I. Call To Order

   A. Pledge of Allegiance

       Members of the Board of Education and the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

   B. Roll Call

       President Elaine Gantz Berman called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: Ms. Elaine Gantz Berman, Mrs. Susan G. Edwards, Rev. Lucia Guzman, Mrs. Michelle Moss, Mr. Kevin Patterson, and Mr. Lester Woodward. Mr. James Mejía was absent and excused.

SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS

Superintendent Jerry Wartgow said that he was pleased to welcome Sally Mentor Hay, the district’s new interim Chief Academic Officer. He said that Ms. Hay came to the district with a very impressive background, including serving as an Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for the California Department of Education, as Chief Executive Officer of her own firm, and as Senior Fellow with the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh.

He also re-introduced Darlene LeDoux, Assistant Superintendent for School-Community Partnerships, who attended her first Board meeting since officially undertaking her duties in the Denver Public Schools. He said that Ms. LeDoux was a principal in the Denver Public Schools several years ago before moving to the Cherry Creek school district, where she served as a principal and Director of Human Resources.

STUDENT BOARD OF EDUCATION

Ms. Gantz Berman introduced Jeff Krumpton, Student Board of Education Representative from the Fred N. Thomas Career Education Center.
C. Recognition

1. National Girls and Women in Sports Day

Mrs. Edwards read the following Proclamation into the record:

Whereas, although the history of women in sports is rich and long, there must be more recognition of the significance of women’s athletic achievements to serve as encouragement and motivation for women in athletics; and

Whereas, women’s athletics is one of the most effective avenues available through which women of America may develop self-discipline, initiative, confidence, and leadership skills; and

Whereas, the bonds built between women through athletics help to break down the social barriers of racism and prejudice; and

Whereas, parents feel that sports are equally important for boys and girls, and that sports and fitness activities provide important benefits to girls and women who participate; and

Whereas, our school district is committed to equal opportunities and equal access in all fields and aspects of our society; and

Whereas, as today’s young female athletes develop into tomorrow’s leaders, the lessons they learn on the playing field will serve as a lifelong guide;

Now, therefore, be it proclaimed that the Board of Education of School District No. 1 in the City and County of Denver and the State of Colorado join with the Governor of Colorado in recognizing February 6, 2002, as National Girls and Women in Sports Day.

Mrs. Edwards said that the Board of Education wished to recognize one female athlete from each of the district’s high schools, who were selected by the staff in their schools for recognition of their exemplary performance as athletes and scholars. The following students were honored:

- **Wendy Madrigal, Abraham Lincoln High School** – Wendy has been an outstanding student and athlete at Abraham Lincoln, lettering in softball, track, and golf, and participating in basketball. She has also played competitive softball for five years. During her athletic career at Abraham Lincoln, she has received All-League Honorable Mention in her sophomore year and made Second All-League Team during her junior and senior years. She carries a 3.0 grade point average and ranks 68th in a class of 220 students. She has been part of the pre-collegiate program for
four years, and plans to attend Arapahoe Community College to become an emergency medical technician.

- **Dena Miller, East High School** – As a senior, Dena has been a starting varsity player on both the lacrosse and field hockey teams, and has consistently been one of the leading scorers in the state in lacrosse. She has represented Colorado in several national tournaments and has been named to the state All-Star Team every year. This year in field hockey, she was the third leading scorer in the state, and scored the only goal in the state All-Star game, leading her team to a 1-0 victory. She ranked 11th in her class with a 4.84 grade point average. Dena also sings in the Angelaires Jazz Choir, is a member of the Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Club and the National Honor Society, and serves as a student mentor. Next year, she plans to attend Tufts University and play lacrosse.

- **Johnna Glassman, George Washington High School** – Johnna is a true leader who always exhibits good sportsmanship. She carries a 3.57 grade point average and has played basketball and soccer for the past four years, lettering in basketball for two years and soccer for all four years. She has worked as a tutor in mathematics, helping freshman students succeed. She balances academics and athletics while maintaining a part-time job.

- **Jaclyn Leyba, John F. Kennedy High School** – Jaclyn’s participation in softball for four years has earned her participation in the First Team All-League for three of those years. Despite an injury early in the season this year, she did not relinquish her status as an inspirational leader for her team both on and off the field. She was chosen to participate in the Colorado Rockies’ RBI Program, which promotes softball and baseball for inner-city youth. This year, Jaclyn was elected All-School President and her dedication to improving John F. Kennedy High School, as well as the district, led her to give more than 300 hours of volunteer community service. All these activities occurred simultaneous to her maintaining a 3.8 grade point average.

- **Tishelle Brown, Manual High School** – Captain of the “Lady Bolts” basketball team at Manual, Tishelle is an all-around student athlete. She ranks in the top ten of her class with a 3.8 cumulative grade point average, and is starting point guard for the girls’ varsity basketball team. She averaged 17.5 points per game last season and helps to teach plays to younger players, demonstrating a positive attitude that sets the tone for the team. She has lettered in basketball for three years, in tennis for two years, and in track for one year, with plans to compete in track this spring. She participates in Colorado Uplift and the Youth Opportunity Program. Tishelle plans to study biology in college and hopes to play college basketball.
• **Victoria Norris, Montbello High School** – As a senior, Victoria ranks 72nd out of 181 students, with a grade point average of 2.5. She is on the volleyball, basketball, and track teams at Montbello, and was named Most Valuable Player in basketball during her sophomore year. She has been a member of Future Business Leaders of America and has been involved in Odyssey of the Mind. In her spare time, she has volunteered at a basketball camp to help children develop their basketball skills, and has been involved in a variety of neighborhood improvement projects. Victoria is also on the Student Board of Directors for the Burt Foundation.

• **Sarah Haas, North High School** – Sarah has been involved in a number of activities at North and has received three varsity letters in field hockey and two in swimming, while serving as Captain of both teams this year. She is an accomplished musician, participating in both concert and marching band for four years. This year, she served as Band Council Secretary and auditions for, and was accepted to, the All-State Symphonic Band. Her coaches say that she is a “coach’s dream” due to her leadership and character.

• **Annette Isham, South High School** – Annette is involved with South’s Academy of Finance, a nationally recognized curriculum. In the fall, she will be attending the University of Richmond on a soccer scholarship and is currently a leader on and off the athletic field. She is in the top ten percent of her class and her athletic honors include All-League in cross country, lettering in basketball and soccer, and making the All-League Team, First Team in State, and First Team in All-Colorado in soccer.

• **Stacy West, Thomas Jefferson High School** – To be considered an outstanding athlete at Thomas Jefferson, one must also excel in academics, citizenship, and extra-curricular activities. Stacy has participated in cross country and doubles girls’ tennis for four years, and in swimming for one year. Upon graduation, she will have earned nine letters in those sports. She has a cumulative grade point average of 3.925; ranks 16th in her class; is a member of the National Honor Society, Student Council, and the yearbook staff as editor of photography. She has played the violin for more than eight years and plays with the Colorado Youth Symphony Orchestra. Stacy plans to attend college and study law and government.

• **Emily Arbogast, West High School** – Emily ranks seventh in her class of 240 students with a grade point average of 4.445. In athletics, this year she will complete four years of high school soccer, volleyball, and swimming, and has served as Team Captain for all three sports this year. She has also participated on West’s stage crew for four years; Student Council for four years, where she now serves as Vice President; and four years with West Works, performing community service. She plans to
The name of each student athlete who is the recipient of this award is .

Mrs. Edwards said that it was a pleasure to be able to honor these extraordinary young women, who have served as examples of the level of quality of student athletes in the Denver Public Schools. She wished them well and expressed pride on behalf of the district at their accomplishments.

She introduced Leslie Moore, Director of Athletics and Student Activities, along with Christine Bullard and Bob Ottowell, Commissioner for the Colorado High School Athletics Association (CHSAA). She said that Mr. Ottowell has served on CHSAA for twelve years and that he would be retiring at the end of the school year. She thanked him for his service and wished him well on behalf of the Denver Public Schools.

Mrs. Edwards explained that Ms. Bullard is the Director of Athletics for Jefferson County Schools and that she nominated Ms. Moore for a national award, which Ms. Moore won. Ms. Bullard stated that the National Federation for High School Associations is the organization that oversees athletics and activities on a national level and that Mr. Ottowell, as Commissioner of CHSAA, works very closely with that organization, as they provide the rules by which games are played and work with officials, as well as being involved in such areas as music, drama, forensics, and speech.

