I. **Call to Order**

A. **Pledge of Allegiance**

B. **Roll Call**

President Elaine Gantz Berman called the meeting to order at 5:19 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: Ms. Elaine Gantz Berman, Mrs. Susan G. Edwards, Rev. Lucia Guzman, Mr. James Mejía, Mr. Kevin Patterson, and Mr. Lester Woodward. Mrs. Michelle Moss was absent and excused.

C. **Recognitions**

Superintendent Jerry Wartgow asked Sabin Elementary School principal Linda Gordon to introduce special guest Sarah Harman. Ms. Gordon said it was a pleasure to honor such a brave little girl, and Sarah would explain herself what happened. Sarah said they were on the road to the Air Force Academy, and the teacher had asked some parents of the kids to drive, so she and three friends rode with Mr. Booth. She was in the front seat and they were almost there when Mr. Booth said he felt sick and so she was getting worried, she said, and then all of a sudden the car just ran into the guard rail, and Mr. Booth was passed out. So she grabbed the wheel and was trying to wake him up with one hand and drive with the other hand, cause his foot was still on the gas, so she couldn’t do anything about how fast they were going. She was getting real scared, and the kids in the back were screaming, so she told them to try to wake him up because she didn’t want them to crash. She said they came to a rest area and she was trying to pull over a little and Mr. Booth was trying to wake up a little, and he woke up enough that at least he could put on the brakes. He looked kind of like he would pass out again, she said, so she grabbed his cell phone out of his pocket and dialed 911. They were asking where we were, and she was trying to ask Mr. Booth, cause she didn’t know. Anyway, she said, they came and took Mr. Booth in the ambulance, and then the firefighters took them to the fire station. They were real nice to them, she said. They called their parents and the principal, and she came and got them and asked if they still wanted to go on the field trip to the Air Force Academy, so she said “okay.” So she drove them there, and they had a fun time there, but she was still kind of shaky from what happened, she said.

Ms. Gordon acknowledged Mr. Booth, and Ms. Gantz Berman told Sarah that they were proud of her and so pleased that Mr. Booth was well, and they were pleased to have him as part of the presentation. She told Sarah that not only was she a little heroine, but also an amazing public speaker. On behalf of DPS, she said they wanted to thank Sarah for her heroic act and give her a little gift.
D. **Approve Agenda**

Mrs. Edwards made and Mr. Patterson seconded a motion that the Board of Education approved the agenda for this meeting. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Moss was absent and excused.

II. **Board Member Reports**

There were none.

III. **Superintendent’s Reports**

Dr Wartgow said he didn’t have a report but just wanted to again thank Sarah and her parents for being there. He said he was so impressed with how articulate Sarah was. He asked how old she was, and was told that she just turned 10 and was a fourth grader.

IV. **Consent Agenda**

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the consent agenda items by number and sequence, in accordance with consent agenda procedures.

A. **Board of Education**

There were none.

B. **Superintendent’s Office**

1. **Gift Report** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the gift report, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-B-1.

C. **Administrative Services**

1. **Human Resources**

   a. **Personnel Transaction Report** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Personnel Transaction Report, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-C-1a.

2. **Facility Management**

   a. **Final Settlements for Contracted Services** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the final settlements for contracted services as described on the attached schedule. A copy of the schedule is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-C-2a.
D. Budget and Finance

1. Statement of Revenue Allocations, Appropriations, Commitments and Expenditures
   – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Statement of Revenue Allocations, Appropriations, Commitments, and Expenditures for the Period July 1, 2002, to January 31, 2003. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-D-1.

2. Resolution ??? - Approving the Stapleton School Funding Agreement with the Denver Urban Renewal Authority – It was recommended that The Board of Education approve the Stapleton School Funding Agreement with the Denver Urban Renewal Authority, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-D-2.

E. Educational Services

1. Resolution ??? - Approving the Wyatt-Edison Charter School Renewal Application – It was recommended that the Board of Education adopt Resolution ??? to renew the Wyatt Edison Charter School contract for a three-year term, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-E-1.

2. Resolution ??? - Approving the Odyssey Charter School Renewal Application – It was recommended that the Board of Education adopt Resolution ??? to renew the Odyssey Charter School contract for a three-year term, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-E-2.

3. Fairmont Dual Language School Within a School Proposal – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed Dual Language School-Within-A-School program for Fairmont Elementary School beginning with kindergarten in 2003-2004 and adding a grade each year until the 2008-2009 school year, when full implementation will occur. A copy of the recommendation is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-E-3.

