-470 corridor. We have been tracking three potential scenarios through 2010 and anticipate a slowdown based on housing data collected. In 2010, the scenarios begin to diverge and student enrollment growth would most likely be on a smaller scale. The next update will be more conservative based on economic and housing needs. New home construction in the E-470 corridor has slowed but the city of Aurora continues to issue building permits at the same rate as the previous year.

Lewis asked if student enrollment projections were for the E-470 corridor only. Hensley replied that students living in new housing developments such as Buckley, Conservatory, Traditions, Cross Creek and Murphy Creek were included in projections. In 2003, we had 23 students living in the E-470 corridor; we now have 1,100 students living in the area.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

No Items

DIVISION OF FINANCE

Mill Levy Certification

Weeks shared that prior to December 15 of each year, local boards of education are required to certify the number of legally allowable mills to the respective counties' board of commissioners.

- August 25 – county assessors certify to each school district the total assessed valuation and actual value of taxable property in the district.
- December 10 – county assessors have until this date to make and communicate final changes in assessed valuations to school districts.
- December 15 – last date that school boards are required to certify mill

levies to county commissioners in Adams and Arapahoe counties.

- The Board will be asked to approve final mill levy figures on Thursday, December 11.

The components of the mill include a general fund mill and a bond fund mill. Components within the general fund include the standard mill, credit/abatement mill and the override mill.

- Standard Mill: certified by CDE, generates the property tax revenue portion of the total program revenue for school districts as part of the School Finance Act of 1994, frozen at 26.010 by 2007 legislation
- We are looking at a ruling in December to determine if the 26.010 figure would remain the same. If the ruling has not taken place by December 11, the 26.010 figure would remain the same and we would ask the Board to certify.
- Credit/Abatement Mill: increases tax revenues in subsequent years to reimburse districts for lost revenues due to decreased assessed valuations granted by the counties.
- Override Mill: approved by voters in 1990 and generates \$7,639,028 of tax revenue.
- Override Mill: approved by voters in 2008 and generates \$14,700,000 of tax revenue.

The other component of the total mill is the bond fund. APS has been able to take care of capital needs without increasing the tax rate. Mills have generated necessary revenues to make scheduled principal and interest payments on all outstanding debt. Jim Bittle and Steve Bell and staff provide debt schedules, structures and maturities when bonds are sold in order to pay off outstanding debt.

Funds are calculated on a total basis in Adams and Arapahoe counties and mill numbers are the same for both counties. Funds that are generated from both counties are different because assessed valuation amounts in the counties are different. The assessed valuation for Adams County is \$500 million and generates \$31 million in tax revenues. The assessed valuation for Arapahoe County is \$1.2 billion and generates \$68 million in tax revenues. The 2009 mill levy override amount has been added for both counties to equal \$14.7 million. A comparison table from the previous year showed an increase of 7.731 percent from 2008 to 2009 and a 1.8 increase in assessed valuation due to new construction and valuations on existing APS properties.

The impact on homeowners as a result of the 2009 mill levy is a 7.731 mill increase on a \$200,000 home equating to approximately \$123 in additional school taxes than the prior year, \$725 to \$848.

Final assessed valuation figures from both counties will be available on December 11 when this item is returned for action.

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Employee Transition for the 2009-10 School Year

Allen shared that the Board had an opportunity to review data in regard to the employee transition program last year. Information was recently updated and provided to the Board for review. For the last several years, we offered transition to employees who planned to retire and participation numbers have been fairly

consistent. This year, employee participation numbers increased most likely due to last year's decision by the Board to discontinue transition in the 2009-10 school year. At that time, the Board asked to revisit the employee transition program in December to reconfirm the decision. Sixty-six employees participated in the program and decided to retire and transition this year.

Part of the reason that the Board determined to discontinue the transition program in 2009-10 was due to budget concerns and cuts that have occurred over the past two years. Reports from the finance department indicate that the district still has some recovery in regard to the budget and it will take time to rebuild reserves.

The recommendation is that the Board confirm its decision to not offer the employee transition program for the 2009-10 school year and to discontinue the employee transition program until district finances rebound. This item will return for action on December 11.

Lewis asked why some employees chose to rescind their retirement. Allen replied that individual circumstances vary. Some employees rescind their retirement in order to skip the transition year and just retire. Everyone who participates in the transition program is retired.

Prince asked if time lines had been established for employees who wanted to rescind their retirement. Allen replied that the deadline to apply for retirement is March; the deadline to rescind is June 30.