Ms. Bullard said that the award presented to Ms. Moore must be initiated through a state association, and that the Colorado Athletics Directors Association placed her in nomination to the national federation. She gave the federation’s description of the award as follows:

Each year, the National Federation of State High School Associations presents citations to outstanding administrators in recognition of their contribution to interscholastic athletics at the local, state, and national level. Only eight individuals are recognized across the nation and nominations must come from state associations. The eight individuals represent one of the eight sections that the nation is divided into. Colorado is included in Section Six, along with Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Ms. Bullard said that Ms. Moore’s nomination placed her in competition with other Section Six nominees and that it was quite a feat for her to beat anyone from Texas in the area of athletics. She said that the awards were presented at a lavish ceremony, which was the culmination of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association conference held in Florida in December.

She said that Ms. Moore is very deserving of this great award, as she serves as a role model for athletic directors throughout the state and region. The last
Coloradoan to win the award, she said, was Robert Conklin, who founded the association, and won the award in the 1970s.

Mr. Ottowell added his congratulations to Ms. Moore and said that CHSAA had long known of her talent and accomplishments long before she was presented with the award. He explained that Ms. Moore was CHSAA’s first female president, serving in that position from 1996 through 1998. He said that she was an effective president and had been very helpful to him, as Commissioner. Naming Ms. Moore president, she said, was a strong indication of the respect that CHSAA holds for the Athletic Department of Denver Public Schools, which is looked upon throughout the state as a model of what such a program should be.

He said that he has spend a lot of his final year as Commissioner watching sporting events in and around the area and that he particularly enjoys watching events in the Denver Public Schools because of the quality of the competition and the welcome that he gets from everyone involved in these events. He provided data regarding students who participate in athletics programs: on average, they have grade point averages one point above those of non-participants, they have approximately half the number of absences that other students have, and they have a dropout rate that is negligible. Student athletes, he said, are the products of district athletics programs and that these programs should be seen for the manifold benefits they provide to students, helping them to become better scholars and better citizens. He expressed his appreciation of the work of Ms. Moore and the state’s other athletic directors.

A copy of the Proclamation for National Girls and Women in Sports Day is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, I-C-1.

D. Approve Agenda

Ms. Gantz Berman explained that the Board had decided to make changes in the way that meetings are conducted. She asked Mary Ellen McEldowney, district legal counsel, to explain the changes for the benefit of the audience.

Ms. McEldowney stated that at Regular Meetings, the Board would be able to receive information from multiple sources, as well as being able to act upon items, should they wish to pursue action, or postpone items to a later date if necessary. At the beginning of a Regular Meeting, she said, the Board will first approve its agenda, allowing members to make motions to add or delete agenda items. She explained that the consent agenda process would remain much as it has been, and that Board members would be able to hold items for discussion as the agenda is read at the beginning of each meeting. The most significant change, she said, is to the “New Business” segment of the agenda, which will now be divided into three sections—the “Information Only” section, whose items do not require action by the Board; the “Issues Requiring Action At This Time” section; and the “Issues Requiring Action Following Public Input” section, with items to be acted upon at a later date. She said
that comments by the public would continue to be heard on the first Thursday of each month, but that it would now be a segment of the Regular Meeting, rather than a separate meeting unto itself, and that any unfinished business from the Regular Meeting would occur after the Public Comment segment.

In response to a request from Ms. Gantz Berman, Ms. McEldowney emphasized that the Board did not make any changes regarding the method in which Board policies are adopted or revised. She explained that policy adoptions and revisions would still require a First Reading at one meeting, an opportunity for public comment at the next meeting, followed by Board action at the following meeting.

Rev. Guzman moved approval of the agenda, as presented, for the Regular Meeting of February 7, 2002. Mr. Woodward seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

II. Board Member Reports

There were no reports.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

There were no reports.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the agenda items by section and number. In accordance with consent agenda procedures, Board members requested that the following items be held for discussion:

IV-A-3 Parkfield Middle School Boundary Changes
IV-A-6 Stapleton Development Boundary Changes

Mrs. Edwards moved adoption of the consent agenda and Mr. Patterson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

The following items were approved under the consent agenda process:
A. **Boundary Changes**

1. **Lowry Elementary School** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed pupil assignment plan revision regarding the boundaries for Lowry Elementary School, and that staff implement the revision for the 2002-2003 school year. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-1.

2. **Gateway Elementary School** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed pupil assignment plan revision regarding the boundaries for Gateway Elementary School, and that staff implement the revision for the 2002-2003 school year. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-2.

4. **North Central Middle School** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed pupil assignment plan revision regarding the boundaries for the North Central Middle School, and that staff implement the revisions for the 2002-2003 school year. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-4.

5. **Grant Middle School** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed pupil assignment plan revision regarding the boundaries for Grant Middle School, and that staff implement the revision for the 2002-2003 school year. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-5.

B. **Administrative Services**

1. **Receive Report of Arbitrator – AAA 77 300 00014 01** – It was recommended that the Board of Education receive the Report of the Arbitrator in the matter of Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) versus Denver Public Schools Case Number AAA 77 300 00014 01. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-1.

2. **Accept Report of Arbitrator – AAA 77 300 00024 01** – It was recommended that the Board of Education accept the Report of the Arbitrator in the matter of Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) versus Denver Public Schools Case Number AAA 77 300 00024 01. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-2.

3. **Facility Management**

   a. **Final Settlements** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Final Settlements for Contract Services. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3a.
b. **Construction Contract for Montbello High School Roof Replacement Project**  
   It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the construction contract for the Montbello High School roof replacement project, and that the firm of D&D Roofing be approved for the project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3b.

c. **Construction Contract for the Steele Elementary School Kitchen/Lunchroom Addition Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the construction contract for the Steele Elementary School kitchen/lunchroom addition project, and that the firm of MW Golden Corporation be approved for the project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3c.

d. **Construction Contract for the Garden Place Elementary School Two-Classroom Addition and Window Replacement Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the construction contract for the Garden Place Elementary school two-classroom addition and window replacement project, and that the firm of Krische Construction, Inc. be approved for the project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3d.

e. **Architect Selection for the Montclair and Amesse Elementary Schools Window Replacement Projects** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the firm of Gifford Spurck Associates as the architect for the Montclair and Amesse Elementary Schools window replacement projects. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3e.

f. **Architect Selection for the Traylor Elementary School Window Replacement Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the firm of DMJMH&N as the architect for the Traylor Elementary School window replacement project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-B-3f.

**DISCUSSION OF HELD AGENDA ITEMS**

**IV-A-3 Parkfield Middle School Boundary Change**

Mr. Patterson said that he held this agenda item in order to address the issue of transportation. He said that he has received calls from community members about transportation of students who live in the Parkfield Middle School attendance area and participate in the Gifted and Talented (G/T) Program at Martin Luther King Middle School. He expressed the opinion that the district should do as much as possible to accommodate Choice options for these students to keep them engaged and provide continuity in their educational experience. He requested that staff members provide input as to possible solutions to the problem.
David Lowry, Executive Director of Planning and Research, said that there have been 48 students identified as living in the Parkfield attendance area and participating in the GT Program at Martin Luther King. He said that there are plans to survey the G/T students, as well as those attending the Technology Academy at MLK, to determine where they would like to attend and, based on the survey results, determine the amount of bus space available for these students. The district, he said, would send a letter to each of those parents explaining the options the district is considering and assuring them that all attempts were being made not to disrupt the education of their children.

Mr. Patterson stated that some parents had told him that the way that the G/T Program would operate at Parkfield would be different than how it operates at MLK, and most of the parents with whom he has spoken have expressed a desire for their children to continue in a sheltered program, where the students stay in a group for core subjects and take only electives outside of the group. He asked Pat Slaughter, who will serve as Principal for Parkfield, to clarify how the G/T Program at Parkfield would operate.

Ms. Slaughter said that she has not shared any information with anyone at MLK regarding the operation of the G/T Program and that she did not understand where people got the information that formed their perceptions of the program. She said that plans for Parkfield include the formation of three different Learning Academies—the Fundamental Learning Academy, the Accelerated Learning Academy, and an Expeditionary Learning Academy. The G/T students, she said, would be supported through the Accelerated Learning Academy and would received sheltered accommodations with a team of teachers to meet their needs.

Mr. Patterson moved that the Board of Education approve the proposed pupil assignment plan revision regarding Parkfield Middle School, with the proposed transportation revision allowing students living in the Parkfield attendance area and attending the Tech Academy at Martin Luther King Middle School to continue with transportation, and that staff implement these revisions for the 2002-2003 school year.

