MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL REGULAR MEETING (03-02)
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1
IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER AND STATE OF COLORADO
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, 900 GRANT STREET
THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2003 AT 5:00 PM

I. **Call to Order – 5:00 p.m.**

A. **Performance** by student group “The Centennial Singers”

B. **Recognitions**

Robin Kane introduced five DPS teachers who recently completed their National Board Certification. She said that these five teachers are joining 25 other DPS teachers with this distinction. Supt. Wartgow also congratulated these teachers for their achievement and thanked them for their dedication. The five teachers were:

i. Kelly Babcock, a teacher of gifted and talented students at Martin Luther King Middle School, in her fourth year of teaching with DPS.

ii. Susan Kerry, an English teacher at Abraham Lincoln High School who has been with DPS since 1991.

iii. Robert Katz, a Social Studies teacher at Hamilton Middle School who has been a DPS teacher for over 25 years.

iv. Priscilla Shaw, a Music teacher at George Washington High School. In November, she had the distinction of being the first and only National Board Certified teacher in Colorado in Early Adolescent and Young Adult.

v. Wendy Ward Hoffer, who teaches 7th and 8th grade Math and Science at Odyssey Charter School and has been with DPS for six years.

C. **Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance**

D. **Roll Call**

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

E. **Approval of Agenda**
Mr. Patterson moved that the Agenda be approved. It was seconded by Mrs. Edwards. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Board Member Reports

There were none.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

Supt. Wartgow announced the upcoming 100th anniversary/birthday celebration of DPS and called everyone’s attention to a special insert in tomorrow’s Denver Post & Rocky Mountain News called “100 Years of Denver Public Schools”. The insert will include DPS facts and history as well as information about our new initiatives. He also mentioned next Wednesday night’s Gala Anniversary/Birthday party at the Marriot Civic Center Hotel, and said that the ticket sales so far were over $500,000 and have exceeded the committee’s goal. These proceeds will go to support arts, athletics and after-school activities.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the Consent Agenda.

A. Board of Education (none)

B. Superintendent’s Office

1. Gift Report (IV-B-1)

2. Motion – Addition of High Achieving Students to the Highly Gifted Program at Gust Elementary School (IV-B-2)

3. Motion – Independent Contractor Services Agreement with the University of Pittsburgh on Behalf of the Institute for Learning (IV-B-3)

4. Motion – Recommended Textbooks (IV-B-4)

5. Motion – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Youth Violence Prevention Grant (IV-B-5)

6. Motion – New International Preparatory Magnet at Smiley Middle School (IV-B-6)
7. Motion – Expansion of Highly Gifted and High Achieving Program at Carson (IV-B-7)

C. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources
   a. Motion – Personnel Transaction Report (IV-C-1a)

2. Facility Management
   a. Final Settlements (IV-C-2a)
   b. Motion – DPS Intergovernmental Agreement with City Concerning GOCO Grant Application (IV-C-2b)

D. Budget and Finance

1. Statement of Revenue Allocations, Appropriations, Commitments and Expenditures for the Period July 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002 (IV-D-1)

Ms. Gantz Berman described the procedure for the Consent Agenda. Mr. Mejia moved that the Consent Agenda be accepted, and Mr. Patterson seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Held item: Motion - Independent Contractor Services Agreement with the University of Pittsburgh on Behalf of the Institute for Learning (IV-B-3)

Mrs. Edwards read the motion (Appendix 03-02, IV-B-3). Mr. Mejia seconded the motion. Mrs. Edwards clarified that she held this item only because it wasn’t included in their packet previously, therefore its wording was not part of the official record. She also expressed that she was in favor of it because it brings Sally Mentor Hay to our District.

A roll-call vote was taken and passed unanimously.

Held item: Motion - New International Preparatory Magnet at Smiley Middle School (IV-B-6)

Mrs. Edwards read the motion (Appendix 03-02, IV-B-6). Mr. Mejia seconded the motion.

