I. Call to Order

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

President Elaine Gantz Berman called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m. 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, Mr. Kevin Patterson, and Mr. Lester Woodward.

C. Recognitions

John McPherson, Principal at John F. Kennedy High School, introduced the Kennedy cheerleaders and said they not only were athletes, they were scholars with an overall GPA of 3.4. He said the group included the class president, National Honor Society members, student council members, and student Collective Decision Making (CDM) representatives. He said the group placed highly in a regional competition and were invited to the National Cheerleading Championships where they represented the district very well. The cheerleaders performed for the Board and audience.

D. Approve Agenda

Mr. Mejia moved that the Board of Education approve the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously.

II. Board Member Reports

There were none.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

Jerry Wartgow, Superintendent, congratulated the East High School Constitutional Scholars Team on winning the state competition and being selected to represent the state of Colorado at the national competition in Washington, D.C., on April 27-28, 2003.

He said CSAP preparation was well under way, and he had talked to students at all levels who said they were “on task.” He said high expectations had been set, and students would try very hard to meet them and he wished them well.
IV. **Consent Agenda**

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the consent agenda items by number and sequence, in accordance with consent agenda procedures. No items were held for discussion.

A. **Board of Education**

There were no reports.

B. **Superintendent’s Office**

There were no reports.

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 the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, 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 motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-C-2a.

   b. **Resolution 2827 – Boundary Adjustment** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve a minor county boundary line adjustment from Arapahoe County to the City and County of Denver for a .9 acre parcel of land located near the intersection of East Bellevue Avenue and the Northbound On Ramp to I-25, and adopt Resolution ______ hereto attached as Exhibit A. The Board of Education authorizes officers of the Board and staff to implement this action. A copy of the resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-C-2b.

D. **Budget and Finance**

1. **Resolution 2828 - Supplemental Budget for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2002, and Ending June 30, 2003** – It was recommended to the Board of Education that the supplemental budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2002, and ending June 30, 2003, as set forth in the attached Schedules, be an official supplemental budget of School District No.1. A copy of the resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-D-1.
2. Resolution 2829 Supplemental Budget Appropriation for Expenditures During the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2002, and Ending June 30, 2003. – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Supplemental Budget Appropriation for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2002, and ending June 30, 2003. A copy of the resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-D-2.

3. Resolution 2830 - Identification and Filing of Supplemental Adopted Budget and Appropriation Resolution and Copies Thereof – It was recommended that the Board of Education direct that the supplemental budget be labeled, signed by the Board President, and made available by the Board Secretary for public inspection. A copy of the resolution is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-D-3.

E. Schools/Community Partnerships

1. Semi-Annual Grant Report – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the summary of grant awards for the period of July 1, 2002, to December 31, 2002. A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, IV-E-1.

Ms. Gantz Berman said they had just voted on a very significant item and asked Dr. Wartgow to describe what had been passed. Dr. Wartgow said the Board had discussed the supplemental budget in previous work sessions, and it was a formalization of a very difficult process that involved reducing the year’s operating budget for DPS by 11.6 million dollars. He said that was the result of a convergence of events—the economy, money rescinded from the General Fund under Amendment 23, and United Airlines filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, which meant the district would not receive property taxes from them for 2002. He commended all the staff and employees for responding in a very professional manner, especially Rich Allen, Assistant Superintendent, and Velma Rose, Chief Financial Officer, Financial/Budgetary Services, for presenting data to the Board so they would have good and accurate information on which to make a decision. He said the cuts would impact education in DPS, but they attempted to keep the direct cuts as far away from the classroom as possible. He said the Board acted in an exemplary manner and tried to make the cuts and develop the budget within the context of the district’s overall goals. He said that tougher times remained ahead because they were entering the process for the 2003-2004 school year.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that Dr. Wartgow had approached budget cuts this year and the next year in a way that was as respectful as possible to teachers, principals, and others. She said the Board commended Dr. Wartgow on his leadership on this process.
V. **Old Business**

There was none.

VI. **New Business**

A. **Student Services**

1. **Second Enhancement Systems – Teaching with Enhanced Listening and Learning** -
   A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, VI-A-1.