Mr. Woodward seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of the motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-3.

IV-A-6  Stapleton Development Boundary Change

Mr. Patterson moved that the Board of Education approve the pupil assignment plan revision regarding the Stapleton Development, and that staff implement the revision for the 2002-2003 school year.

Mrs. Edwards seconded the motion.
Mr. Patterson said that questions had arisen about the effect the proposed boundaries for Stapleton Elementary School would have on schools in the vicinity that had previously served students living in that area. He said that he would like to discuss the issue in greater detail and requested that action be postponed until the February 21, 2002, Regular Meeting. None of the Board members voiced an objection to the request, so Ms. Gantz Berman declared that the motion was postponed for two weeks.

A copy of the motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, IV-A-6.

V. **Old Business**

There was no Old Business.

VI. **New Business**

A. **Information Only**

1. **Principles of Budgeting for Denver Public Schools**

   Mr. Patterson said that he has worked with the Citizens Budget Task Force (CBTF) for over a year to examine the process and structure of how the district develops its budget, how budgetary decisions are made over the course of a year, and how the budget aligns with the district’s goals and objectives. The budget, he said, should be the district’s policy document regarding how and where money is spent, and what programs are to be funded. He noted that the CBTF started its existence as a Board of Education committee, but that it has since become a committee of the Superintendent, and he asked Superintendent Jerry Wartgow to continue the conversation.

   Dr. Wartgow expressed his appreciation for the work done by the CBTF, both before and after his arrival in the district. The task force was reconstituted and presented with a new charge last summer, he said, and, since that time, have been working diligently to develop and present a set of principles to assist staff, the Superintendent, and the Board of Education in developing and implementing an effective budget. He introduced Richard Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Finance, to acknowledge the CBTF members present at the meeting and to present their report.

   Mr. Allen expressed his personal appreciation for the work of the CBTF, stating that they put in a great deal of time and good thinking toward their charge, and that he feels that their efforts have resulted in a product that will serve the district well as it moves forward in the budgeting process.
Mr. Allen said that the CBTF’s “Principles of Budgeting” is a document that is in keeping with the Superintendent’s goal of setting high expectations, as it is a very challenging list of principles and best practices specifically applied to the budget process of the Denver Public Schools. These principles would be extremely difficult to implement simultaneously and instantly, he said, but they are very significant goals for the district whose value will be apparent by the improved budget process upon full implementation.

He directed the Board’s attention to the Preamble, which states the task force’s strong feeling that the district’s budget should be embedded as the fiscal portion of an overall strategic plan for the district. The budget, he said, should be one of many aspects of the overall plan woven together to create an effective system. He said that the section entitled “Scope” states that the budget should be comprehensive, addressing overall budget issues rather than budgeting individual programs in isolation from one another. The section entitled “Alignment With Goals, Strategies, and Priorities,” he said, addresses an issue that the Board of Education has discussed many times and with which the CBTF wholeheartedly agrees—that the budget must be in alignment with clear, measurable objectives that support the district’s long-term goals.

Mr. Allen referred to the section entitled “Sustainability” and said that, in his mind, it is a very critical aspect of the CBTF recommendations. It is important, he said, that non-recurring revenues be used for non-recurring expenditures, rather than for ongoing expenditures; if that principle is not adhered to, serious financial consequences will surely follow. He said that that practice had occurred in the past, but that is must be discontinued to avoid further and more severe economic shortfalls. Still in the area of sustainability, he stated that the district needs a coherent strategy about the kinds and amounts of reserve funds that are held for various purposes. He said that the district has, for years, operated under fairly minimal reserves, which has limited its ability to deal with problems and respond to new opportunities as they arise.

Regarding the section entitled “Standards For Budget Decisions,” he said that this area deals with the process of handling specific items proposed for the budget, with a series of recommendations. Some of the key recommendations, he said, include that all budget decisions are consistent with the long-term goals and annual objectives of the district, and that budget decisions that have a financial impact will include a budget analysis and identify source(s) of funding.

Mr. Allen spoke about the “Compensation” section and explained that 85 percent of the district’s operating budget goes to pay the salaries of district employees and, therefore, discussions regarding compensation dominate the budget process.

He said that there are two major issues around the budget calendar: (1) the schools must have adequate time to prepare their internal operating budget; and (2) there must be adequate time provided to provide input and feedback about the budget.
process, so that the Board can consider that input prior to adopting the final budget.

Mr. Allen said that the CBTF recommends that the budget be presented in different formats at different times to make it more understandable and to meet legal accounting requirements. He said that the State of Colorado requires that the budget be presented in the state chart of accounts format and for control purposes, it must also be shown by organizational unit. However, he said, he and his staff are also considering presenting the budget in other ways for other purposes, i.e., showing how the expenditures proposed align with the Board’s goal strategies. He said that regardless of the method of presentation, all versions of the budget would have the same financial information and would provide more useful information to the Board, the schools, and the general public.

Regarding the area of communication, Mr. Allen stated that his department, on behalf of the district, would prepare an annual report on the budget and accomplishments of the district. He also said that the district’s goals, strategies, and priorities—and how they are reflected in the budget—would be communicated internally throughout the district.

Rev. Guzman thanked the CBTF for their work in developing and presenting the Principles of Budgeting and said that they are needed very much. She asked if the differentiated budget formats would allow closer examination of the budget to ensure equity among schools, especially those who have received ratings of “unsatisfactory” and “low.”

Mr. Allen said that such an examination would be possible under the new budgeting principles and likely would have been possible under the old ones. He said that the budget could be presented such a way as to highlight any particular issue that the Board would like to put under review. With the old line item format, he said, it would be difficult to make such a presentation about individual line item issues.

Ms. Gantz Berman noted that one of the principles under the “Scope” heading stated that the annual budget would include all district financial activities, rather than just General Fund activities, and asked what rationale was behind that principle.

Mr. Allen replied that the approximately half of the district’s budget each year is made up of General Fund expenditures and half expenditures in the rest of the district’s funds. There are many important fiscal interactions between all of these funds, he said, and it is important that the budget, as a whole, has all of its parts coordinated, to the extent possible, and that they are all directed at the goals and priorities of the district.
Ms. Gantz Berman asked if the CBTF had discussed the Resource Allocation Methodology (RAM) and whether or not a new method of allocating funds would be more effective.

Mr. Allen said that there had been some discussion of the RAM, but that the task force decided to focus on the methods for considering changes to the RAM rather than the changes themselves. He said that the Principles of Budgeting provides a guideline for approaching questions of changes in the budget process, but does not make specific recommendations about the areas that should be changed.

In response to Ms. Gantz Berman’s question about the next steps for the CBTF, Mr. Allen said that they would next provide advice and counsel on a strategic fiscal plan that will address the development of the key elements of the district’s budget and fiscal practices over a period of three to five years in order to prioritize areas of importance. He said that they would also advise the Superintendent as to the alignment of the district’s budget with its educational goal, which will include an analysis of the goals to determine whether they include the detail required for implementation, whether they are fiscally feasible, and whether they have, in fact, been appropriately funded within the budget.

Mr. Patterson said that the process around developing the Principles of Budgeting had been a very positive experience. The Superintendent, he said, saw an early draft of the report and has already begun to implement many aspects of it. He said that he is pleased with the direction in which the budgetary process is beginning to move and that the Superintendent has embraced the ideas of the CBTF and is making significant changes because of them. These principles, he said, should help district staff determine whether programs that are funded, or are being considered for funding, would be the most effective use of the district’s resources. Another vital issue, he said, is making the district’s budget a truly public document—ensuring that it is understood by the citizens of the City and County of Denver.

Dr. Wartgow said that, while he was in the interview process for the position of Superintendent, he was provided with information and reports compiled and developed by the CBTF and that he had been impressed with the thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and soundness of the ideas of the task force. He said that the members of the task force have worked diligently to transform those ideas into a meaningful action document, and that the CBTF has proven the worth of having an outside committee looking at district concerns with a fresh perspective. He thanked the task force members for their participation and dedication to the project.

A copy of the report entitled Principles of Budgeting for the Denver Public Schools is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-A-1.
2. **Career Education Center – Transition**

Ms. Gantz Berman introduced Peter Hergenreter, Principal of the Fred N. Thomas Career Education Center (CEC), to present a proposal for a change in the educational design of the school.