Mr. Patterson asked that someone from staff address the question of the mandatory nature of how some of the students were going to move. Mr. Eckerling said there was a change from the original proposal; 6th graders in the proposed Smiley/Catchman area for 2003-2004 who
have applied to Hamilton and are accepted would have the option of enrolling in either Hamilton or Smiley. They would be able to enroll at Hamilton if they chose, with transportation.

Regarding the budget question on some of the outside funds that have been secured, Supt. Wartgow confirmed that outside funding has been secured, and the only cost that the District is agreeing to pay are the transportation costs for the program. All of the costs for staff development and materials will be raised through outside funds. He added that a commitment has already been received for $20,000. Nate Howard, Principal of Smiley Middle School, introduced his Assistant Principal, Althea Fuller, and his CDM member, Mr. Brewer. He confirmed that they had secured outside funding with the Stapleton Foundation, who have agreed to sponsor $20,000 for the next three years for a total of $60,000, if we don’t receive some of the grants that they are in the process of applying for.

Mr. Patterson asked whether, by moving this initiative forward this week, we would still be able to accommodate parents who are going through the choice timeline now for the next school year, and Mr. Howard confirmed this. Mr. Howard said they had received a lot of phone calls from parents who were very interested in Smiley having an IPM Program, and he told them it was pending Board approval, so voting on it this evening would allow the school to meet all of the District’s criteria for choice schools.

Supt. Wartgow congratulated everyone for their work on this program, and noted that this was a great collaborative effort between Hamilton and Smiley.

A roll-call vote was taken and passed unanimously.

**Held item: Motion - Expansion of Highly Gifted and High Achieving Program at Carson (IV-B-7)**

Mrs. Edwards read the motion (Appendix 03-02, IV-B-7). Mr. Mejia seconded the motion. Mrs. Edwards spoke of her continuing pride in DPS, especially when it comes to expanding the options that are available to meet the needs of students within our District, and discovering which programs work best, with high parent satisfaction and student achievement. She praised the Board’s decision a few years ago to re-open Southmoor Elementary by noting that, although it was done with some risk, last year’s CSAP scores made it the top-ranking elementary school in the state, and now the demand for the school exceeds the capacity of the school, and it is also the site of one part of our current Highly-Gifted Program within the District. She noted that the demand for that program and the demand for space at Southmoor have resulted in the need to look for another site for that program, and the recommendation that has come to the Board is to have that site be at Carson Elementary. She confirmed that Carson is also highly supportive of this move. Finally, she said that the Board had passed on Consent Agenda, without speaking to it or holding it, a similar initiative in southwest Denver, where the Highly Gifted Program
currently offered at Gust Elementary is being expanded into a program for Highly Gifted and High Achieving students, and she wanted to express her support of that motion (03-02, IV-B-2) again, as well as this one.

A roll-call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

V. **Old Business**

There was none.

VI. **New Business**

A. Information only


Mr. Sandoval introduced Melanie Byers, the Principal at Fairmont Elementary, noting that she was recognized last year by the Principal’s Center for her outstanding work. Ms. Byers introduced the members of her staff in attendance: Chrissa Nelson, administrative assistant; Connie Fees, ECE teacher; Tina Wilson, kindergarten teacher; CeCe Martinez, kindergarten teacher; Gabrielle Santian, a parent and paraprofessional; Robert Parker, kindergarten teacher.

She began by noting that their first objective is to work with their ECE and Kindergarten, and their staff is 100% on board with the proposal. She thanked Sandoval Elementary and their Principal for helping them to put their proposal together and advising them, as well as for giving them the opportunity to work with their teachers on staff development. She explained that each of the teachers present are now enrolled in dual language staff development with the Sandoval teachers, and compared their partnership with that of Hamilton and Smiley.

Ms. Byers explained that Fairmont is keeping their current program, and they are proposing a “School-Within-A-School” model. The Dual Language model they are proposing now would be definitely for their Kindergarten, and for their ECE, based on interest. They want to create a “strand” and then adding another grade on each year, starting with ECE and Kinder, and then proceeding the following year to include 1st grade, then 2nd grade the following year. She concluded by praising Fairmont and its staff, its support of the community, and that they just won a Distinguished Significant Improvement Award from the governor.