   Ms. Gantz Berman introduced John Leslie, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, and Allan Balczarek, GOB Program Manager for Research, Planning and Special Programs. Dr. Leslie said that the entire building at Grant Ranch School was fitted with sound enhancement systems, as was the case with all the new schools. He said staff had presented research and benefits of sound systems, and there was compelling information about the positive effects it had elsewhere in the country and testimonials from district teachers who had found it to be beneficial in the classroom. He introduced Mr. Balczraek and Annette Shurich and Lisa Cannon, Audiologists, who worked as a team with Facility Management to help school design committees build the system into their school designs.

   Mr. Balczarek described the process used to determine the benefits of the systems, and said they were able to install the systems without incurring any additional costs to any of the projects. He asked Ms. Cannon and Ms. Shurich to speak to a visual presentation describing the program. Ms. Cannon said they had used classroom amplification for a long time for students in the deaf or hard of hearing population, but the technology was good for all kids. In a classroom, teachers did a lot of talking, and students did a lot of listening. She described the technology, the benefits, and how the systems were used in the classroom. Ms. Shurich described how the system benefited students and teachers in hearing and speaking, and described the results of a study showing positive support of teachers and students for the system.

   Mr. Balzarek said the program was started with three pilot schools—Grant Ranch, Greenwood, and Sandoval. He described funding and usage in the schools and said there were schools that were not bond schools that had purchased the system through their own funds.

   Jim Kullhem, Principal of Grant Ranch, said he was a parent of a hearing impaired child and described the problems his child had encountered. He described the new technology of the system at Grant Ranch and said it affected classroom management, it rewarded kids, and it made it easier on adults. He said that the systems were originally installed in some classrooms, but were so popular that by the end of the year it was in all classrooms.
Mr. Balzarek cited statistics from around the country and said that there were districts that had adopted the systems as a standard for every classroom. He said the cost of the system was $1,500 per system, and they had recently negotiated with the Department of Technology Services (DoTS) to provide wiring and speakers. In response to a question from the Board, he and Ms. Cannon described problems and solutions for installing the systems in older school buildings.

B. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources

   a. Action on AAA Case No. 77 300 000133 01, DCTA and DPS, Grievance – It was recommended that the Board of Education accept the arbitrator’s opinion dated February 11, 2003, to the extent of approving the stipends for Inez Dominguez and Josefina Lopez only. A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, VI-B-1a.

   Mrs. Edwards read and Mr. Mejía seconded a motion to accept the arbitrator’s opinion. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Educational Services

1. Reading First Grant Application – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve submission of the grant application as described in the attached proposal summary and that the Superintendent be directed to submit all necessary documents consistent with grant application guidelines and be authorized to make any technical or administrative adjustments that may be necessary. A copy of the report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 03-05, VI-C-1.

   Rev. Guzman read and Mr. Mejía seconded a motion to approve the recommendation. A roll call vote was recorded, and the motion passed unanimously.

RECESS

Ms. Gantz Berman recessed the meeting and explained that the Board would reconvene at 7:00 p.m. for the Public Hearing segment of the meeting.

RECOVENE

VII. Public Comment (First Thursday of Each Month)

Students from Grant Ranch School performed songs for the Board and audience.
Grant Ranch Elementary School Welcome

Jim Kullhem, Principal, welcomed the Board and audience and said he had been with the district for 34 years as a student and employee. He said it was a once in a life-time experience to be principal of Grant Ranch. He talked about the high parent involvement and the good people surrounding him. He said the school was one of the best 12 million dollars the district had ever spent, and he said it served as a template for the district.

Ron Huston, Collaborative Decision Making (CDM) Committee member, described the technology of the school and said that it nurtured the gifts of all students. He discussed the many uses of technology by students and teachers, and how it enhanced the learning of students. He recognized that all of those educational opportunities were supported through the bond and by the decisions made by school leadership, staff, and the CDM.

Tracy Davis-Wifall, Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) President, spoke about countless volunteer hours spent to make Grant Ranch a school of excellence. She said the teachers had high standards for their children, and parents were willing to do their part to reach those goals. The parents were not passive when it came to their children’s education, she said, but were actively involved in furthering their child’s education and entire school experience. She described volunteer fund raising efforts, how the funds were utilized, and the numerous ways volunteers assisted in the classroom and the school.

