I. **Call to Order**

A. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited

B. **Roll Call**

President Elaine Gantz Berman called the meeting to order at 5:30 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, Ms. Theresa Peña, and Mr. Lester Woodward.

II. **Board Member Reports**

A. **Historically Underutilized Business (HUBS) Report and Plan for Utilization of Minority/Women Contractors and Suppliers** – Mike Langley, Executive Director of Facility Management, introduced Manual Gonzales, board chairman of the Hispanic Contractors of Colorado (HCC). Mr. Gonzales said that the projects included in the bond issue would be ideal in size and scope for small businesses. In preparation for the proposed bond issue the HUBs Council had been working with Denver Public Schools (DPS) Facility Management since the beginning of the year to review how DPS did business with HUBs companies. He said they continued to be pleased with the progress of the HUBs program. He said that they have addressed some difficult and controversial issues, and because of their willingness to take on tough issues, DPS had become a model of the type of commitment, reporting, and dialogue that minority and women businesses wish to establish in a state that is rapidly becoming minority dominated. Mr. Gonzales said that the DPS Board has been key to the success of this council, through their belief in the council, their financial support, and their willingness to supply staff necessary to facilitate the HUBs program. Included in the report were seven recommendations for which they ask approval, he said. Mr. Gonzales introduced Cece Ortiz from the Mayor’s Office. She said she was present to show the Mayor’s support of the mill initiative and as insight for the Mayor’s economic development agenda for the city, as this provides an excellent opportunity to work hand-in-hand with HUBs. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, II-A.

Ms. Peña asked what was being done to provide advanced notification of bids and if the process is sufficient.

A spokesperson for HCC responded that when DPS had a construction project coming up, it would send notices to all of the different chambers, and they in turn sent notices
to their members. They had project plans in their office available for contractors who may not be able to afford them. She believed the process was sufficient and efficient.

Ms. Peña asked what plans were in place to ensure equity in the architect and general contractor selection process.

They responded that both processes were essentially the same. The solicitations went out, the invitations were made, and they said the process was sufficient. HUBs members are involved in the final selection process, also.

Ms. Peña asked the HUBs Council to supply the Board with at least a quarterly report on the status of the projects as they roll out with the bond.

Rev. Guzman asked if anyone from the Denver Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (DHCC) was in attendance, because she knew that at one time they had some major concerns about the process. She wondered if those concerns had been resolved.

Again HCC responded that members of the DHCC were at a meeting in Arizona, but that they were in agreement with all of the recommendations in this report.

B. School Improvement Accountability Council (SIAC) Evaluations and Recommendations Regarding Charter School Applications

Pam Bisceglia, District SIAC member, explained the Charter Schools Act that required District SIAC to review charter school applications and provide recommendations to the Board of Education. This year that responsibility was delegated to a subcommittee, and she introduced the seven other members. She thanked DPS staff for its support and technical assistance, but emphasized that they did not participate in the decision-making process. She explained the subcommittee’s process that led to the District SIAC’s review and acceptance of their report and authorization of its submission to the Board of Education. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of the meeting as Appendix 03-19, II-B.

Jesse Sutherland presented recommendations for the American School Charter application. He reviewed the strengths and issues of the program and stated the District SIAC recommendation as follows:

As noted, District SIAC is opposed to granting charter to the American School if it intends to offer educational services to adults over the age of 21. However, a majority of the committee considers the underserved needs of the target population to be extremely compelling. Accordingly,

By majority vote, District SIAC recommends that the charter application of the American School be granted on the conditions that the school would limit its enrollees to persons eligible for State Finance Act funding and that the other concerns noted are appropriately resolved.
Nevertheless, even if these conditions were to be met, a minority of the committee remains concerned that the curriculum and educational program is inadequately defined and, thus, would recommend that the charter application be denied.

Ms. Gantz Berman asked how the majority/minority opinions were split. Mr. Sutherland replied that it was a 5 to 3 split.

Mr. Woodward asked if they considered how this might relate to the programs available at Emily Griffith Opportunity School (EGOS). Mr. Sutherland replied that they thought the offerings of this school would be quite different from EGOS.