Mr. Hergenreter said that he wished to present the recommendations of the CEC Futures Panel, made up of district staff members, community representatives, and other interested professionals. He acknowledged the following members of the Panel: Karen Ellis, Career and Technology Education Manager with the district; Dr. Darryl Green, CEC Architectural Technology Instructor; Leroy Haynes, CEC CDM member; Dr. Christine Johnson, President of the Community College of Denver; Dr. Dan Lucero, Executive and Vocational Director of T.H. Pickens Technical Center of the Aurora Public Schools; Terry Matthews, Senior Vice President of Fuller and Company; Rick Nuanes, CEC Auto Technology Instructor; Sharon Robinson, Executive Director of Emily Griffith Opportunity School; Dr. Olive Ann Slotta, district Mathematics Specialist; Daybra Thomas, student at CEC and the Community College of Denver; Mario Williams, Principal of George Washington High School; Jennifer McKinton, Vice President Programs for Junior Achievement and Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce representative to the Panel; Sherry Schneider, Vice President in the Colorado Community College system; and Marlene Yaniglos, CEC Instructor. Mr. Hergenreter thanked the members for their diligence and hard work, and for their dedication to the charge of the panel. He said that their input had been invaluable as they planned for the future of the CEC.

He said that the panel was established in spring 2001 with the approval of the CEC CDM, and the endorsement of Ms. Gantz Berman and Rev. Guzman, following discussions by central administration regarding the mission, funding, and role with the CEC and Denver Public Schools. The panel, he said, was charged to do three things: (1) to review and validate the mission of the CEC; (2) to review the present model and make recommendations for a future model; and (3) to review present funding and make recommendations for alternative funding streams to continue the school’s mission under the recommended program model.

Mr. Hergenreter listed the following benefits of the recommended educational model for CEC:

- It provides more advantages, options, and a head start for high school students in Denver.
- It is a singularly unique educational model in Colorado.
- It is an innovative model that will attract funds from a variety of sources and benefit from fundraising activities.

He introduced Terry Matthews, business representative on the panel, to speak about the planning process undertaken by them.
Ms. Matthews said that it had been a privilege to work with the CEC Futures Panel in the capacity of business representative and the parent of a CEC graduate. She said that the group included students, education professionals, and members of the business community; that they met six times between June and October of 2001; and there were three subcommittee meetings, which included extensive discussion and review of four different models. All decisions, she said, were reached by consensus as they progressed through the development of the final product.

She said that the Panel unanimously supports a recommendation for a very exciting educational model, which would empower students to make a seamless transition into the workplace, college, or university with technical accreditation or an associate’s degree in hand. The Panel, she said, also considered, and has suggested, various business and education partnerships that would enable this model to deliver the quality of education that CEC students and parents require. She said that the Panel also had extensive discussions about cost-savings benefits and new opportunities for increasing revenues.

Ms. Matthews said that she and the other CEC representatives wished to present their proposed new educational model—the Middle College Model. She introduced Dr. Christine Johnson, President of the Community College of Denver, to share highlights of the proposed model.

Dr. Johnson said that the Middle College Model is the integration of grades ten through fourteen, which is a movement that has been endorsed by the Columbia Teachers College as the “new model for urban education.” It is a model, she said, that integrates the best of educational practices around the needs of urban students, combining the experiences of community colleges and the world of work, to provide a setting that allows for the application of skills and the shortening of time in which students may earn a degree. She said that the model has a proven track record of success and increases the rate of college bound students by bringing curricular coherence and the kind of transition that should take place between high school and college. This model, she said, has been studied extensively by such distinguished institutions as Stanford University and Columbia Teachers College, with both institutions having endorsed the model.

She said that all existing Middle College Models have been funded by the Ford Foundation, an organization that is truly interested in moving this model forward. The model that has been in operation the longest, she said, is LaGuardia Middle College and has been in operation for 25 years; other places with operational models include Seattle, Washington; Peoria, Illinois; Flint, Michigan; Houston, Texas; and University Heights in the Bronx, New York.

Daybra Thomas, student at the Community College of Denver, said that she was a student at CEC for five years of her life and that she saw a great deal of change in
the school during those years. She said that the Middle College model appeals to students because it dips them into the college world gradually and provides work skills—such as Workplace Competency and Problem Solving—that are very valuable to students as they enter the world of work, be it directly upon exiting the program or after obtaining a degree. She said that many aspects of the program have prepared her for college, such as learning how to take notes and how to work in an independent study situation. She said that the Middle College model also allows students to find their true areas of interest earlier and to have more time to mold themselves to what they really love.

She said that she feels as if she grew up at CEC and that she feels very honored to have been allowed to participate in the decision to propose that CEC adopt the Middle College model. She introduced Sharon Robinson, Executive Director of Emily Griffith Opportunity School (EGOS).

Ms. Robinson referred the Board members to Appendix E of the proposal regarding the Middle College model, and said that it is a comparison chart between CEC’s current educational model and the one proposed by the Futures Panel. She said that she did not wish to go over the entire chart, but would point out some of the differences between the models. Under the current model, she said, students complete the program with a high school diploma, but could exit the program with an associate’s degree upon completion of the proposed program. She explained that, currently, only ten CEC students are enrolled in post-secondary programs but that the anticipation is that the proposed model would have the majority of junior and senior students enrolled in such programs.

Regarding CEC’s student population, she said that, currently there are 151 full-time students, from grades eight through twelve, enrolled in the school, but that they estimate that 400 students would participate in the proposed program.

Ms. Robinson said that under CEC’s current schedule classes run from 7:30 a.m. to 2:05 p.m., but that under the proposed model, classes would be offered until 9:00 p.m., fully utilizing the facility throughout the day and evening.

Under the current program, she said, only students in ninth grade have the opportunity to participate in career exploration; whereas, the proposed model would have ninth and tenth grade students participate in such programming. Another change in the program’s methodology, she said, would be that approximately 200 part- and full-time students would be enrolled in classes at the Community College of Denver or EGOS under the Post-Secondary Options program, versus the 28 CEC students who are currently taking advantage of that program.

Ms. Robinson explained that funding for the program would still come from Denver Public Schools, as it currently does; however, the Middle College model lends itself to aggressive fundraising and enhanced grant opportunities. New
programs, she said, would be funded by a consortium of grants, district funding, and a partnership between CEC, the Community College of Denver, and EGOS. She said that they anticipate a significant increase in CEC’s enrollment under the proposed model, which would provide increase per pupil funding and generate more income for the school.

Ms. Robinson said that the model would be innovative with a program offering both high school and college courses, a schedule running from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and a consortium of institutions with mutual interests working to build an educational continuum that serves the interests of Denver high school students. As Executive Director of EGOS, she assured the Board and the public that EGOS has made a firm commitment to work with the CEC and the Community College of Denver in building a strong coalition that would benefit the students of Denver.

Mr. Hergenreter said that the new educational model would be implemented in three phases over the next two to three years, beginning immediately. The starting point for Phase One, he said, is to establish an ongoing consortium to include the CEC, EGOS, and the Community College of Denver. He said that the consortium would adopt the following objectives for Phase One:

- Increase in CEC’s full-time enrollment to 200 students from its current 160 students
- Funding and assigning a coordinator for the consortium
- Development of programs that will have certification and post-secondary status
- Coordination of evening classes and access to those classes
- Completion of a facility review to maximize capacity for change
- Formation of a grant writing team to seek long-term grants to fund Phases Two and Three.

Leroy Haynes, CEC CDM member, said that he and his entire family are products of the Denver Public Schools, and that the district has been noted for its long-reaching thought processes and the implementation of innovative programming. He said that he is excited and honored to be a part of the transition of CEC into a middle college—a milestone in the school’s history. He said that the proposed model is a new way of addressing education for high school students and putting these students in a position where they can achieve the best they can be.

Rev. Guzman said that she is impressed with the proposed Middle College model for the CEC and that she has kept in touch with the progress of the CEC Futures Panel, and, given the fact that the school is in her Director District, she has taken a special interest in the plans for its future. She said that she is excited about this unique opportunity and sees it as another high school in her district—one that will draw students from all over the city to participate in the singular educational experience that the school will offer. If implemented as planned, she said, CEC would soon raise the bar in terms of career education and the academic value that
is found in that type of curriculum. She said that there would be many challenges in implementing the plan, not the least of which is funding, but that she is confident in the leadership of Mr. Hergenreter at CEC with guidance from the Futures Panel, and is highly appreciative of the work that they have put forth in developing and presenting this proposal.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that she was surprised to learn that South, George Washington, and East High Schools sent the most students to CEC, while North and West High Schools—even with their close proximity to CEC—sent relatively few students there. She asked if anyone representing CEC could provide an explanation for that situation.