4. Fred N. Thomas Career Education Center Transition to Middle College – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed recommendations in the Report, and that the name of the Fred N. Thomas Career Education Center be formally changed to the Fred N. Thomas CEC, Middle College of Denver, effective with the 2003-2004 school year. A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-E-4.

F. School/Community Partnerships

1. Proposed Policy Change on Revenue from Non-Tax Sources – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the proposed revisions to Policy DF – Revenue From Non-Tax Sources – and that the Superintendent be authorized to direct that appropriate staff inform all schools and departments of the changes. A copy of the
policy change is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-F-1.

2. Proposed Policy Change, Policy KHB, Advertising in Schools – It was recommend-
ed that the Board of Education approve the proposed revisions to Policy KHB, Advertising in Schools, and that the Superintendent direct that appropriate staff inform all schools and departments of the changes. A copy of the policy is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, IV-F-2.

Mrs. Edwards made and Mr. Patterson seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda as read. A roll call vote was recorded and the motion passed unanimously. Mrs. Moss was absent and excused.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that the Board had discussed during their work session some of the items they just passed. But she said they had just approved some very significant things. They approved an additional three years for Odyssey and Wyatt-Edison charter schools, both very exemplary charter schools in the DPS. She said they also just approved a new dual language choice program at Fairmont, which they were excited about. As everyone knew, the dual language Montessori at Ana Marie Sandoval had been one of the most popular choice options with a long waiting list. Now that they added a second dual language school, she said, they were hopeful that it would be as successful as the one at Sandoval.

Dr. Wartgow said the Middle College at CEC was another very exciting concept that had just been approved. They changed the official name, but much more was embodied in it than the name change. It was a new model that had proven to be very popular already, and they were attracting more students to the CEC. It would provide new opportunities, new choices for students, new collaboration with the community colleges, and they looked forward to a very successful and exciting program there, he said.

Dr. Wartgow said they also approved another significant collaboration, and that was with the Denver Urban Renewal Authority. The district would build schools as needed in the Stapleton area with funding that would come from DURA and not from the DPS bond issue or general fund. They were very pleased about that collaboration, he said.

V. Old Business

There was none.

VI. New Business

A. Educational Services

1. Tuition-based Early Childhood Education – The Report of Tuition-based Early Childhood Education was submitted for information only, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, VI-A-1.
Dr. Wartgow asked Wayne Eckerling, Assistant Superintendent of Research, Planning and Special Programs, to introduce the staff presentation of Tuition-based Early Childhood Education (ECE). Dr. Eckerling said the timeline they suggested would be that the Board considered that tonight, that they take comments publicly and in writing by the first Board meeting in March, and that they consider action at the second meeting in March, on the 21st. He introduced Cheryl Caldwell, Director of Early Childhood Education, who would make the presentation to the Board.

Ms. Caldwell said they had before them a proposal for the district to offer Tuition-based Preschool. Currently preschool services were funded from four sources: the Colorado Preschool Program (CPP), which were state dollars; second was Title I, which were federal dollars; third was Head Start, and those were federal dollars; and fourth was DPS general fund dollars, she said. With the addition of preschool classes in the last few years, they had grown to 19.5 FTEs next year if they added Stapleton, and the impact on the 2003-2004 budget would be projected to be about $1.3 million. In their packet, she said, Attachment No. 1 showed the present allocation of the funding sources to the various schools. She said they had preschool in all of the Denver elementary schools except Bromwell and Knight. Attachment No. 2 showed how they might reallocate some of those resources based on free and reduced lunch. At present, she said, the general fund dollars supported some preschools in schools with as much as 75% free or reduced lunch. What they did was to reprioritize where the at-risk, Head Start and Title I dollars would go. That was not an elimination of classrooms, but a move to tuition-based, she said. The model would call for a class size of 16 in order to be competitive. For every 16 kids there would be two scholarships. She said they actually had a request from the Northwest area asking if they could start tuition-based preschool, because there were families who didn’t meet the risk criteria, and they have space, so one of the positive things would be that it would give those schools the opportunity to provide tuition-based preschool. Page two of the report was basically the details of what she had already said. She said the proposal assumed that the state would not reduce them by more than three FTEs and that they would continue to have the same level of Title I funding. It also assumed that the new Stapleton school would offer only tuition-based ECE. She said the proposal should not be viewed as a lack of district commitment to ECE, but as a lack of district resources that needed to be addressed. Concerning models, she said a half-day model would have a monthly tuition of $305, based on the suggested class size of 16. That would be competitive with present market rates, she said, while a full-day model with certified teachers would not be competitive with market rates. However, she said, they could investigate creating a model with a Kaleidoscope component that would be less expensive.