John Schultz presented recommendations for the Leadership High School application. He reviewed the strengths and issues of the program and stated the District SIAC recommendation as follows:

In regard to this application, the committee was evenly divided.

By majority vote, District SIAC believes that the Leadership Challenge Program is a valuable extracurricular activity and should, if at all possible, be expanded to all DPS high schools, but does not believe that the program is appropriate as a basis for the operation of a full school and would recommend that the application be denied on the basis of the concerns noted.

A minority of the committee recommends that the charter application of Leaders High School be granted pending demonstration of parental or community support and the development of a recruitment plan for at-risk students.

Mrs. Edwards said when applicants made their charter school presentations to the Board, a Student Board member was present, but she had to leave before there was an opportunity for comment. She gave Mrs. Edwards a note to pass along. The student said that she found this proposal to be very intriguing and that she thought leadership skills were very valuable. She attended Manual High School, and her question was why this program couldn’t partner with Manual and become part of their Leadership Academy. Mrs. Edwards said she is now surprised to hear SIAC say that the extracurricular program was offered at Manual, and she wondered where the student is in the program.

Mr. Shultz said he could only respond that they were told that approximately 500 applications come in at the schools and they have to pare it down to 30.

Mr. Patterson asked the ratio of the vote and was told that it was 5 to 3.

Marilyn Sampson presented recommendations for the Highline Academy. She reviewed the strengths and issues of the program and stated the District SIAC recommendation as follows:
District SIAC finds this charter application as presenting a plan for a school that has every likelihood of being an extremely valuable one for the district and for the students who attend. Further, it could well serve as a model for other schools, both traditional DPS schools and future charters, to provide the popular and successful Core Knowledge curriculum to many more students in Denver. Accordingly,

District SIAC strongly recommends that the charter application of Highline Academy be granted.

Dorolyn Griebenaw presented recommendations for the Southwest Early College. She reviewed the strengths and issues of the program and stated the District SIAC recommendation as follows:

Our principal concern with the application relates to the issue of making the school known and available to all DPS students.

On the assumption that the applicant would present and implement an outreach program throughout DPS with special emphasis on all of the middle schools in southwest Denver, District SIAC recommends that the application of the Southwest Early College be granted.

Leo Smith presented recommendations for the Green Valley Ranch/Montbello Edison Charter School. He reviewed the strengths and issues of the program and stated the District SIAC recommendation as follows:

Upon considering both the positive aspects of having another Edison school and the multitude of issues that would arise if the school is located at the proposed site,

District SIAC recommends that an application for an Edison operated school in the Green Valley Ranch/Montbello area should be granted, but that such school should not be located in the new DPS facility presently under construction in the area.

We further recommend that the Board, after full public discussion, develop a policy to be applied in all circumstances in which charter school applicants seek to use a newly constructed DPS school as the site for the proposed charter school.

Mr. Woodward asked if the committee considered separately the two issues of a charter school and an Edison contracted charter school, and if so, did they give any consideration to whether it would be possible for this to be a school operated by Edison pursuant to a contract with the district, and if the charter aspect of this is a critical piece.

Mr. Smith said they did not specifically address that. They did address whether the idea of an Edison charter school was a good idea in the abstract in that area, and they strongly supported that because the area didn’t have much choice.
Ms. Gantz Berman asked if the recommendation was that the district develop a policy regarding charter applicants who request the use of a newly constructed school building. She said that they did something similar to that with Odyssey School, and asked how that would be different in their minds.

Mr. Smith said that Odyssey and the related school are really a tribute to the PDAC process, because the community developed it as part of that process. The big difference was that there was still a DPS school that had the regular rules about neighborhood enrollment available to that neighborhood, even though part of it was Odyssey.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

Superintendent Jerry Wartgow announced an opportunity offered by the DPS Athletics Department for anyone to attend a district athletic event on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, October 16, 17, and 18, for an admission fee of only $1.00 per person. Sue Edwards, who worked with Athletics on this special offering, encouraged everyone to make an effort to attend a game on that weekend. She said they couldn’t get a better deal for just one buck.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the consent agenda items by number and sequence, in accordance with consent agenda procedures. The following items were removed from the consent agenda and held for discussion:

IV-C-1d  Review and Action on Administrative Judge’s Recommendation in a Teacher Dismissal Action Decision

IV-D-1  Resolution – Amending the Adopted Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2003, and Ending June 30, 2004

The following items were included under the consent agenda:

A. Board of Education

1. Minutes of August 21, 2003, Meeting – A copy of these minutes is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-A-1.