Mr. Hergenreter replied that he, too, had been stymied by that fact, and that he has been working with the principals of both North and West to try to establish closer communications and recruitment efforts within those school communities.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that there had been earlier discussions with the Board about the fact that home schools kept the revenues for their students who attend CEC and what the best method for funding CEC would be. She asked if the funding arrangement would remain the same with the new program, to which Mr. Hergenreter replied in the affirmative.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that that matter would have to be discussed in further detail among the Board and the Superintendent. She said that she understands that there is a disincentive for the sending school to share funding with CEC for students being educated at CEC. However, she said, if a student attends CEC for half of the time or more, the sending school should not get to keep all of the per pupil funding for that student.

She praised the Futures Panel for developing such an innovative plan and for demonstrating so clearly their vision for the future of CEC. She said that she had recently attended an education conference in Washington, DC, where someone had raised the issue of the Middle College model; and that it made her very proud to know that such a new and innovative program was already being developed for the Denver Public Schools.

Dr. Wartgow said that he feels that the Middle College model is a very exciting concept for CEC, and that he is very impressed with the caliber of the people participating on the Futures Panel. He said that there would naturally be questions regarding details of the plan, but that he would gladly lend his support to efforts to move forward with the plan, which he sees as being beneficial to the district, CEC, the partners involved in the consortium, and the City of Denver.

Mr. Hergenreter thanked the Board for their time and their consideration of the CEC proposal and, once again, thanked the members of the CEC Futures Panel for their committed dedication and outstanding work.
A copy of the report entitled *Recommendations of the Fred N. Thomas Career Education Futures Panel* is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-A-2.

3. **Teacher Incentive Pay Program (SB-98) – Proposed Guidelines**

Dr. Wartgow said that there was a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), developed by district administrators and the leadership of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), regarding the Teacher Incentive Pay Program, a provision of Senate Bill 98 of the 2001 session of the Colorado Legislature. He said that the Board was not scheduled to take action upon the MOA that evening, but that he wanted its existence entered into the record. He assured the Board that district staff and DCTA staff are in concurrence about the proposal on how to distribute and expend the funds from Senate Bill 98, which was designed to reward and recruit outstanding, qualified teachers, especially in high-need areas.

**RECESS AND RECONVENE**

Ms. Gantz Berman recessed the meeting at 6:37 for the Board’s dinner break. The meeting was reconvened at 7:12 p.m.

**VII. Public Comment*\**

Kim Ursetta, Vice President of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), said that this year’s celebration of Read Across America Day would take place on March 1, 2002, the birthday of Dr. Suess, in whose honor the day was established several years ago. She asked that community members, parents, and businesspeople take time out of their day to visit schools and read to children. Read Across America Day, she said, is a national project through the National Education Association (NEA), and this year’s celebrity sponsor is Garth Brooks. She presented each Board member and Superintendent Jerry Wartgow a *Cat In The Hat* striped hat and pin.

Felicia Gomez, graduate of Colorado High School, said that, for her, classes in the public schools she attended were too crowded and that she was not able to get the individualized help and attention that she needed. Because of the problems she had in public schools, she said, she felt lost in the crowd and dropped out of school for a semester and, while she was out of school, she decided to seek out a smaller school to help her focus on basics in education so that she would be able to catch up on what she had missed. She said that Colorado High School offered her a chance to be in smaller classes with about fifteen students, where students were better able to relate to the teacher and each other.

Dorothy Mayes, parent of a junior attending Colorado High School, said that her son attending a public school in Denver during his first two years of high school, but that the

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* This agenda item was a timed item.
experience had been a bad one for him. She said that the typical method of instruction at the school he had attended was lecturing and testing, and that that method was not effective for her son. One of the advantages of Colorado High School, she said, is that class presentation is different—a feature that will remain in the event that it becomes a charter school.

She said that her son tends to learn better in a hands-on, interactive setting that allows for expression of student opinions and ideas, rather than just lecturing by the teacher. She said that her son would never enjoy testing, but that, since he began attending Colorado High School, he seems better able to retain knowledge for a longer period of time, indicating that he is not simply “learning for the test.”

Ms. Mayes said that another challenge her son faced during his enrollment in the Denver Public Schools was attending class. She said that most of his classes didn’t hold his interest and that, many times, he simply did not attend class. Colorado High School, she said, is very good about ensuring that parents are notified in the event that their children do not attend class, and that calls are made by school staff, rather than by an automated system, such as is used in the district. She said that teenagers who skip school are often home during the day and erase any message left by the automated system. She said that the small classes at Colorado High School allow teachers to be instantly aware when students are missing from class, and that teachers take immediate action by calling parents either at home or at work, so that parents can take immediate action to locate the student and get him or her back to class. Oftentimes, she said, parents of children in Denver schools are not aware of their children’s absenteeism until the receive report cards.

She said that the change in schools has also brought about an change of attitude in her son at home; he now wants to communicate with his parents and family.

Ms. Mayes said that Colorado High School also provides a monthly grading block, which offers students almost constant feedback to let them know how they are doing in school. She said that her son has benefited tremendously from this system that has month-long class blocks that include a parent/student/teacher conference in the middle. Teachers, she said, provide students with input and guidance on a daily basis. It is a give and take relationship, she said, in which teachers know their students and students know their teachers.

Another advantage to her son attending Colorado High School, she said, is the fact that there is such close supervision of students that they have fewer opportunities to participate in substance abuse.

Ms. Mayes urged the Board to seriously consider the application for Colorado High School to become a charter school. She said that all students should be given the opportunity to learn in the way that best suits them, even if it is outside of the traditional classroom structure. She said that the students of the present are the leaders of the future,
and that Colorado High School should be given the opportunity to teach, mentor, and encourage these leaders.

Myra Simmons, parent of a student at Colorado High School, said that her 16-year-old daughter was a child identified as gifted while she attended Denver Public Schools, and that she participated in the Gifted and Talented (G/T) Program throughout elementary and middle school. She said she discussed the issue with her daughter and determined that high school, with its traditional programming, would not fit in with the years of non-traditional education she received through the G/T Program. In their discussions, she said, they determined that her daughter would need several things in order to succeed in high school: (1) a program with small class sizes; (2) a program with a core curriculum, with individualized attention to help students determine the path of their education; and (3) a program to prepare her for college. She said that all of these aspects are available at Colorado High School and that she supports its efforts to become a charter school in the district.

Ms. Gantz Berman asked Wayne Eckerling, Assistant Superintendent for Research, Planning, and Special Programs to update the Board and the audience about the status of the charter school application from Colorado High School.

Dr. Eckerling said that district staff would be meeting with the applicants in the very near future, and that a formal presentation would come before the Board on February 21, 2002, with action taken by the Board at the meeting of March 7, 2002.

Dee Chiancio, parent of a fifth grade student at Park Hill Elementary School, said that she and her husband have become involved in the effort to convert Park Hill to a kindergarten through grade eight school. She said that many parents in the school community had worked to develop the plan and that even more of them support it. The parents who have worked so hard, she said, developed the proposal, did the research, polled the community to ensure support, and were available to answer questions from staff after the proposal was submitted. She expressed her appreciation for the work of the Park Hill community.

She stated that she brought her son to the meeting with her so that he would be able to see democracy in action and how important it is for people to become involved in their community. She said that she and her husband started their child’s education in a private school but that, by the time he was in third grade, that educational option was not working for them and they placed their child in Park Hill. They expected to have to lower their educational expectations when going from a private school to a public school, she said, but that their experience at Park Hill had been better than they had experienced at the private school. She said that her family was embraced by the Park Hill community and that they were given an opportunity to expand their connection to the community while their son excelled academically.

Park Hill, Ms. Chiancio said, has exceeded every expectation her family had as an educational experience for their son, and that the Park Hill community would like to see
the experience continue for their children by expanding their program to eighth grade. She said that it is important that children stay in a grounded environment as they grow, especially through the early adolescent years of sixth through eighth grade.

Student Paul Chiancio, fifth grade student at Park Hill, said that he is very happy at his school and would like to continue to attend there through eighth grade. He said that Park Hill meets his social and academic needs and he urged the Board to approve the proposal.