Sally Bernsten, parent and CDM representative, described her involvement with the school: she had lobbied for placement of the school, participated in the Program Design Advisory Committee (PDAC), served on the on the interim CDM, and helped organize the PTO. She said they had a framework in place to provide an excellent academic environment for their children, one where children felt welcome and secure. She said she had learned that: her children’s academic performance had far exceeded her expectations and were on par with any public or private school, DPS provided unparalleled opportunities for parents to be involved in their children’s school, her opportunity to be involved in the creation of and vision for school was unique and one not offered by other districts, her experience with Grant Ranch School had reaffirmed her commitment to public school education, and the time parents put into schools mattered, and it mattered a lot.

Char Mize, first grade teacher, said she was excited to go to work every day at Grant Ranch because it was a pleasure to work with the finest administrators, outstanding faculty, supportive and caring parents, and awesome kids who were becoming life-long learners. She said they were happy to be in a K-8 school because it allowed students to have the opportunity to have older students as role models, which was important to their character education program. They were trying to meet the needs of all students, and all students had the opportunity to be exposed to art, music, and technology. They were working particularly hard on the area of literacy, she said, and celebrated the million word campaign by collecting a million pennies to represent the million words that each child would read that year, and at the end of the year the money would go to the library to purchase books.
Marci Block, parent and CDM member, said she had been involved from the inception of the school, was the Grant Ranch representative when they argued about the school site, served on the PDAC committee, and had been on the CDM since the school opened. She said when they were planning the school she had hopes and dreams and the school had far exceeded any expectation she had. She said the area involved three cities and two counties and the school had helped bring the communities together.

Summer School Budget Cuts

Monica Acosta, Louise Rodriguez, Juan Evangelista, and Judy Estrada – The students introduced themselves as North High School students and members of Jovenes Unidos, an organization that fought for student rights, equality in the schools, and students to have a stronger voice. They were there because they were concerned about budget cuts and how they would affect their school and them as students. One concern was about cuts to the summer school program, and they described how the program had helped some of them, how it was needed for many students to stay in school and graduate, how students would be able to attend if there was only one school, and how transportation would be provided. One student described problems he saw in the school—outdated textbooks that he displayed to the board, lack of class aides, overcrowded classes with 40 students, lack of products such as soap and toilet paper, and the smell of gas in the building. He said he saw the motto that said the DPS Board gave students the right to an education to become good citizens, and if they cut funds for schools they should remove the motto.

Mrs. Edwards commented that the motto of DPS was that they provide the opportunity for a quality education for every child in the district. She quoted a former Board member who said education was not a spectator sport and that students needed to engage themselves in that opportunity to learn. She said she was in schools every day and she had yet to be in a classroom that had 40 students. She said there were resources in the district to purchase textbooks, but the State had cut back on funding. She agreed that the summer school issue was a huge one, but her final point was that the district was just a conduit of resources provided to education by the taxpayers of Colorado, and the cuts in funding were a reflection of the economy. She said the district was not doing the cutting, they were being cut, and one solution would be to go back to the voters to ask for additional resources.

Mr. Mejía commended them for being there, and said that whenever they saw something they disagreed with in the community they should speak up. He said the district was in the uncomfortable position of having to make adjustments in the amount of $11 million dollars this year because of the economy, and he projected that it would not be better the next year. He said he did not want to make the cut to summer school nor to the early childhood education program, but somewhere in the system they had to find ways to do things differently that would cost less money. Whatever they did would be unpopular to someone, and the decisions of where to cut were extremely difficult. Dr. Wartgow also commended the students on making the long trip to Grant Ranch to express their concerns. He said the difficulty and the challenge was that there would be less money coming to the district, and tough decisions had to be made. He made a point
of clarification on summer school and said the summer school program was not being cut for juniors and seniors because they needed the classes for graduation, and staff members were working on other options.

Rev. Guzman asked if the outdated textbooks shown were actually being used in classrooms, and asked staff to check on that. She also asked Facility Management to work with the facilities people at North. She asked about the location of summer school and was told by Dr. Eckerling that there would be three different ways to obtain summer credit: at Abraham Lincoln High School, online courses at one high school in each quadrant, or through Community College of Denver.

**Early Childhood Education (ECE) Cuts**

Ms. Gantz Berman announced that staff would present the latest revised proposal on early childhood education. She asked Wayne Eckerling, Assistant Superintendent for Research, Planning and Special Programs, John Crawford, Manager of Early Education, and Cheryl Caldwell, Director of ECE, to make the presentation.