2. Minutes of September 4, 2003, Meeting – A copy of these minutes is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-A-2.

3. Minutes of September 18, 2003, Meeting – A copy of these minutes is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-A-3.
B. Superintendent

1. Gift Report – The Board of Education will be asked to accept gifts having a value of $500 or more. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-B-1.

C. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources

   a. Personnel Transaction Report – This report contains information regarding employee activity such as appointments, resignations, and transfers. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-1a.

   b. Motion to approve the Agreement between Denver Public Schools and the Denver Federation for Paraprofessionals – The Board of Education will move to approve the Agreement and Memorandums of Understanding between Denver Public Schools and the Denver Federation for Paraprofessionals, including related Salary Schedules, effective July 1, 2003, through June 30, 2006. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-1b.

   c. Motion to ratify the Agreement between Denver Public Schools and the Amalgamated Transit Union, Division 1563 – The Board of Education will move to ratify the Agreement between Denver Public Schools and the Amalgamated Transit Union, effective June 1, 2003, through May 31, 2006. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-1c.

2. Facility Management

   a. Final Settlements – The Board of Education will be asked to approve the Final Settlements for contracted services as described on the schedule. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-2a.

   b. Balarat Conservation Easement – The Board of Education will be asked to grant a Conservation Easement to Boulder County over the Balarat property. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-2b.

D. Budget and Finance – Financial Services

2. Resolution – Authorizing the Use of the Beginning Fund Balance During the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2003, and Ending June 30, 2004 – The Board of Education
will be asked to adopt a resolution, in accordance with SB 03-149, to authorize the expenditure of the beginning fund balance of specified funds as anticipated in the amended budget, to state the purpose for which the expenditure is made, and to state the District’s plan to ensure that the use of the beginning-fund balance will not lead to an ongoing deficit. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-D-2.

3. Resolution – Adopting the Amended Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2003, and Ending June 30, 2004 – The Board of Education will be asked to adopt a resolution to adopt the amended budget as presented and amended. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-D-3.

4. Resolution – Appropriation for Expenditures during the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2003, and Ending June 30, 2004 – The Board of Education will be asked to adopt a resolution to appropriate the moneys to be expended in each fund. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-D-4.

5. Resolution – Identification and Filing of Amended Budget and Appropriation Resolution and Copies thereof – The Board of Education will be asked to adopt a resolution to direct that the Amended Budget be labeled as such and signed by the Board President and to cause the Board Secretary to have this Amended Budget on file for public inspection. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-D-5.

E. Educational Services

1. Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program – Approved Application Form – The Board of Education will consider the Superintendent’s recommended changes to the application form for nonpublic school participation. A copy of the changes is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-E-1.

   a. Dove Christian Academy – The Board of Education will take action on the nonpublic school application submitted by the Dove Christian Academy to participate in the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-E-1a.

   b. Montessori School of Lakewood – The Board of Education will take action on the nonpublic school application submitted by the Montessori School of Lakewood to participate in the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-E-1b.
c. St. Pius X School – The Board of Education will take action on the nonpublic school application submitted by St. Pius X School to participate in the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-E-1c.

d. Tetra Academy – The Board of Education will take action on the nonpublic school application submitted by the Tetra Academy to participate in the Colorado Opportunity Contract Pilot Program. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-E-1d.

Mr. Woodward moved and Mr. Patterson seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda as modified under the consent agenda process. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

IV-C-1d Review and Action on Administrative Judge’s Recommendation in a Teacher Dismissal Action Decision – A decision was received on September 25, 2003, and statute requires the Board of Education to act on the decision within 20 days.

Mrs. Edwards moved the adoption of Resolution 2830 in the matter of agenda item IV-C-1d as presented. Mrs. Moss seconded the resolution. A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” were Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Ms. Peña, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Patterson abstained. The resolution was adopted. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-C-1d.