Mr. Mejia commented that, as a property owner in the area, he knows of the changes that are going on in the neighborhood, and predicted that the dual-language model would be successful here, as it has been at Anna Maria Sandoval.
Ms. Byers added to that comment that they are hoping to pick up students from the waiting list at Sandoval who are interested in a dual-language component for their education.

Mrs. Edwards asked whether they presented other models when they spoke with people in the community.

Ms. Byers said that, because 75% of their staff speak Spanish, this is the model that they keep coming back to. She said the situation they ran into that they sort of put on hold was English Immersion. One of her staff added that they’ve also heard from people that don’t currently have children at Fairmont, that it is a desirable model.

Rev. Guzman said she spoke with the director or president of the Neighborhood Association recently, who doesn’t have a child right now that would go into the program, but is very excited about it, and confirmed that the staff had worked very closely with the neighborhood association. She also noted that the children in dual-language programs are successful all over this country and commended the staff for wanting to embrace the cultural and economic diversity of their neighborhood.

Ms. Gantz-Berman asked for clarification of the “school-within-a-school” model of the dual language program, and whether research has shown it to be as successful as what we have at Anna Marie Sandoval.

Sally Mentor Hay responded to the question by saying that the research you would look to in this case would be research about school-within-a-school programs, and the factors you have to guard against, in terms of making a program successful, really does relate to whether or not the overall school environment is favorable and supportive a particular concept; so you have to consider things such as whether students in the school within a school program receive better treatment and/or extra resources, and whether the teachers in this program have “extras” of some kind. She said it always comes down to equity. Relative to this particular school-within-a-school program, she said that because the focus is on language and the desire is for students to develop both languages, the issue is whether or not the school program as a whole – assemblies, playground, other times when the students are out and about – is providing continued support.

Ms. Byers added that, because they’ve been very successful in their Spanish language model of instruction, and would maintain an English language classroom with English-speaking students, as well as having an ELA-S classroom with Spanish-speaking students, then their third option would be the dual-language piece, so they would have that continued language support throughout the school. She said that currently they have a classroom where half of the kids are English-speaking and half are Spanish-speaking, and those teachers are qualified to teach in both languages, and are doing so in the same classroom. The emphasis has not been on Spanish language instruction for their English-speakers, but that’s nevertheless what they’re hoping to bring into it. Someone added that that particular classroom is the most requested classroom from all of the parents, because they realize the importance of having
the Spanish language in that classroom, believing that their kids will internalize while they’re in there.

A Board member asked whether their intent is to use the same model that’s being used at Sandoval, with the same standards, within the strand.

Mrs. Byers confirmed this.

Mrs. Edwards commented that, although she is in support of the model itself, nevertheless she has seen the school-within-a-school initiative in other places where sometimes the numbers don’t quite work out because the demand for one of the programs within the school, i.e. at the 2nd grade level 18 kids want model A, and 39 kids want model B, and you get two teacher allocations, then making the numbers work can be a challenge. She concluded by saying it sounds like they have come up with some creative ways of dealing with that already at Fairmont, but it will take some management, and she wished them luck.

Ms. Gantz Berman said the Board would be looking forward to any public comment on this and they would be voting on it next month.

Dr. Wartgow said the public hearing will be held on the first Thursday in February, and the vote is planned for the third Thursday in February.

2. Odyssey Charter School Renewal Application (VI-A-2)

Mr. Nelson Chase introduced the staff, board members and parents who were in attendance: Jeremy Hoffer, 7th & 8th grade teacher; Wendy Ward Hoffer, 7th & 8th grade teacher; Peter Sherman, honored alumnus; Van Skoles, the original director of the school, new board member, and parent; Lenare Krizzon, one of their original teachers; Adeja Hanes, new board chair; his wife Cindy; Barbara Volte, original member of their board and a new member of their board; Kathy McLaughlin, 1st & 2nd grade teacher, and a nationally board certified teacher; and the enrollment coordinator; Audrey McCall, special ed teacher; Marsha Fulton, professional development; Kim Byer, a founder of the school, parent and original teacher; Jen Dingman, head of their Adventure Program; Ally Morgan, member of their board, a 5th & 6th grade teacher.