Dr. Eckerling said there had been a lot of misconceptions about what had been proposed and there needed to be clarification. He said the district firmly believed in early childhood education and in the teachers of early childhood education. He said the district was trying to find ways to address budget issues, and described the three sources of funding for ECE: Head Start, Colorado Preschool Projects, and Federal Title I funds. All had limited amounts of money that could be used for ECE, and that was why it was not offered to any student who wanted it—there were specific numbers of student slots that were offered. He said the fourth source of revenue was the district’s General Fund, but there were no General Fund revenues that support ECE. The money that had been spent to provide ECE in some schools had actually come from other per-pupil funding that had been generated for the K-12 students in the district. He said they were fully supportive of early childhood education, but they were faced with a situation where it was very difficult to balance the General Fund with the expenditures for the program.

Dr. Eckerling said what would not be affected by the proposal were all of the schools that currently received Title I, Colorado Preschool Project Funding, above 36%, and that they would continue to be funded. Additionally, there were four schools that were taken off the original proposal, and those schools were Bradley, Holm, Samuels, and Palmer. Those schools would offer ECE, with the Colorado Preschool Project, under the same guidelines with the number of slots as had always been offered. If those communities had more students who wanted ECE than there were slots, then tuition programs would be offered. He said one of the benefits of a tuition-based ECE was the ability to open it up to more parents who had the ability to pay and wanted to send their students there, and that would be true of any other school in the district. He listed the schools where they were proposing to offer a tuition-based ECE program. The classes would be offered as they were currently, with certificated teachers, a paraprofessional in each class, and class sizes of 20 to 1. The tuition would be lowered from $305 to $185 per month. They would then offer as many scholarships as possible for students who were on free or reduced price lunch.
Mrs. Gantz Berman calculated that the tuition would mean $9.00 per class, and what would be offered if people wanted all day opportunities. She was told that they were looking at developing some different options for schools to look at to see what they wanted to try, according to cost, space, and other factors.

Rev. Guzman asked why class size was 20, why it couldn’t be 24 and lower the cost, and was told that all classrooms were licensed by the State and that was the rule.

Tracy Davis-Wifall, parent at Grant Ranch, presented a petition with over 150 signatures stating that the signers did not support a tuition-based ECE program and requested the Board to reconsider their current proposal. She said ECE was a highly respected program in the district, the foundation of the elementary schools, and where the literacy initiative began. She said that changing the program to a tuition-based program might eliminate opportunities for development for the children who needed it the most. She understood that DPS was the only district in Colorado that made ECE a free program, but that was one of the elements that set the district apart from others.

Marci Block, parent at Grant Ranch, said her child had attended the ECE program last year after coming from Jefferson County. She said she wondered what to expect from a program that was free, but it far exceeded anything she could have imagined.

Brandon Zinn, Bernard Goldman, Lisa Zinn – Brandon, his grandfather, and his mother all emphasized the importance of the ECE program and said that educating children at a young age was critical for building a foundation for later academic and social competence. They also emphasized that having tuition-based ECE programs would adversely impact those parents who could afford it least but needed it most.

Mrs. Edwards said they were preaching to the choir and that there was not a person on the Board who did not believe that early childhood education was critical to the future development of the students they served. She said that six years ago in another budget crisis, people told them how important ECE was, and they were told that the place they needed to be advocating was at the legislature. She said they needed to have more opportunities for more kids in the district who were in need, but there were only certain sources of money, basically from the taxpayers. She said if the legislature allocated more money or if through a bond election there was more money from the taxpayers, then the district could provide what was being asked. Otherwise, they were taking money away from the kids they were charged to educate, children in grades K-12.

Sandy Miller and Luis Rivas – Samuels Elementary School – They said they were pleased to receive the good news that Samuels was on the list in the new proposal. They said Denver offered the finest ECE program in Colorado, and it was apparent that DPS was a leader in its commitment to early education.

Ms. Gantz Berman said the proposal was very complicated. They were not serving nearly the number of children who needed the program—they had 500 kids who were
on the waiting list—and she did not want people to get the impression that the district was serving everyone who needed the program for free. She said they were not doing that because they did not have the money. She said the quality of the program would be exactly the same as it was, and the proposal would cost the parent approximately $3.75 an hour, and she didn’t think they could find anything less expensive than that.