IV-D-1 Resolution – Amending the Adopted Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2003, and Ending June 30, 2004 – The Board of Education will be asked to adopt a resolution identifying the specific adjustments to the revenues and expenditures of all funds.

Mr. Patterson said that this was one of a group of resolutions for the fiscal year budget that the Board might be asked to adopt. He asked Velma Rose, Chief Financial Officer, to briefly explain the reasons for the public record.

Ms. Rose said that every year the district is required to submit to the Board any adjustments to the annual budget for the given year no later than October 15. She said that the 16 funds included in the amended budget approximate $871 million, with the general fund being the largest at $528 million, since it included the operating funds of the district. She explained that many assumptions are used in the initial budget, and as information becomes available, adjustments to the budget can occur. Ms. Rose said this is the first of five resolutions, and the Board will be asked to adopt further adjustments in the spring. By then the district will know the final enrollment count, have finalized the audit in December, and the Department of Education will have notified them of their funding entitlement for the year. The Board of Education also certifies the mill levy, and much will depend on the outcome of the mill
levy override and bond election. If those were approved and the district wanted to spend any of that money this year, they would need to increase budgets for those purposes, also.

Mr. Patterson moved the adoption of Resolution 2831 in the matter of agenda item IV-D-1 as presented. Mrs. Edwards seconded the motion. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously. A copy of this resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, IV-D-1.

V. **Old Business**

There was none.

VI. **New Business**

A. **Policy Revision – JLCD – Administering Medication to Students** – Staff recommended revisions related to this policy in conformance with new state law. A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, VI-A. Discussion on this item can be found in *Board News* publication and on the district web site. The Board will vote on this policy revision at its next meeting.

B. **Policy Revision – KB – Parent Involvement** – Staff recommended revisions related to this policy in conformance with No Child Left Behind Act. A copy of the policy is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, VI-B.

Mrs. Moss said that the policy begins the district’s compliance with No Child Left Behind and it reaffirms the district’s commitment to recognizing parents as partners in academic achievement. That is critical to the success of the district and the success of children. This presentation is a collaborative work of parents, teachers, and administrators who had been meeting since June to write the policy. Policy presenters were Kathy Roper and Fran Jane Smith, chairpersons of the ad hoc task force.

Ms. Smith said that they were before the Board two weeks ago to present the policy, and were here now to present the revision of that policy after consideration of input from the Board and further legal recommendations. Ms. Roper said that the real reason for the development of this policy is to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act and Section 1118, which states that “Each local education agency that receives funds under this section of the No Child Left Behind Act shall develop jointly with, agree upon, and distribute to parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy.” Ms. Smith said that in June 2003, DPS assembled a parent involvement taskforce that grew to more than 25 members. They are confident that, throughout their process and in a variety of ways, they gained input from representatives from all of the district’s constituents. The policy revised and presented today reflects what the constituents believe are key for true parent involvement in the education of their children.

Ms. Roper and Ms. Smith read proposed Policy KB Parent Involvement in its entirety, a copy of which is attached to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-19, VI-B. Ms.
Roper added that a district-wide parent advisory council made up of district stakeholders to be appointed according to procedures approved by the Superintendent shall be established to make recommendations to the Board regarding strategies to implement and ensure success of this policy. The council shall draft regulations to address the requirements of section 1118 of the No Child Left Behind Act, which shall be reviewed annually and revised as needed by the Board of Education and the Superintendent. Ms. Smith said that the Policy before the Board received rave reviews from the Colorado Department of Education because they could tell it was written with parent input and involvement, and that put DPS in a leadership position, which was very exciting for the district. They said they felt confident that this policy was right for the district and the students, and they look forward to the Board’s vote on October 16.

Rev. Guzman said that she thought it was great that in the policy’s opening paragraph they have explicitly included parents of migrant children and those who speak other languages. She said she hoped there was a strong foundation to that statement, because it was often very difficult to get those parents involved. She said if there were any way the Board could support that effort, they would consider that to be very important.

Dr. Wartgow thanked Ms. Roper and Ms. Smith for their hard work, and said that he believed this was an excellent policy and that he and staff were completely supportive and committed to implementation of this policy.

