MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING (03-10a)
OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1
IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER AND STATE OF COLORADO
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, 900 GRANT STREET
THURSDAY, MAY 15, 2003 AT 5:00 PM

I. Call to Order – 5:00 PM

A. Performance and Recognition

Valverde Grupo Folklorico– National Champions

After they performed for the Board, Dr. Wartgow announced that Valverde Elementary School entered the Viva Aztlan 2003 National Folklorico Competition in Lubbock, Texas and won the awards for Best Choreography, Best Advanced Children’s Group, and were declared the National Champions for 2003 for their performance “Infantil Viva Mexico”. He congratulated them on their great success. He added that the 3rd grade CSAP reading scores at Valverde skyrocketed this year.

B. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance

C. Roll Call

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

Recognitions (continued)

Four new principals introduced to the Board

Southeast Assistant Area Superintendent Beth Biggs announced that Dennis Thompson, the current interim principal at Bromwell, has been appointed to be the new Principal of Bromwell Elementary School. Mr. Thompson said he is delighted to be remaining at Bromwell. Area Superintendent Irene Jordan announced that William Kohut, the current interim principal at South High School and a former teacher and assistant principal at South, has been appointed to be the new Principal of South High School. Mr. Kohut said that South will be the premier high school in the city of Denver. Dr. Wartgow said that there was overwhelming support for these gentlemen based upon the job they did last year and congratulated them on their new appointments.

Northwest Assistant Area Superintendent Dave Debus introduced Ms. Claudia Beck, currently the interim principal at Cheltenham Elementary School, as the new Principal of Cheltenham. He noted that she has also served in various administrative and teaching roles at Cheltenham. Ms.
Beck said she loves the school, the kids, the community, and the staff at Cheltenham. Mr. Johnston also spoke about Ms. Beck’s qualifications for this new position and expressed support for her appointment. Ms. Gantz Berman and Dr. Wartgow also congratulated her.

Northeast Assistant Area Superintendent John Youngquist introduced the new Principal of Smith Elementary School, Jorge-Ayn (Jai) Riley. She is coming from Douglas County, where she served as principal at South Elementary School for nine years. Ms. Riley attended DPS as a student and is very happy to be back in the District. Dr. Wartgow said he and the Board are delighted that she’s here and are looking forward to a great year.

On behalf of the Board, Ms. Gantz-Berman congratulated and welcomed all of the new principals.

2003 IKON Athletes of the Year

Karen Higel, an athletics manager for the DPS, and Board member Sue Edwards presented these awards. Each year one middle school girl and one middle school boy are honored as the IKON Athletes of the Year. The award recognizes their outstanding sportsmanship while they played in the Nuggets / Avalanche Middle School Prep League, their leadership on and off the playing field, scholastic achievements, and citizenship at school and in the community. The winners this year were:

Nicole Howard, from Martin Luther King Middle School, has participated in cross-country, basketball and soccer. She has 3.2 GPA, is active in her church youth group and choir, and volunteers at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. She was also a leader on her team and in her school in resolving conflicts between teammates and students and handling difficult situations with maturity and excellent communication skills.

Ian Kane, from Hamilton Middle School, played floor hockey, basketball, flag football and wrestled for Hamilton. He is a volunteer with the Families First organization, has natural leadership qualities, and brings great strength, honesty, and compassion to his team and to his classrooms.

Ms. Edwards thanked the Middle School Prep financial sponsors: the Denver Nuggets and the Colorado Avalanche Community Funds, the McCormick Tribune Foundation, and IKON Office Solutions. She also thanked the Board for the support they give to our student athletes throughout the year.

Million Word Readers Recognition

Dr. Wartgow introduced Darlene LeDoux, Assistant Superintendent for School Community Partnerships, and thanked her for all of her work on this program. Ms. LeDoux thanked Sally Mentor Hay for the idea for this campaign. She said the three goals of the campaign were: 1) to have every student in DPS read a million words a year; 2) to inform parents and community members about the campaign and get their support and participation; 3) to use this effort to highlight the DPS 100 year anniversary. She said the District provided the initial messages to the community, created the “Read” logo, organized a press conference, provided banners, posters, bookmarks, pins, buttons, and bumper stickers, and coordinated District activities. Each school led the development of their school-based campaign, and some of these efforts included: elementary schools established a 3-hour block of reading and writing during the school day;
teachers and librarians encouraged students to read outside of the school day for an additional 15-30 minutes and provided incentives. She noted that the 84 banners on display represent 84 different schools in the DPS, and were made by DPS students, staff, and parents.