Mr. Chase reviewed the school’s application program, and student CSAP performance. Mr. Chase said the school is in its fifth year now, and a goal for the school and their board is to revisit their vision and come up with a strategic plan for the next five years.

Mr. Chase introduced Karen Shields to speak on behalf of the parents. Ms. Shields said that one of the major factors in their decision for Odyssey was family involvement, which is very integral to the Odyssey community, and one example she gave of this is the Before and After School Program, which encourages family participation. A second reason for their choice concerns the school’s philosophy on learning both inside and outside the classroom. Ms.
Shields praised the school’s evaluation methods. She said that her daughter’s first “report card” was a conference attended by the parents, their daughter and her teacher, where they talked about what she had learned, looked at a portfolio with examples of her work, and received a 3-page report concerning her strengths and areas of improvement. She acknowledged that the Odyssey model is not necessarily for everyone, but she and her husband place their trust and confidence in the Odyssey school to provide their daughter with a quality educational experience.

Kathy McLaughlin, a member of Odyssey’s board, as well as a 1st & 2nd grade teacher, spoke about their educational program. Ms. McLaughlin started with a little of her own history, explaining that she got her national board certification while teaching in a different district; she’d heard about Odyssey, and because of her work with the national board standards and what she had heard about expeditionary learning schools, and her interest in exceptional teaching practices, she decided to leave what was a better paying job to join this charter school.

Audrey McCall talked about their Special Education Program. She said she’d been with Odyssey since the beginning, when they started out with one student in special ed, and they now have 25; because of that increase the position is now full time; they also have support services of a nurse, social worker, school psychologist and occupational therapist, who come in for one-half day per week. The program is an inclusionary one with some pull-out and a lot of consultation with the teachers, and it works really well for these students because of the philosophy of the school. She said they also have some students who are ESL students, and that the ELL students seem to also flourish.

Mr. Chase took this opportunity to thank Sherry Eastland, who has been a great support to him and to Odyssey.

Adeja Hanes, the chairperson of their board, said she was honored and humbled to be the chair of Odyssey School. She said they’ve had a tough time on the board over the past few years, due to transitions which have included three different directors for the school and the school moving every year since it began, but she said that these changes compliment the philosophy of the style of teaching and expeditionary learning at Odyssey, which is to always try to achieve the highest goals possible regardless of what is going on, and she said that the children receive stability in addition to good academic teaching. She said the board is supporting the staff, the teachers, the parents, and most importantly they are supporting the work and the achievement of the students of the Odyssey School.

Ms. Gantz Berman opened the floor to questions and comments from the Board.

Rev. Guzman brought up a concern that many people believe a problem with charter schools is that they are built to teach very few poor kids, and asked them to go into more detail about how they intend to increase the number of free lunch kids.
Mr. Chase said that they don’t know for sure, because until they move back out to Stapleton they won’t know what their “catchment” area is going to be. He said he thinks there are some concerns that, because of the nature of the culture of expeditionary learning in Outward Bound, there may be cultural differences in terms of what people expect and want in an educational experience, and thinks one thing they need to do a better job of is educating families about who they are and what they provide. He said they’re in the process of upgrading their marketing material, and printing a new brochure, and they’re trying to look more broadly into the community to see where they need to go, but they don’t have all the answers yet.

Someone else added that they have also increased the diversity on the board, which will greatly enhance their ability to reach out to various communities, and they have specific communities targeted. Mr. Chase added that they are concerned about diversity, and are a very ethnically balanced school, 50% Anglo, 40% African American, and the balance Asian and Hispanic.

Mrs. Edwards asked how many students are currently enrolled. Mr. Chase said their charter is 216 and he believes they’re at 214. She asked how many of those students live outside DPS boundaries. Answer: five to ten.

Mrs. Edwards said that if their marketing plan includes reaching out to neighboring cities, communities and school districts, there are probably families in Aurora who should be reached out to, and that they should take a look at daycare centers in that area. Mr. Chase said they were also relying heavily on the families getting the word out, too.