Ms. Gantz Berman advised that the Board would not break for dinner, and that Dr. Wartgow would introduce the next topic on leadership.

Leadership Development Project – Dr. Wartgow said that this was an exciting project made possible by a planning grant from the Donald Kay Foundation. It was a partnership with the University of Denver (DU), and it represented the future of the district in terms of principal leadership and development. He said members of the Leadership Development Project were known as Ritchie Fellows, named after Dan Ritchie, and were DPS employees who wanted to become principals in DPS. He said this was a program that they created and thought would specifically address what principals in an urban district needed.

Sally Mentor Hay, Chief Academic Officer, introduced Tony Lewis, executive director of the Donald Kay Foundation; Ginger Maloney, dean of the School of Education at DU; and Maureen Sanders, executive director of the leadership project who shares her time between DPS and DU.

Mr. Lewis said that the program was little about them and much about DPS and the Ritchie Fellows. The unique challenge of the program was the collaboration, getting the university and a large urban school district together to agree on how to operate a program. The four parts of this program are, 1) the aspiring principals, the Ritchie Fellows, 2) current principals and assistant principals learning good team development from the Ritchie program, 3) leadership team development within the school, and 4) executive leadership development at the cabinet and the sub-cabinet level. He said they
wanted to start to institutionalize leadership development, so that as people come and go, DPS would retain the real quality parts.

Ms. Maloney said that the collaboration between DU and DPS started with a trip to California, which enabled them to visit some of the most prominent principal preparation programs in the country. They met Ms. Sanders and were so impressed with her work at the California Leadership Academy, that all of them agreed that she was the person that they wanted in Denver. Ms. Maloney said that the Ritchie Program was values driven, and those values are the touchstones that weave through every piece of course work, every interaction with each other and with the students. The head, hand, and heart part was important, she said. The head means that students should be exposed to the very best thinking about education issues and practices, but they should know more than what to do, what is needed. They should know how to do it, and the only way to make that happen was through hands-on, clinical experience. What had been so spectacular about this particular partnership, she said, was that it enabled the students to have full-time positions within DPS where they are able to try out what they are learning. And finally, they wanted to make sure that the heart was in this. You can’t be a great school leader if you don’t believe in the possibilities that every child represents. She said they will do extensive evaluation as part of the project and will be able to come back in a few years and tell you about the actual impact on the district.

Ms. Sanders said she was excited to be a part of the project because her heart is in urban schools. She said the collaborative effort of this project has been incredible. The program was performance based, she said, but the way they learn was unique. They reflect on their practice and are adamant about holding themselves to the learning agreements under which they work, and they really look at using different kinds of protocols. A unique feature of the program is the internship. It is all wrapped around instructional leadership—that’s the focus. The process that the Ritchie Fellows went through to be a part of the program was unique and rigorous, she said, and they are very proud of them. She had all of the 15 Ritchie Fellows stand to be recognized.

Ms. Mentor Hay said that while the Ritchie Fellows program was the component of the project that was now up and running, it was just one of the four components that they intended to develop. She said that as they have the resources to develop the other three components, they will be equally as proud. They have received generous funding from the Donald Kay Foundation, and they have proposals out to other foundations to raise funds to support the other components. They did get started on the second component, the training and development program for the district’s existing principals, and for the first time they were able to include assistant principals. She said they want to invest in their own people and grow their own leaders in addition to being a district that was open to invite the best in the country to come and work here in Denver. This year every high school and middle school principal and assistant principal will spend four half-days during the school year involved in this leadership component.

VII. Public Comment (1st Thursday of Each Month)
Krista Fox, Dee Farris, Peggy Cuciti, Joel Canales, Rosie Aguilar, Angel Holt, Ouima Marshall, Darrel Harris, David Wilson, and Patrick Hamill - Green Valley Ranch/Montbello Edison Charter School Application – These presenters spoke from different perspectives in support of the new charter school. Ms. Cuciti, who runs the public opinion research program in the graduate school of Public Affairs at CU Denver, said that her group was asked to do a survey by the Foundation for Educational Excellence after the planning process for this school was already started and they had identified key elements of the proposal. She said they conducted 593 interviews in the Green Valley Ranch and Montbello communities. The margin of error was 4.1%. Some key findings from the survey were:

- There continues to be moderate dissatisfaction with the performance of public schools, more than is typical around the state, and people are looking for alternatives.
- There was general familiarity with the concept of charter schools, all positive.
- There was strong support--70%--for this partnership with the Edison school.
- Some 90% were in favor of Board approval for this charter school proposal.
- Some 70% said they would enroll their child in this school if it were approved.