Laura Alms – Lowry Elementary School, an ECE parent, presented a petition with 78 signatures of people who opposed the tuition-based ECE as it was previously proposed, though she said they would applaud the changes that had been made. She said they were pleased to hear that there would be scholarships. Their concern with respect to Lowry was that they had a great deal of affordable housing and, according to statistics they had been given, about 20% of the kids would be free or reduced lunch and they hoped they could be accommodated.

Linda Lanors – Kaiser Elementary School, said she was a parent of three children, two who had attended ECE and one currently in the ECE program. She said that having her children in the program had been wonderful, the teachers were great, the benefits immeasurable, and the children entered kindergarten with more knowledge than was expected of them. She said she had been offered the tuition-based full-day kindergarten, but was not interested due to the cost. For two years their school had not had a full-day kindergarten because the price was too steep for those like her who were on a budget. She said she believed that if the ECE proposal went into effect, it would eliminate the ECE program altogether because the majority of the families were middle class and the price was unreasonable. Another concern she had with the proposal was that she felt it unfairly placed the burden of financing the program on a small portion of the Denver area.

Susan Triahan – Montbello/Green Valley Ranch Areas, ECE teacher at Greenwood, said that Denver was one of the few districts that had non-tuition-based programs, but they felt it was justified because of the high level of diversity amongst their students. That fact alone made them wonder why their ECE programs would be turned into tuition-based programs, action that would not benefit the education of their highly needy children.

Amanda Mullin, parent, said that in its 100 years the DPS had done a wonderful job in educating the city’s children. She presented to the Board an outline and spoke briefly to the items: DPS worked hard to fulfill the No Child Left Behind Act; she liked that DPS recognized that ECE was no longer an option, but a necessity; and she was impressed that four-year-olds had a place in the educational system.

Elizabeth Sopher, parent of an ECE student at Lowry, said they were having a great experience there and wanted to thank DPS for the new proposal. She said she had two points: having ECE was a great way for DPS to compete for students who might be considering a private school, and the program should be strengthened to ensure they were competitive; and that the choice program should be applied earlier, because when a child was in ECE they had to reapply to attend kindergarten, and she knew of people who chose private schools because they did not have to reapply for kindergarten.
Mr. Mejía asked for clarification on reapplying. She responded that if a child was entered in an ECE program that was not a home school, then the parents had to enter the choice program for kindergarten, that there was no guarantee that the child could continue at the ECE school. Dr. Eckerling said it had been an issue because ECE had been funded differently, and they were looking at that and would give clarification.

Mr. Woodward said he wanted to say a few things in general to the audience. He was pleased they had a revised program plan that would permit more children to attend ECE at a cost they could afford. Also, he was pleased to hear many good things about the DPS ECE program, and it was clear it was a quality program. He was delighted that so many parents were enthusiastic about an ECE program and that they were willing to attend the meeting and talk about it. He then urged those who could not take advantage of the scholarships to make the necessary sacrifices to obtain ECE for their children.

Mrs. Moss said she wanted to reiterate her support for and appreciation of the ECE program. She urged the audience not to stop with speaking to the board, who were trying to listen and figure out how to cut the budget and not hurt anyone, but they needed voices of support at the state legislature where they decided to cut $1.4 million from textbook money, continued to cut Colorado Pre-school slots, and continued to cut monies from the general fund.

Angel Rivas, parent, said that what the Board was doing was great, the only thing that was unfair was that certain schools were segregated by those that had to pay and those that didn’t. He said that there were parents in each school who could pay, others who could not, and there should not be a focus on the number of free or reduced lunch only. He felt that parents were penalized by where they lived, not by individual income. He asked the Board to propose a fair policy.

Ms. Gantz Berman said he had a good point, and the way to do that would be to use a per person basis rather than a school basis, but she had been told they could not do that because the district did not have the capacity to do billing on a sliding fee scale basis for every person in the district. She said they would continue to investigate that point, but there were many issues to be considered.

Mr. Patterson said that one of things to be remembered was that what they were trying to do with the proposal was to still have some general fund money to fund some slots. If they wanted to make it fair and equal, they could not use that money and would only have slots provided by the Colorado Preschool Program and Head Start funds. He said they were trying to provide additional slots with the tuition-based program.