Mr. Mejía asked how they decided which general fund dollars were used for those programs. He said it seemed rather arbitrary how current funds were allocated. Ms. Caldwell said that there was a suggestion a few years ago that as new schools were added to the district, they would get a 1.0 FTE for ECE programs, and also there was a commitment made several years ago that there would be a preschool program...
in every elementary school, so the schools that could not benefit from funds designed for at-risk kids were the schools that obtained FTEs at that time.

Dr. Eckerling said he believed that some of that predated the district’s release from the U.S. court order, so places like Steck that are clearly mismatched, had satellite attendance areas in Northeast Denver where students came to Steck and were served. So that would be one of the reasons that some of the schools ended up with CPP slots, so some of that had grown up out of legacy, he said.

Mrs. Edwards said she thought part of that came from a commitment the district made to ensure that it provided equitable and quality educational opportunities to all students, realizing that there were at-risk, at-need kids in every area of the city and each of the schools, and to be sure that any of those children had the opportunity for ECE. One of her questions, she said, had to do with the capacity of a building itself, and if there were any constraints on an individual school that might have great demand for a preschool program but would require more classroom space.

Ms. Caldwell said that they would probably do a first-come, first-served system, or they could do a lottery like they do for tuition-based kindergarten.

Mrs. Edwards asked if, on the second chart, at Sandoval and Denison where it read “one FTE, one CPP,” was that one person? Dr. Eckerling said that meant that 32 students on free and reduced price lunch could be supported in half-day ECE slots in those schools. Mrs. Edwards asked if it meant that the district was using CPP money to fund a slot in each of those schools. Mr. Eckerling responded that it did. Mrs. Edwards further clarified by asking if the general fund was funding another FTE. Dr. Eckerling said no, it was all tuition based. Those schools had to be self-supporting, but they got that one CPP FTE to help them be self-supporting, he said.

Rev. Guzman said she was a bit confused, and her major concern was in the West and Northwest areas where so many of the schools were low performing. With everyone purporting that ECE was a major issue in terms of supporting low performing kids, she was concerned, she said, that some high-needs children would not be served. She also noted that they said the proposal would significantly reduce district general fund ECE expenses, and she asked by how much. Ms. Caldwell said by $1.3 million. Rev. Guzman asked if they didn’t cut out the $1.3 million, and kept that in there, would they also be able to offer tuition-based ECE on their own? Ms. Caldwell said she saw no reason why they couldn’t.

Mr. Mejía asked about the circumstance with Knight that FTE was not provided. Dr. Eckerling said that it was a magnet program that started as K-5, then it became 1-5, and it wasn’t until last year that they offered kindergarten, and in a fundamental school, he said he wasn’t sure they needed to offer an ECE program. Mr. Mejia asked if the shaded areas on Attachment 2 were the schools where an ECE student would pay full tuition. Ms. Caldwell said that was correct. He asked if he wanted to attend ECE in any of those schools in non-shaded areas, would he pay
any tuition at all? Ms. Caldwell said if he met the requirements of the fund sources, i.e., in CPP one had to have certain risk factors and in Head Start one had to have a certain level of income. Mr. Mejia said if he qualified under CPP and went to Centennial, he would not pay any tuition. Ms. Caldwell said that was correct. Mr. Mejia asked what if all those students got in and there was room, could a full-paying student attend at Centennial? Ms. Caldwell said yes, she would think that he could.

Mr. Mejia said he would just recommend that if they were indeed able to accommodate all the students that qualified under Head Start or Title I or CPP, then they also should look at accommodating full-pay students.

Ms. Gantz Berman asked if they knew the number of schools that had waiting lists. Ms. Caldwell said she could get them that information. Ms. Gantz Berman asked if they had addressed the concept of the sliding-fee scale, because it sounded to her like it was either all or nothing. Ms. Caldwell said that was the proposal that was on the table now, but they would certainly entertain the idea of a sliding-fee scale.