Carol Hedges, member of the Park Hill Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) Team, said that the Park Hill community is made up of terrific families with terrific children. These community members, she said, have taken advantage of the Board of Education’s offer to allow school communities to become actively involved in the educational design of their school and to build a community that supports the needs of all of Park Hill’s children. She said that the proposal before the Board represents a great deal of hard work and good thought on the part of that community. She explained that an addendum to the proposal was submitted to district staff late the previous day and that she believed that copies of it would be forwarded to the Board in time for them to consider the new information prior to taking action on the request.

Ms. Hedges said that the committee who worked on the proposal struggled with developing a plan to create a community school while avoiding having a membership so large that people might not want their children to attend the school. She said the issue was discussed at great length and the solution arrived at by the community was to determine the number of available spaces and conduct a lottery for those spaces. In response to concerns from district staff and parents about the use of a lottery system, she said, it was decided that there would be an enrollment priority to sixth grade for children completing the fifth grade at Park Hill, and any available places after the priority would be awarded by lottery.

She said that one of the values of the proposed model is continuity and one of the values of attending a community school is the ability to stay within the community. She said that the school administration has vowed to do all it can to keep the pupil membership numbers at a reasonable rate to maintain relatively small class sizes while allowing everyone in fifth grade the opportunity to continue to sixth grade at Park Hill should they so desire.

Patrick Tooley, parent of children attending Park Hill, said that he wished to address three issues before the Board: (1) the proposal itself; (2) why Park Hill parents are excited about the Park Hill model; and (3) why the K-8 model is a good fit for the Park Hill community. He said that the Park Hill CDM and community began plans in August to redesign the school and, in that process, a working group was formed comprised of many parents who put in a great deal of time evaluating the K-8 model. They spoke to parents, teachers and administrators of K-8 schools, he said, did research on the Internet, and researched evaluations of schools from other cities that had shown success with the model. He said that they had sought out professional literature that spoke of what professional educators have learned about K-8 schools, and that they spoke with Dr.
Huff, dean of education at a college in Missouri, who was also responsible for research at the National Association of Middle Schools. Their proposal, he said, was well and thoroughly researched and a pursuit to find the educational model to best meet the needs of their children; the process took time, deliberation, careful thought, and evaluation.

Mr. Tooley said that the committee realizes that there is not a simple and correct answer to the question of grade configuration, but that they believe that there are significant benefits, including better academic performance and a better environment for students in middle school grades. One of the more positive aspects, he said, is the fact that students in K-8 schools do not have the culture shock of transitioning from elementary school to middle school. He said that their research also revealed that students in K-8 schools also experience less transition loss when entering high school compared to middle school students, have lower dropout rates, better self-esteem, and better school attendance. The K-8 model, he said, also allows older students to act as mentors for younger ones. According to Dr. Huff, he said, many K-8 schools have seventh and eighth grade students serving as reading tutors for first and second graders, and that it benefits both the younger and older children.

He said that the redesign committee feels that the K-8 model is an exceptionally good fit for Park Hill, as they have a stable population base, dedicated teachers and a strong administration, and diversity in families. The tie that binds these diverse families together, he said, is a commitment to education. He said that his children are the third generation in their family to attend Park Hill and is reflective of the community’s commitment, which is necessary for the success of the K-8 model.

Mr. Tooley said that the Park Hill proposal was submitted to the Board of Education in November and that parents with children in the fifth grade are concerned about planning for sixth grade for their children. He urged the Board to render a decision as quickly as possible so that these families know how to plan for their future.

Claire Chavez said her children attend Park Hill and that she herself attended the school as a youngster. She said that she left Denver after college, but returned to Park Hill to raise her family because of the sense of community she always felt when she was growing up there. Her children are mixed race children, she said, and at Park Hill, they do not feel out of place because of the diversity of the population—lots of children look like them and lots of children look different from them. She said that they are comfortable with their peers and that they know their teachers hold them in esteem.

She said that she is concerned about her children transitioning from elementary to middle school and their reaction to suddenly being placed in a much larger student population where they might feel lost and isolated. She said that, with all the changes that children undergo at that age, she would like them to have the most stable environment possible, and that Park Hill as a K-8 school would offer such an environment.

Mrs. Moss commended the Park Hill community on the quality of their proposal and the hard work that went into developing it. She said that the data provided was enlightening.
and interesting and that she was impressed by its depth and scope. She asked for further clarification about the enrollment process for sixth grade.

Kathy Adams, Park Hill Principal, replied that they understand that the enrollment process must be handled carefully over the course of three years. She said that they are prepared to open three sixth grade classes for the 2002-2003 school year, if that is what is necessary to accommodate all of their fifth grade students. However, she said, over time they hope to dedicate six classrooms to grades six through eight, with approximately 150 students attending those grades. That number, she said, would allow Park Hill to offer a viable middle school curriculum with content specialists.

She said that the issue of choice in the middle school grades would be complicated, as approximately 184 of the school’s current student membership live in other school attendance areas and attend the school under the Choice option. They must be careful, she said, about the number of Choice students they will allow into the program to ensure that children in the Park Hill attendance area have the first enrollment priority. She said that there would be some natural attrition so that two classrooms per grade would be sufficient to support the program they have proposed. She said that there would be parents who would still opt for traditional middle schools for their children because they would offer a greater selection of classes and activities, and that they did not expect that every Park Hill fifth grade student would continue into sixth grade at their school.

Mr. Patterson thanked the Park Hill administration, staff, and community for bringing forth a superior proposal for school redesign. However, he said that he did not understand how they would go from having three sixth grade classrooms initially to having two classrooms of sixth, seventh, and eighth grades when the transformation is complete.

Ms. Adams said that she does not have a definitive answer, but that in discussions with administrators of K-8 schools, attrition was always a factor throughout the middle school years of a K-8 school. She said that she believed that two classrooms per grade could be filled between Park Hill priority students and Choice students.

Mr. Patterson said that one of the shortfalls of a K-8 model is that children in the middle school years do not have the same opportunities for elective courses and activities as children in traditional middle schools, and wondered if that fact had been made clear to parents.

Ms. Adams said that that fact was clearly stated in their proposal and that she feels that it has been clearly expressed during discussions with and among parents. However, she said, many parents can see past those advantages to the very real advantages that a K-8 model offers children. She said that she and her staff are already looking into the kinds of elective courses that will be available for the middle school-aged children, and that these will be easier to offer because the school already has such facilities as a science lab, an art lab, a computer lab, and a superior library/media center.
In response to a question from Mr. Patterson regarding the timeframe for Board consideration, Ms. Gantz Berman said that her understanding of the situation is that the Park Hill Community hoped that staff would be able to complete recommendations and the Board would take action at the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2002. She asked Superintendent Wartgow if that timeframe would be possible.

Dr. Wartgow said that there had been some outstanding questions from staff, but that he had been informed that the Park Hill representatives had addressed those concerns. He said that the ability to move forward with action by the Board would depend on how thorough the responses were to staff’s questions.

Wayne Eckerling, Assistant Superintendent of Research, Planning, and Special Programs, said that he felt that staff could have recommendations prepared for the next meeting should the Board wish to take action at that time.

Ms. Hedges said that she does not believe that the Park Hill sixth grade program would be at its full capacity of 50 students during the 2002-2003 school year. Because of timing and the opening of a new middle school, she said, the Park Hill community expects to have little problem filling two classroom of sixth through eighth grade students, but also feels that there would not be sufficient enrollment to justify a third classroom at any level.

She informed Dr. Wartgow that some of the questions raised by staff concerned the budget for the K-8 school. She said that she did not feel that it was appropriate to address the questions in a public hearing setting, but assured the Superintendent that the staff’s questions had been thoroughly addressed in writing.

Mrs. Edwards said that she was excited to see so many parents in attendance at the meeting who had been involved in developing and supporting the Park Hill proposal. She said that she would be pleased to see that level of parental and community involvement in every school in the Denver Public Schools. She asked if the impact of a Park Hill K-8 program on Smiley Middle School had been discussed among community members.

Ms. Hedges said that she had never visited Smiley because her children are young enough that the question of a middle school for them had never arisen. To her knowledge, she said, Smiley had not been specifically discussed because the matter was not that it was a bad middle school but, rather, that parents and the community believes that the K-8 model is a better educational alternative for their children. She said that one of the major objections to the traditional middle school model is that parents feel that their child would be intimidated and flounder in the larger middle school environment, regardless of the middle school in question.

Ms. Chavez said that many parents whose children have attended Smiley give the school glowing reviews and are very pleased with the education their children receive. She said that her oldest child is in fourth grade and that when the time comes, she will investigate
Smiley as an educational alternative, even if Park Hill has a K-8 program in place at that time.