Mr. Patterson thanked those present for showing their dedication to providing quality education. He said they need to be mindful about making sure that they’re clear on what expeditionary learning means, especially as they go into more diverse neighborhoods, because if people don’t understand that term and what’s being offered to them for their kids, they may just go on to the next one. He also asked about the problem with their getting an ESL list, and whether the board needs to address that. Dr. Wartgow said the data should be available on SASI, but if they need a list it would be given to them.

Mr. Patterson asked Dr. Wartgow explain the process for these renewal applications. Dr. Wartgow said that what they have presented tonight had been turned in by December 1st, and staff have seen already. He said the Board will have a chance to discuss this at the work session on February 6th, and will ask the Board to take action on the renewal applications at its February 20th meeting.

Mrs. Gantz Berman said that Odyssey has had some challenges in terms of change of leadership and change of location, currently about to move to a 4th location, and believes that given all that, they are doing remarkably well. Speaking for herself, she said she couldn’t imagine any problem that would prevent the Board from extending their charter application. In reference to Rev. Guzman’s comment earlier, she said that of the ten current charter
schools operating, Odyssey does have the lowest percentage of free and reduced lunch, and she suggested that they look at their goal of 30%, which is still way below what the district average is, because the issue of outreach and trying to increase the number of free and reduced lunch students is something that the Board will probably look at very seriously. Otherwise things seem to be going extremely well there, and she congratulated them.

Clarifying her earlier point, Rev. Guzman said she thinks it would be great for poor children to be able to have the opportunity to go to a school such as Odyssey.


Kay Frunzi, Principal of Wyatt Edison, spoke on behalf of the school, and started by referring to a notebook the Board members were given earlier with information about Wyatt Edison’s financial stability, student achievement, and programs. She announced that Wyatt Edison was the only charter school of all the DPS charter schools that showed significant improvement compared to its comparison schools. She introduced the board members who were present: LaTonya McPherson, chair; Mary Gideons Kronen, secretary; Barbara Bridges, treasurer; Carolyn Gray; Dora Guiterrez; Carolyn Magweeg; three board members could not be present.

Ms. McPherson spoke first and said that she has been a supportive parent of Wyatt Edison since it opened in 1998, and has been very excited about the growth and progress she has seen. She has two daughters, in the 2nd and 4th grade; her 4th grader initially had some problems with reading and focusing, but teachers and tutors noticed it and brought it to her attention, which she is very thankful for. She is also an active member of the board, this being her second year as board chair, and she appreciates the opportunity and the confidence they’ve placed in the board members to conduct business for the school. Some of the benefits she sees at Wyatt Edison include the tutoring, needs assessment, and the World Language Health Arts Music Dance and Drama program, which gives the children the opportunity to do things other than just reading, writing and arithmetic. She concluded by expressing her support of the application for renewal.

Ms. Gideons Kronen expressed her appreciation of the choices the board has offered to the children of Denver, Wyatt Edison being one of those options, and hoped the board would look favorably upon its application. She said Wyatt Edison is a low-performing school, and moving to that status from unsatisfactory has been a big achievement. She assured the Board that Wyatt Edison’s board, staff, and community strongly support this renewal.

Ms. Frunzi introduced the Wyatt Edison staff present: Eva Hernandez, Kathy Garvey, Day Reynolds, Sandy Stewart, Danielle Diacenzo, Chris Cook, Mars Moreno, Kate Greeley, Diane Cook, and Andre Bachalet.
Ms. Hernandez and Ms. Garvey spoke on behalf of the school’s staff. One of them began, saying she was a DPS teacher for four years before coming to Wyatt Edison, and that she has never been happier in her career as an educator. She said she has grown as a professional, appreciates the curriculum, and has experienced a supportive staff, especially regarding her ESL students. She said she is grateful that they haven’t lost their arts and music programs, and that all of the components which Edison offers are helping the students to succeed.