Craig Dobkin – Experience Substituting for DPS and Play for Peace – Mr. Dobkin said that he was a teacher of 32 years, and that he substitute taught last year for DPS in 55 different schools, and it was a powerful and eye-opening experience. He said he saw teachers doing things with students that technicians couldn’t do, because they all connected with those students in a very empathetic way. He said that DPS had a lot to be proud of.

Nina Bayer – Transportation to Hamilton – Ms. Bayer, parent of a Hamilton Middle School student, expressed her concerns regarding the lack of transportation from the One Dartmouth Place and Kennedy Ridge apartment complexes on the other side of Hampden and Havana Streets in Southeast Denver. She voiced concern for the safety of students having to walk the isolated routes to and from school, and said it takes her 11-year-old two hours to do it. She said a school bus stopped within 500’, and she could see that the bus was always half empty.

Dr. Wartgow said that Transportation was actively working on this problem, and DPS was aware that the situation must be addressed and resolved quickly.

Chris Terboth, Rachel Hawkins, and Niki Mitchell – Southwest Early College Charter School – The speakers presented different perspectives in support of Southwest Early College Charter School. Mr. Terboth said that the founding committee was committed to making this a school for all of Southwest Denver. Ms. Hawkins is a Denver resident who sends her child to a Jefferson County charter school. She said that since there are no small high schools in Southwest Denver at the present, in any school district, that this is the kind of choice that could bring her child back into Denver Public Schools.

Joanne Roll – Board Proceedings – Ms. Roll said that she was protesting the Boards failure to post minutes of meetings on-line or to make them available in hard copy. The
last minutes posted on-line were for August 2002. Whether inadvertent or deliberate, what that meant, she said, was that citizens could not access records, and that making all public records available in a timely manner was the responsibility of the Board.

Ms. Edwards responded that in an effort to cut back on expenses in central administration, they eliminated one position in the Board Office, and that one employee/position previously transcribed minutes. She said they are significantly behind in transcription of minutes and will work to get that caught up as promptly as possible.

Ruth Kedzir, Esther Varney, Daniel Whitlock, Pat Austin, and Sue Berscheid – Highline Academy Charter School – The speakers presented various perspectives, all of which supported the approval of Highline Academy Charter School. Ms. Kedzir said that a sign on a new housing development in her neighborhood read, “Convenient Denver location, and the Cherry Creek school district.” Educational choices such as the Highline Academy would offer would discourage developers from such negative statements about DPS. Ms. Varney said that she lives in the heart of Denver, on the northeast corner of the boundaries for this school. She and her husband absolutely love the culture and energy of the inner city, but they are concerned about its public education for their children. Their neighborhood school is consistently ranked average, and they are not willing to settle for average for their children. In the absence of choices such as Highline Academy, their children will attend school outside of DPS. Mr. Whitlock addressed the issue of diversity, which he said seemed to concern the Board. He said their charter calls for recruitment of kids from the neighborhood, which is as diverse as one can get. There is nothing in the charter that excludes anyone. Ms. Austin said that the core knowledge curriculum, the uniforms, the parental involvement are all part of what makes Highline Academy so attractive to parents. Ms. Berscheid said that her two children do not attend DPS because their neighborhood school consistently shows a 40 to 50% proficiency in reading and writing, and they cannot settle for 50% for their children. Highline Academy could bring them back into the DPS fold.

Becky Wissink – DCTA Issues – Ms. Wissink, president of Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), presented petitions to the Board from what she said were 117 schools and sites with signatures of 3,144 of Colorado’s finest teachers. The petitions asked for a Board commitment to a Salary Recovery Plan necessary to regain marketplace value of DPS teachers in the metro area. Ms. Wissink provided information to support statements in the petition and outlined what should be included in the Plan. She said teachers asked for the Board’s commitment and immediate action to work together to do the analysis, to do the evaluation, to examine the spending priorities in the district budget, and to create a plan to reestablish the competitive value of the compensation system for DPS teachers.