Dr. Eckerling said they tried to keep it simple. If you started dealing with sliding scales, then the exact dollar of income started to be important and they would want to coordinate that with tuition-based kindergarten. Ms. Gantz Berman said that was her question exactly—weren’t they using some kind of sliding-fee scale for that? Dr. Eckerling said that they were using exactly the same approach, the same forms, and preschool would be handled in exactly the same way. In tuition-based kindergarten, one would either be a full scholarship, a half scholarship, or full pay. And that was the extent of the sliding scale. Perhaps Step Scale, would be a better term, but they were exactly the same by any name.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that the proposal only dealt with four-year olds. Was there a reason, she asked, why they did not include a tuition-based three-year-old program?

Ms. Caldwell said that the classes were presently licensed for four-year olds, and they would have to look into how that would be different to include three-year olds. The other answer she would give was that there were plenty of four-year olds that they would serve first before three-year olds. They believed the schools’ capacity would fill up with four-year olds.

Dr. Eckerling said that except in the two Montessori schools, the district didn’t serve any three-year olds, so they as a Board would have to address the more general policy issue of whether they wanted to serve three-year olds in any way. It had been the policy of the district to deal with only as young as four-year olds.

Ms. Gantz Berman said her bias on this issue and interest in the proposal was that she believed there was a huge interest on the part of working parents to find both preschool and child care opportunities at both the three- and four-year old levels. She also thought that as DPS looked to build its enrollment, it would be in their best interest to try to get students in as early as possible to see what DPS was like. If
they could attract them at the three- and four-year age, then they might be much more interested in DPS and staying in DPS. In her experience, she said, people tended to look at educational situations that they thought were sound education, but that also met their own needs as working parents. She also would be interested in looking at a tuition-based program for three-year olds, where there was capacity.

Mr. Mejía said that there were only two scholarships provided for several of the schools for a classroom of 16, however, the number of free and reduced-lunch kids varied greatly from a low of 3.2% to a high of 45.1% in the otherwise full-pay schools. Wouldn’t it be reasonable to allocate those scholarships according to the number of free and reduced-lunch kids?

Dr. Eckerling said that they actually tried that on the tuition-based kindergarten program, but it got to be administratively very difficult to do, because you got down to 1.2s and 1.3s, and it was just much simpler administratively to go to a school and say they had two full scholarships or four half-scholarships. One way you could mitigate that, he said, would be to have a small fund set aside, and you could say that it couldn’t go to any school with under 20%, or something like that.

Mr. Mejía said there was a lot to talk about, and he liked the move away from general fund dollars, but he thought that the allocation of scholarships needed to be more equitable and correlated to free and reduced lunch kids.

Mr. Patterson asked if they went to a sliding scale, wouldn’t there be some sort of need for an income eligibility effort that they would have to make that he assumed they were not doing now? Ms. Caldwell said they do that for tuition-based kindergarten, and they would follow the same procedure. Mr. Patterson asked what that procedure was. Dr. Eckerling said that with the advent of Sandoval they had established a person just to do all of the financial work around that program. They had an application form where parents had to declare income information, and it was standard across tuition-based kindergarten and the Montessori programs. Those were evaluated in that office and a determination made as to whether a student was eligible for a scholarship.

Mr. Woodward said it would be good to have some information, if it could be readily provided, concerning those schools in which there might be capacity that could be utilized for three-year olds. He said he knew that would be a limited number of schools, but where they have the capacity, it would be smart to use it in a useful way educationally and without a cost that would adversely impact the rest of the students in the district.

B. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources
a. First Reading of Proposed Policy Change on Staff Concerns/Complaints/Grievances – The First Reading of Proposed Policy Change on Staff Concerns/Complaints/Grievances GBK was submitted for information only, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, VI-B-1a.

C. Information Only

1. Expulsion Reports – A report of the Expulsion of Pupils from the Denver Public Schools was submitted for information only, a copy of which is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-04, VI-C-1.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that they would conclude the meeting with a very important concert by the Crofton Vocal Chords. She welcomed the Crofton parents who were there to hear their children. She welcomed Ruth Balza, the music instructor, and the Crofton Vocal Chords. Following the performance, the parents of the children in the Chords presented Ms. Balza with a plaque that read, To Ruth Balza, music teacher extraordinaire, thanks for all you have done to make music such a joyous part of our children’s lives as Crofton Vocal Chords, 2002-2003. The presenter said they participated in the CMEA on January 25, 2003, and they would sing the national anthem at the Colorado Rockies game on May 27. He said how much Crofton parents appreciated what Ms. Balza did, what Principal Dr. Diana Howard did, and the support the Board of Education gave to music in the schools. He said this was a prime example of how wonderful it could be to integrate everything into the curriculum. He said the kids loved it and got so much from it.

VII. Adjournment

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education