The other teacher said she has been privileged to be a part of Wyatt Edison for the past 4 years, and that it’s been an honor to work with the exceptional families and students, as well as with the dedicated board and staff. She said that she is always excited to share with people about Wyatt Edison’s students, teachers, staff, and academic growth, as well as the hope, support and encouragement that are offered at this school. She concluded by saying that most importantly, Wyatt Edison provides an opportunity for everyone to learn, to grow, and to become a successful member of our community.

Two 7th grade students, Marina Estrada and Paul Longmore, read excerpts from various 7th and 8th grade students, which included comments about the new opportunities that have been given to inner-city kids, the support and encouragement of the teachers, the well-rounded education they are receiving, including help they receive from teachers after school in areas where they are struggling, the increase in their test scores, the Step Up To Writing Program, and the variety of academic clubs they can join.

Dora Guiterrez, a parent and board member at Wyatt Edison, said she grew up in the area, and that school was abandoned; later she moved back to the area with her family, and at that time her oldest son was having trouble learning to read; it was the second year the school was open, and now he’s been attending for 3 or 4 years and he reads above his grade. She also said that both of her sons knew very little English when they started, and now they have very good grades.

Ms. Frunzi introduced two people from the Works for Corporate Edison: Santiago Lopez, the Reading & Writing Curriculum Coordinator, and Laverne White, the Regional Vice President of School of Operations for the Western Division of Edison Schools.

Ms. White applauded the students for sharing their thoughts about their school. She said that, as a member of the School Operations Division in New York, her primary role is to provide whatever support the school needs, and they are very encouraged and excited about Wyatt. She explained that one of the indicators they use to measure how well a school is doing is student achievement, and they are making significant improvement in the skill levels of students that they’re serving; another indicator is design & curriculum, which is one of their non-negotiables, and the teachers are relentless in assuring that the curriculum is implemented; another is customer satisfaction, which is extremely high based on the feedback from teachers, staff, students and parents.
In summary, Ms. Frunzi said that Wyatt Edison has served the students and the community in an exemplary manner over the last five years, with student achievement results and other measures of excellence indicating the strength of the school, and requested the Board extend the charter for the next five years.

Ms. Gantz Berman opened the floor to questions and comments from the Board.

Mrs. Edwards began with a request, saying that she’s always been impressed with Wyatt Edison’s research-based programming, and she asked for them, when time permits, to give the district some feedback on the things they’re doing that are making a difference for kids which might be different from what is being done in our other schools in DPS, because one of the reasons the Board approves charters is to have the opportunity to learn from them. She commented that she has visited Wyatt Edison many times, and each classroom appeared very caring and very focused on student achievement. Mrs. Edwards then asked about the proposal first came to the board in the Edison conferences she attended, one of the points brought up was the idea of computer linkage to every home for interaction with the family and for doing homework; she asked whether that goal still exists and how it’s coming along.

Ms. Frunzi replied that Edison is going through some re-design, and one of the re-design elements is that the “Home Roll Out Program” which they call the computers in the home. Our intent is to keep existing computers in homes until they die, we’re not going to pull them back and store them.

Mrs. Edwards asked if they weren’t as effective as it was hoped, or if it was a cost issue.

Ms. White said it was a combination, and being a research-based organization they looked at the effectiveness and they had a group study and as they moved forward they asked what do we want to keep, what do we want to improve upon. Computers are still involved and integrated within the day-to-day operation of the school, but they’re taking a little different focus as they move forward with the newer contracts.

Mrs. Edwards added on a final note that she was sorry to hear that a DPS principal (Ms. Frunzi) would be replacing Karen Lefever at Edison, because her work in DPS has been so highly valued and she will be missed.

Ms. Gantz Berman thanked everyone for coming out and speaking on behalf of Wyatt Edison, and she noted that, although generally speaking charter schools are doing about the same as non-charter schools within the system, Wyatt Edison is the only exception to that, and she hoped they would keep up the good work.

4. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Announcement
Dr. Wartgow mentioned that there are a lot of activities going on in the schools in appreciation of this holiday, and he is pleased that it’s being appropriately recognized. He wished everyone a fun, relaxing and safe three-day weekend.

**VII. Adjournment**

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 7:09 PM.

Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education