Lisa Schmidt, parent of three students at McKinley-Thatcher, said they should reevaluate the numbers taken in October to determine students eligible for the free and reduced lunch. She thought the number might be skewed because many ECE parents did not fill out the form because they did not get lunch. She said her family could afford a private preschool, and over the course of a year it would cost $180 per month, so the district might rethink their tuition. Her last concern was that there was a large group of families in the
middle—those who could not afford the tuition but were not eligible for scholarships or free and reduced lunch slots—that would not be able to enter the ECE program.

Bev Krez-Helmuth, parent and ECE teacher at Steele Elementary, said that at a school like Steele it was assumed they had the population that could afford tuition, and that was not accurate. She was concerned about the number of scholarships available versus the number of paying children, and if they all could be accommodated.

Leslie Eilers, ECE parent at Green Valley Ranch, said she understood there was a finite amount money in the budget, but did feel that the district was discriminating against a certain group of families, regardless of income, by asking them to shoulder the burden for everyone else. The district was asking only a small percentage of families to pay, while other families that might make more money would not pay. She questioned that it was not applied across the board because it was a billing issue.

Ms. Gantz Berman said she had asked staff that question and was told that the district did not have the capacity, and that it would increase administrative expenses that would make the program more expensive. Dr. Eckerling said they looked at free lunch percentages in other parts of the city with free programs, and in order to do qualification they would have to collect income information for 3600-3800 students, which would be an administrative burden. He said they knew from records that 90-95% of students who were in ECE qualified for free lunch. Dr Caldwell explained that in the requirements of the Colorado Preschool Project students were accepted based on risk factors and could not be excluded just because they had money. She said that from screening of students for all of the programs she knew it was unlikely there were many people with a lot of money in any of those classrooms.

Curtis Kennedy, parent and concerned citizen, said he saw issues had been thoroughly considered by the Board and he appreciated their difficulties.

Pam Krotchko, parent at Kaiser, thanked the DPS for a wonderful ECE program, but asked why a few schools in a few areas were being designated to pay a monthly fee.

Arts Resource Council Update

Clark Strickland, Chair of the Arts Resource Council, said the Council was committed to see that all students received a comprehensive arts education as a tool for academic, personal, and professional success. He described the value of a good arts program as multicultural sharing, building important skills, visual literacy, and making a school attractive to parents making choices about where to send their child. He said there was tremendous evidence that the success of top performing schools at all levels was strongly rooted in their arts curriculum. It was an issue of equity, he said, that all students in DPS had the opportunity to be educated in all of their talents, and work needed to be done in that area, as well as with the elementary arts curriculum. The curriculum issues the Council had were: arts education needed to be standards-based, particularly art and drama; there was an
emerging interest in multimedia video and film; and how to make that standards-based without affecting the basic literacy instruction in arts.

Mr. Strickland said that hopeful signs were the continued success of strong arts programs in some schools in DPS, and the Citizens Committee on Facilities was trying to make sure buildings were arts capable. He said the district should be wary of arts activities that were not part of art instruction. The Council recommended that the district have arts specialists in schools, and that arts classes be a requirement for graduation as a demonstration of the district’s commitment to the arts. He said he was surprised by data that showed that 95% of the students graduating had some form of art instruction.

Dr. Wartgow thanked the Arts Resource Council for their advocacy and support of DPS, and said he, too, was surprised and pleased by the 95% figure.

Mrs. Moss said she had attended the DPS Elementary Art Show at the Denver Art Museum, and it was a wonderful celebration of art in the DPS. She thanked the Council for all they did.

Darcy Schlichting, Arts Resource Council and Denver PTA member, talked about the PTA Reflection Program, a national PTA-based arts competition in four categories: visual arts, photography, music composition, and literature. In the 2002-2003 competition twelve DPS students were honorees, 25% of the awards, and there were seven students who won gold medals and would represent the state at the national competition. She said that without an arts program in DPS, students would not have the opportunity to receive such honors, and cutting arts would mean cutting an important part of students lives.

Pam Starck, retired DPS teacher and teacher at the Museum of Outdoor Arts, asked the Board to please remember that elementary arts needed to be in every school. So many schools at the elementary lacked art instruction, and the high schools could not bring them up to level without their having had the basics.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that was an issue the Board was very concerned about, they have had many discussions, and they all want to restore arts to the elementary schools.