Rev. Guzman asked if by the idea of “recovery,” they were suggesting that they make adjustments to recover some of this in 2004-05?

Ms. Wissink responded “both,”—if adjustments can be made in 2003-2004 year, they should be included in the plan. The Joint Budget and Compensation Committee would
examine that and seek outside input of where adjustments could be made. She pointed out that the Board earlier passed a resolution for an amended budget, and said that this could be a part of another amended budget that the Board might get in the spring.

Mrs. Moss reiterated the commitment that the Board made when they voted on the mill levy package to really make an effort to find additional money to increase salaries in the coming year. She said her personal commitment would be that she would like to work with them to do that.

Rev. Guzman asked if the reality that DPS leads the area in starting salaries but lost ground after five years had been that way for several years. The answer was “yes.”

Ms. Gantz Berman asked if the Joint Budget and Compensation Committee was separate from the Compensation Task Force that had been working on the Pay for Performance pilot for some time. If so, she asked if it had begun or when it would begin, what the membership was, etc.

Rich Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Finance, replied that they are separate bodies. The Compensation Task Force is referenced in the Agreement and is an ongoing body. The Joint Budget and Compensation Committee is a body designed for a specific purpose, to produce a new compensation system, and will then cease to exist. The Committee had not yet started its work, he said.

Responding to Ms. Gantz Berman’s question about a timeline and committee composition, Andre Pettigrew, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services, said that they are in the process of setting up a core team meeting for the middle of this month, and they will set schedules and agendas for all new committees that have been empowered as part of the Agreement. Mr. Allen said the committee is a “joint” committee, so both district and DCTA personnel will be on it.

**Jay Smith – Parental Involvement** – Mr. Smith said he is a parent at Academia Ana Marie Sandoval Montessori School and spoke to his concern about the loss of the spring parent/teacher conference day. There is no better way to foster communication among the teacher, administrator, and parent than the parent/teacher conference. One meeting will only give parents 15 minutes per year with a child’s teacher. That is not enough time, he said. Mr. Smith asked if there was a state law requiring a certain amount of time between parents and teachers.

Mrs. Moss said that parent/teacher conferences are not required anywhere except in No Child Left Behind, which requires elementary schools to have a parent/teacher conference at least once a year. Last year the DPS Board put in two conferences a year, and unfortunately, in the budget crisis, one of those days got dropped this year. She said they do have a commitment from administrators that teachers would meet with at least 80% of parents during the second semester. She said right now schools are trying to figure out how to accomplish that with no extra time given.
Mrs. Moss said she agreed with Mr. Smith, and hopes that next year the second day can be put back into the calendar.

Mrs. Edwards said that she believed that they need to increase the amount of parental involvement and communication, she believed that they need to increase compensation for teachers so that DPS can attract and retain good teachers, she believed that they must offer choice in the district. But she also believed that the challenge was how to resource all of that in a time of economic crisis. There was hardly anyone who came to the Board who didn’t ask for something that would benefit children, she said, but the Board sat there and struggled with how they could fund all of the needs. That was, she said, simply a statement of fact and her perception of tonight’s public hearing, that the needs are there, but the resources are not.

Mr. Smith asked to respond and said that last year their school community raised $45,000 just to maintain their core programs. This year they will do the same, and next year they believe they may have to raise $70,000 to maintain their school’s core programs. If you get parents involved, they will bring resources, he said.

Announcement—Ms. Gantz Berman said that as they concluded the meeting, the Board wanted to publicly congratulate a colleague and friend, Cole Finnegan, who recently was appointed by Mayor Hickenlooper as City Attorney. Mr. Finnegan played a big role in the rebirth of the DPS Foundation as vice-chairman and did a remarkable job of raising additional resources and awareness about DPS. He will not be able to raise any more money for DPS, but hopefully he will be able to continue on the Foundation board. So congratulations to Cole Finnegan, Ms. Gantz Berman said.

VIII. Adjournment

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.