Rev. Guzman asked Paul Chiancio what his reasons were for wanting to stay at Park Hill rather than going on to middle school and its wider scope of opportunities.

Paul replied that he was in private school until third grade and that he was approximately a year behind in academic achievement when he arrived at Park Hill. Since attending this school, he said, his grades have improved greatly; his academic and social needs are met at Park Hill.

Rev. Guzman complimented the Park Hill community for their innovative program design proposal and said that the school and community coming together to develop such a proposal is a positive and commendable action.

Catrina Hernandez, teacher at Pioneer Charter School, thanked the Board for the time to share her perspective on the importance and power of the school’s charter status. She said that she began the 2001-2002 school year at Pioneer following a very stressful and exhausting two-year stay at a district elementary school and that, at the time, she had been considering leaving the teaching profession as she felt that her abilities were being wasted. She decided to apply to Pioneer in the hope that the school’s charter status might relieve some of the difficulties of teaching. This school, she said, has regenerated her belief in teaching and that the atmosphere at Pioneer is full of spirit, community, and a strong sense of purpose; and awakened the reason she decided to embark on the journey of teaching elementary school. She said that it is possible to surround a child with all the necessary support, instruction, ideas, and tools to be a lifelong learner, which is what Pioneer’s charter status does for its students, their families, and its staff. Students come to school for an extended amount of time each day and each year, she said, to help address their needs, while still receiving the daily enrichment of integrated arts, physical education, computer skills, and after-school small group instruction. She said that Pioneer parents are welcome, involved, and aware on every level of their children’s learning; and are offered the opportunity to choose Pioneer over other schools.

As a teacher, she said, she could not ask for a better situation as her day includes well over an hour of uninterrupted, duty-free planning, which is much more than she ever had in the district elementary school from which she came. She said that that time allows her to prepare effective lessons for her students. On a weekly basis, she said, Pioneer staff participates in very meaningful, organized professional development, which directly addresses the school’s needs and the teachers’ concerns. She said that a very powerful asset of the school is the ability of teachers to design and implement change in the learning environment, as teachers are able to go past identifying problems to working toward resolving them, and go beyond ideas to make them come to life. She explained that standards-based, after-school enrichment and remediation activities are available for students. Above all benefits, she said, the charter ensures that she and her colleagues can always depend on the finely tuned school structure, which provides answers, assistance, and support that every teacher needs to make a difference.
Ms. Cuesta said that Pioneer has had an amazingly positive effect on her career and, more importantly, has made her feel like she has been a positive influence on her students.

Angel (no last name provided), first grade student at Pioneer Charter School, said that he thinks the principals and teachers at his school are very good. He said that taking away the charter would mean that the school would not be able to offer the Success For All program, and that he likes the program because it has helped him learn to read well enough to be in the highest reading group. He urged the Board to allow Pioneer to retain its charter status.

Dean Slack, parent and member of the Pioneer Charter School Board of Directors, said that he feels that Pioneer’s charter should be renewed because he feels that there is so much that is positive and good about the school—small class size, uniforms, and the fact that the children and teachers feel like they are part of a team. He feels that the interaction between upper and lower grades is a good thing because it eliminates feelings of inferiority on the part of younger students and superiority on the part of the older ones. The discipline at the school is very effective, he said, and he has noticed that his daughter acts more maturely and politely than other children her age that he has seen, after only one semester at Pioneer; and that, in that time, she also learned how to read quite well.

He said that there seemed to be a separation between staff and parents at the school his daughter used to attend, and that he does not feel that separation at Pioneer. He said that teachers and staff at Pioneer want to hear what parents have to say and care what they think.

Mr. Slack said that Pioneer faces many challenges, but that test scores and achievement levels are on the rise. He said that 60 percent of the school’s population is Hispanic and that the majority of them have Spanish as their first language, thus qualifying them as English language learners. English is being taught more aggressively this year, he said, including offering after-school activities designed to promote English for those whose primary language is Spanish, as well as classes in mathematics, reading, and writing, as well as English lessons for parents so that they are better able to help their children at home with their schoolwork.

Peggy Harper explained that she has two second grade students attending Pioneer Charter School, both of whom have shown gains in academic achievement in all areas since attending the school. She said that her stepson has shown an interest level in school that he had never demonstrated before and that his attitude about school and homework has completely changed. The Success For All program, she said, has been instrumental in bringing about these changes and that her children are anxious to come home and tell her what they learned.

Ms. Harper also commended the staff and teachers at Pioneer for helping parents feel more comfortable and welcomed at the school. She said that she is a proactive parent when it comes to the education of her children and that it is very important to her to
spend time in the classroom. Pioneer, she said, provides numerous ways for parents to become involved and encourages their presence in the classroom.

Marlena (no last name provided), said that she is a second grade student at Pioneer, and that she has learned a lot since going to the school. She said she enjoys the Success For All program because the teachers challenge the students and it has helped her challenge herself so that she is learning more and getting better every day.

Victor Hernandez, parent of children at Pioneer, addressed the Board in Spanish and voiced his support for the continuation of Pioneer charter. Ms. Gantz Berman translated for him and said that Mr. Hernandez thanked the district for giving his children the opportunity to attend Pioneer. He said that his children had attended another school, which was not as welcoming to parents as Pioneer is.

Marlili Cuesta, second grade teacher at Pioneer Charter School, said that she has taught at the school for two years and that it has become a very vital and important part of her life. She said that the school does, indeed, face many challenges, but that staff and teachers need sufficient time to enact changes to face those challenges head-on. She said that the administration, staff, students, and parents have not had sufficient time, that work is being done, and that real progress is being made. Having only been a part of the school for two years, she said, she could not change what happened in the past within the school but that she knows the current efforts are concentrated on improving student achievement and that they are working. She urged the Board to give them a fair chance to show that they are worthy of charter school status.

She explained that teachers participate in staff development activities on a weekly basis and that they are being instructed in how to teach reading and mathematics by education professionals. There are also weekly meetings, she said, with administrators and grade level teachers so that everyone is on the same page in instructing children at every level. She said that class sizes are small, the school has an ambience that is comfortable and safe, and that children are well-behaved, which indicates that learning is taking place. Also, she said, there is a great deal of parental and community involvement at Pioneer, and she feels that there would not be such a high level of participation without their status as a charter school. She said that Pioneer teachers have taken it upon themselves to do more for, and give extra time to, their students by providing such services as after-school tutoring for Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) tests.

In the area of funding, Ms. Cuesta said that Pioneer has more financial support than many public schools, as they have a number of ongoing and new grants, as well as some grants that are currently pending. She said that these funds would help support their reading and mathematics programs.

Mrs. Edwards said that she was pleased to see so many Pioneer parents and staff members present at the meeting to show their support. She said that she has been working with Pioneer as a member of the Board of Directors for a number of years and that she has great expectations of improved student achievement for the school. She cited
Dr. Wartgow’s statement about having high expectations for schools and providing the support to meet those expectations, and said that she would be voting in favor of extending Pioneer’s charter.

Rev. Guzman agreed that the district should support Pioneer as its students, administrators, teachers, and parents do, and that the children who spoke before the Board demonstrated that good teaching and learning is taking place at the school.

Mr. Patterson said that Pioneer parents continue to show strong support for their school and that it is good to know that they stand behind the school’s academic program. He said that he recently visited the school and that he was impressed with the fact that the school has maps on the walls that show children where they are in their neighborhood and why schools are so important, thus giving them a feeling of their place in the world. The school’s educational program is sound, he said, and he would be voting in support of the proposal to extend the school’s charter.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that staff would be presenting their recommendations to the Board and would take action on the proposal at the Regular meeting of February 21, 2002.

Rosella Gonzales said that she resides in northwest Denver and that the schools that serve her neighborhood are Edison Elementary School, Skinner Middle School, and North High School. She said that she was present to voice her concern about the recent cut in funding for the Truancy Reduction Project—a program she feels is very important to her neighborhood and the schools that serve it. The funding lost, she said, came from the City and County of Denver and supported the Truancy Reduction Project in seven schools. She said that her concern about the loss of funding had led her to call the district’s Department of Social Work Services to speak to the manager. She said that the manager provided her with a lot of information, including the Truancy Project Evaluation Report for the 2000-2001 school year, and that the report provides a history of the project as well as a listing of the people involved in developing and working the project.