Gifted Students

Nena Stegar, Resource Teacher of Gifted and Talented (G/T) at Grant Ranch, felt that it was a vital function to advocate for students in the top10% academically, those who were high achievers, those with artistic gifts—the highly gifted and talented. She distributed a copy of a quiz to the Board and said she would have to research the answers, but there were students in the district with the ability, gifts, and passion to engage themselves in such higher order areas of thinking and learning. She said the Board, through the G/T program, supported those learning experiences and the children whose academic, social, and artistic needs were being fostered through the program. She said that enrichment programs in designated classrooms were essential, but it was equally important to support gifted students in regular classrooms because it truly defined their educational experience. She
said the new literacy program strived to meet the needs of all students, including advanced students. She thanked the Board for the support provided through staff development, training, and materials, and said she hoped the Board continued to recognize the special needs of that population of students.

**Proposed Boundary Changes for Grant Ranch Elementary School and Advantages/Disadvantage of Grant Ranch**

Nita Toland, parent and teacher at Grant Ranch, said that for 20 years the district promised a school for those students west of Wadsworth, and they built Grant Ranch. She said the area was in Denver County, developing rapidly, and had a large population of children. She had attended many CDM meetings, and last February she was told that DPS was discussing redrawing boundaries for the area west of Wadsworth and would bus kids to other schools.

Mrs. Moss said she had asked Dave Lowry, Executive Director of Planning and Research, to look at that issue and to determine how many people were moving into the area. He told her that there was no effort under way to redraw boundaries.

Ms. Toland said Mr. Lowry was part of a group who said, a few years ago, that the area west of Wadsworth was a retirement community, a dying area, and there would not be enough kids to support building a school. They then built Grant Ranch and opened the door to kids from 36 schools and were now in a crisis because classes were too large. She described what would happen in a perfect world, but said they don’t live in a perfect world but at the school they had laid a good foundation through good leadership, good staff, and active parents who were committed to making Grant Ranch a school to be proud of.

**Northwest Parents for Excellent Schools Update**

Ted Steinway, member of the Northwest Parents for Excellent Schools, read their mission statement. He then gave an update of the group’s activities for the last month: they met with several Board members, met with and received suggestions from Dr. Wartgow, had members on three CDM in Northwest Denver, attended CDM and PTA meetings at several schools, had meetings with school principals, held meetings at schools, had meetings with Area Superintendents, and they were working to expand their membership, especially to include those parents who had children who would attend ECE and kindergarten.

Rev. Guzman said she appreciated all their efforts on behalf of the children of Northwest Denver.

**Pepsi Contract**

Dr. Manny Salzman and Dr. Phil Zeitler. Dr. Zeitler, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and endocrinologist and diabetes specialist at Children’s Hospital, described his credentials and many years of expertise in clinical care and research of children with obesity and diabetes. He said there had been much argument in the media regarding soda ingestion for children, and it was oversimplified and counterproductive. He said that ingestion of soda and
sugared beverages should not be blamed for the problem of obesity, and that it was a multi-dimensional problem with many components that would vary from child to child. His clinical experience was that for many adolescents, a reduction of soda and other sugared beverages was the one most important dietary change in beginning the process of reversing excess weight gain. He was concerned about promotion of sugared beverages and suggested they be banned from schools. He said the Board was comfortable banning smoking, and it was similar to smoking, though smoking had long-term serious problems, ingestion of excess calories were of equal import to a child. Obesity-related morbidity was more prevalent among kids than smoking morbidity, and would happen now rather than later. In regard to the proposal to sell soda and water at the same price, he felt that selling water to children, possibly with limited financial means, for $.60 or $1.00 was not the final word in social justice, and it would be more appropriate to provide clean, cool, accessible water. He urged the removal of vending machines from schools, but if it was decided to keep the machines, then the money should fund education programs to promote healthy lifestyle choices, and it was critical that such programs were integrated, universal, and pervasive. He said a few sessions in a health education class would not impact children’s choices. He said it was important that the district promote high visibility efforts to address the negatives, such as signs on the machines listing adverse effects of ingesting the product.

Dr. Wartgow said students asked questions about diet drinks and if they had the same adverse effects as others. Dr. Zeitler responded that there are some who said all sodas should be banned, but he felt that if the child were encouraged to change choices to diet soda it would be a positive first step.

VII. Adjournment

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 10:40 p.m.

Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education