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

No Items

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

2008-09 K-12 Enrollment Update

Sturges invited Josh Hensley, planning coordinator, to the staff table to present information on 2008-09 K-12 student enrollment projections. Hensley reviewed a graph of total K-12 enrollments in traditional schools from 2000 to 2008. In the first half of the decade, student enrollment grew at a fairly consistent predictable rate. In 2005, we saw a significant jump in student enrollment. In the past two years, we have seen significant enrollment declines of more than 1,000 students. In the 2007-08 school year, we saw our largest decline of student enrollment in 30 years of data recordkeeping. Our current student enrollment level is similar to 2002 and we grew by 452 students.

Last November, we saw significant declines in student enrollment. Information from charter schools indicated that student enrollment had increased and declines would be worse than in previous years. As a result, we projected a decline of 600 students. We were over projections by 1,052 students with most of the growth occurring at the elementary and high school levels. Two general factors for increased student growth include program and marketing changes as well as the overall economy. About 33 percent of growth occurred at the kindergarten level and we grew by 167 students. Over nine percent of the district's student population is at the kindergarten level.

Year to year stability graphs showed growth for students who were enrolled in APS in May of the previous year but were not present for the October Count.

Data showed that 348 less students left APS than in the previous year. This year, new student enrollment, excluding kindergarten students, increased by 452 students. The increase of stability and new student enrollments may be due to the economy in that trends suggest that people stay put during a tight economy and housing market. Hensley reviewed a graph showing percentages of rental properties in three metropolitan areas including Denver, Aurora and Cherry Creek. APS has a significant number of rental properties compared to other districts. In a tight housing market and tough economy, metropolitan areas that have a high number of rental units become more attractive to families.

Charter school enrollments increased by 682 students this year. Approximately 447 students who were enrolled in a district school in May elected to enroll in a charter school as indicated on October 1. Charter student enrollments were a bigger impact on the district this year than the previous year. The number of students that left the district to attend schools in other metropolitan school districts has also doubled. Trends resulting in decreased enrollments are still occurring in APS and we have to continue to plan for a worst case scenario.

Hensley reviewed a graph of changing enrollments over the course of the year. Enrollment changes dramatically in APS from month to month but in December 2007, student enrollment stabilized more than the previous year. Growth along the E-470 corridor is growing and we are projecting steady growth in new housing developments.

Barry noted that student enrollment decreased by 600 students as projected. We gained more than 1,000 students and were 452 students over projections. The projections made in order to meet finance requirements from last year were proven. Our truancy efforts, promoting and marketing our school district and the increased rental market helped increase student enrollment.

Prince commented about the need to increase marketing to promote middle schools. This is a time when parents start losing control and kids become more independent. We must find ways to keep nervous middle school parents involved at the middle school level.

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

Non-Licensed Administrative and Professional/Technical Personnel

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

No Items

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

No Items

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

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Lewis, Prince #8051

Approved on a vote of 6-0

IV. ACTION ITEMS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

No Items

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

No Items

DIVISION OF FINANCE

General Obligation Bonds, Series 2008

Weeks shared that the Board was provided information concerning the sale of General Obligation (GO) Bonds, Series 2008 at the November 18, 2008, Board meeting. This resolution and related documents authorizes the district to sell newly authorized GO Bonds in the amount of \$150 million to complete a significant portion of the projects identified in the Capital Improvement Plan approved by the voters on November 4, 2008. This resolution also authorizes and approves various documents associated with the sale of the bonds such as the Bond Purchase Agreement, the Registrar and Paying Agent Agreement, and the Continuing Disclosure Certificate.

The recommendation is that the Board approve the General Obligation (GO) Bonds, Series 2008 Resolution as presented.

Cukale moved and Carmany seconded to approve the General Obligation (GO) Bonds, Series 2008 Resolution as presented.

Cook asked if bonds could be sold in the marketplace in smaller portions. Steven Bell shared the issue is currently sized at \$150 million and is driven by market conditions. We could sell the bonds in smaller portions but the current plan is sized at \$150 million.

Bell shared that the resolution authorizes the districts to sell the bonds; authorizes terms and conditions of the bond; and authorizes the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer to approve the sell when it occurs.

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Lewis, Prince #8052

Approved on a vote of 6-0

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

No Items

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 December 11, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the Dr. Edward and Mrs. Patricia Lord Boardroom.

Adjournment

Cook moved that the Board recess into executive session, under the authority of C.R.S. §24-6-402(b) to discuss the Superintendent's contract renewal. Barber moved and Prince seconded to recess into executive session.

The regular meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

President

ATTEST _____

Secretary