She said that the evaluation shows that the Truancy Reduction Project has had impressive results and has successfully brought together a variety of players into the lives of children in a coordinated and effective manner. She congratulated the district on the project and said that she was disheartened to hear about the decrease in funding when, given the program’s success, there should be an increase in funding.

Ms. Gonzales stated that her specific request is that the Board of Education, as a policymaking body, look at the issue in terms of stability of funding for the project and increasing funding for it. She said that she understands that funding is a difficult thing, that budgets are set, and that work must be done in the area of future planning. However, she urged the Board to work with the utmost of haste to approach the City and County of Denver to reassess its decision to withdraw funding for the Truancy Reduction Project. She said that it is her understanding that district staff has this item on their agenda for sometime in the future, but that she feels that discussions with the city commence as soon
as possible, so that there is the best chance that funding can continue for a program that works. It is also imperative, she said, that a source of permanent funding be found for the program, as a dependency on grant funding for critical support services puts these services in danger of not being funded when the grants run out.

In closing, Ms. Gonzales stated that she is a northwest Denver resident who is very involved in a variety of programs within her community, and a Latina, and she has long been concerned with the poor academic performance and high dropout rate of Latino students within the Denver Public Schools. She said that children cannot make academic progress if they are not in school, and if they do not make academic progress they will not have success in life. She urged the Board to ensure that the Truancy Reduction Project gets the priority and stability it deserves.

Jacqueline Stanton, representing the National Association of Social Workers, said that she wished to urge the Board to pursue funding sources for the Truancy Reduction Project, especially with the City and County of Denver. She said that she is the parent of a student at Smiley Middle School and that she works as a community-based social worker who provides services to many of the schools in the northwest Denver community. As difficult as some of her cases are, she said, many more children and families would fail without the resources and support of the Truancy Reduction Project, as well as the knowledge that there are consequences for children not attending school.

She said that the program must continue to be funded at its current level and should actually see a funding increase because of its success. The program is absolutely necessary, she said, as it helps get children off the streets and into school where they belong and where they can obtain the tools for a bright future.

Mrs. Edwards said that the Board is well aware of the good things that the Truancy Reduction Project has accomplished and that the people speaking in support of the program were “preaching to the choir.” She urged them, and everyone else concerned about the program, to bring their concerns to Denver City Council representatives and Mayor Wellington Webb. She said that they are the ones who control the budget for the City and County of Denver and are the ones best able to address their concerns.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that the Board has asked the Superintendent to put the issue on the Board work session agenda for the near future and that the matter would be discussed thoroughly at that time.

Mr. Patterson said that a major area of concern, and one that the City-Schools Coordinating Committee must examine, is the difference between the budget calendars for the district and the city. He said that the city concludes its budget for the coming year in August, while the district must submit its budget to the state by the end of June. He also stated that the city’s budget called for a one percent reduction in all general fund budgets, and that the Truancy Reduction Project is part of the Human Services Department, whose budget had many other areas of concern.
He said that, as a new Board member, he was not aware of how successful the program is, and asked if there were clear results of improvement by individuals in either attendance or achievement.

John Leslie, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, said that the schools involved in the Truancy Reduction Project showed noticeable gains in student attendance, showing levels going from the mid-80s in percentile average to the low- to mid-90s in percentile average since the inception of the program; those schools have since reached a plateau at a very high level of attendance. He said that they also tracked individual student attendance at those schools and noted a five-to six-percentile gain in student attendance.

VI. **New Business (continued)**

B. **Issues Requiring Action by the Board of Education at this Time**

1. **Tuition Based Kindergarten**

   Dr. Eckerling explained that district staff has proposed to the Board that the tuition rates and requirements for the full-day kindergarten remain the same for the 2002-2003 school year as they were for the 2001-2002 school year. At that rate, he said, program revenues would exceed program expenditures by only about $7,000, based on projected salary increases for staff in the program. He said that there have been requests by some full-day kindergarten sites that they be allowed to start second full-day classrooms prior to having first classrooms with the required 25 students, but that he could not justify allowing this to occur because of the extremely small margin of profit for the program as it currently stands.

   Cathy Gonzales, Director of Early Education, explained that the full-day kindergarten program must, by necessity, be looked at as a single unit rather than as different programs at different sites. Revenues are counted collectively, she said, and used to support the entire program, allowing for more equity in participation from site to site. She reinforced Dr. Eckerling’s statement that tuition could only remain at the current level if program requirements remain the same.

   This was an agenda item for discussion and is scheduled for action by the Board of Education at the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2002. A copy of the report entitled *Extended-Day, Tuition-Based Kindergarten and Tuition-Based Montessori Programs* is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-B-1.

2. **Grant Proposals**

   a. **Tony Grampsas Youth Services Grant – Social Work Services**

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* This agenda item was taken out of sequence.
Mrs. Edwards moved that the Board of Education approve the submission of an application to the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Grant Program, and that the Superintendent be directed to submit all necessary documents consistent with the grant application, making any technical or administrative adjustments that may be necessary. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of the grant application abstract and overview is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-B-2a.

b. **Small Learning Communities (Manual and West High Schools)**

Mrs. Edwards moved that the Board of Education approve the submission of a grant application to the United States Department of Education, and that the Superintendent be directed to submit all necessary documents consistent with the grant application, making any technical or administrative adjustments that may be necessary. Mr. Woodward seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of the grant application abstract and overview is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-B-2b.

c. **Title I Accountability/School Improvement/Choice Grants – Amesse, Barrett, Brown, and Cheltenham Elementary Schools; and Morey and Skinner Middle School**

Rev. Guzman moved that the Board of Education approve the submission of a grant application to the Colorado Department of Education, and that the Superintendent be directed to submit all necessary documents consistent with the grant application, making any technical or administrative adjustments that may be necessary. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejía was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of the grant application abstract and overview is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-B-2c.
C. **Issues Requiring Action by the Board of Education Following Public Input**

1. **Pioneer Charter School**

Sherry Eastlund, Charter Schools Project Leader, explained that officials with the Pioneer Charter School are seeking a renewal of the school’s charter. She said that the school had submitted the paperwork required by law to have their request considered and that several people had spoken in favor of the request during the Public Comment segment of this meeting. She said that questions from staff had been addressed by the applicants and that complete financial data had been provided.

She said that Pioneer had faced many challenges and that they have struggled to make the expected progress toward the initial goals and objectives listed in their charter school application. Major changes, she said, have been made in both the school’s leadership and educational programming, and controls have been put into place to ensure that the school does not overspend its budget, as it did in its first two years of operation. She said that in the past two years, they have remained well within their budget and have been able to repay some of the deficit that occurred early in their operation. District staff, she said, feel that Pioneer has followed the terms and conditions of their contract and have operating in compliance with the provisions of the Charter School Act.

Ms. Eastlund said, however, that although many changes have occurred within the educational and administrative structure of the school, staff has identified potential changes to put into place as a condition of charter renewal. She explained that staff recommends that Pioneer’s charter be renewed for a period of three years, contingent upon its agreement to implement the changes listed by their own representatives in their application and upon the condition that the school achieve an overall academic performance rating of “low” or above by the end of the 2002-2003 school year. If that rating is not achieved, she said, the charter should be revoked.

Regarding the school’s “unsatisfactory” performance rating, Ms. Gantz Berman asked if the State of Colorado would take over Pioneer for reconstitution if the district revoked its charter due to the fact that they were unable to raise their rating to “low” or better. She asked staff if that possibility had been taken under consideration when that recommendation was made.

Dr. Eckerling replied that that question had been considered and said that, upon revocation of the charter, Pioneer would cease to exist as a school and, therefore, would not be eligible for reconstitution by the state. He said that that would give the district time to reorganize and reconstitute the school in any way that the Board feels would allow for better student achievement.
Mrs. Moss said that she had a difficult question and that she did not wish to ask district staff to attempt to “predict the future”; however it seems to her that Pioneer has an extremely formidable challenge ahead of them. She asked if there were any measure in existence that would show how much of an improvement Pioneer would have to make in order to move their achievement level from “unsatisfactory” to “low.”

Dr. Eckerling replied that the school would have to achieve approximately one-half of a standard deviation growth in the state formula, and that, while it would be technically possible, it would be a very daunting challenge for the school. He expressed his belief that the school should be allowed additional time to compensate for the dramatic changes that have occurred within its administration and educational program, and that the school community should be given every possible chance to succeed.

A copy of the report entitled Pioneer Charter School Renewal Application: Staff Analysis and Recommendations is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-02, VI-C-1.

VIII. **Adjournment**

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education