Ms. LeDoux and Elaine Gantz Berman presented the Special Recognition Award to our friends and business partners of AXA Advisors: Executive Vice President Ross Ferrin, and Vice Presidents Brian Stouder and Joseph DiBiasi. They said they are excited to be a part of this great program with DPS.

The following core volunteers from the community were acknowledged: representing the Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition, Patsy Royball; from the Denver Public Library, Jolea Kalvin and Judy Somerlot; from the Northeast Collaborative / PEB, Shelley Wood; representing the Faith-Based Community, Robin Johnston; from the University of Denver, student Laurel McMechan; from Community Resources Inc., Cyndi Burdick and Dianne Hammer; and Sue Edwards of the DPS School Board.

The following core volunteers from Denver Public Schools were acknowledged: the president of the DCTA, Becky Wissink; the Library Services Team – Jody Gehrig, Beth Wrenn-Estes, Karen Shannon, Ron Arner, Ruth Brassell, and Andrea Baker; from Curriculum and Instruction, Susana Cordova; from Public Information, Mark Stevens; on behalf of School Community Partnerships, Christine Smith and Karen Fulghum Sear.

Ms. LeDoux explained that traveling trophies are being presented to honor the schools with the students who have read the most million words. However, she noted that no trophy is being awarded this year at the high school level because they didn’t feel the high schools met the standards, but they will be encouraged to try again next year.

Principal Reina Gutierrez accepted the award for Hamilton Middle School
Principal Angela Hardy-Willhite accepted the award for Kaiser Elementary School
Principal Paul Sandos accepted the award for Marrama Elementary School

Dr. Wartgow congratulated the winners, volunteers, sponsors, and participants at all levels. He said that after a very difficult couple weeks of trying to balance the budget, an event like this is particularly exciting and encouraging.

D. Approve Agenda

A motion was made and seconded by Mr. Patterson to approve the agenda. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

II. Board Member Reports

A. Student Board of Education

Mrs. Edwards said she has enjoyed working with this wonderful, committed, hard-working group, and thanked Karen Higel and Troy Garner for the great job they have done of leading and working with these kids. Two kids from each high school currently serve on this board, a tradition begun by Mr. Mejia. She introduced and thanked the following students:

John Panter from CEC; Rebecca Revoal from DSA; Tavé Johnson from East; Lindsay Workman from East; Rava Chapman from GW; Helen Kassahun from GW; Annie Guo from JFK; Graciela
The Student Board of Education’s president, Tavay Johnson, and vice president, Ravay Chapman, presented their Annual Report (Appendix 03-10, II-A) to the Board. They discussed their many activities, as well some of their concerns, such as the possible removal of pop machines, maintenance issues, and the availability of adequate textbooks and technology in the schools. They thanked the Board of Education for their time and commitment to the Student Board of Education.

Mr. Mejia thanked them for their service and a great report. He asked what they thought the role of the students might be in helping to better maintain the schools. They responded that they are trying to organize clean-ups at their schools, but they would like some extra help. They also would like more security, in an effort to reduce graffiti.

Ms. Gantz Berman asked them to go into more detail about their idea for healthy snacks in the vending machines. They said they think that snacks help kids get through the day, and granola bars would be a good option.

The Board thanked them again for their work and their presentation.

American Indian Education Advisory Committee

Ms. Gantz Berman announced that the proceedings would continue out of order because another group, American Indian Education Advisory Committee, was present with a presentation for the Board (Appendix 03-10, VI-B-1a).

Sarah Howell, the chairperson of the American Indian Education Advisory Council, is also a member of the Pawnee tribe of Oklahoma. She began by referring to an article in this week’s Denver Post titled “Tribal Language Lessons and DPS Reaches Out to American Indians”. She said that she truly appreciates the fact that DPS reaches out to American Indian students, and she continued to emphasize that point throughout the presentation.

Sara Howell introduced some of the Advisory Board members: Jan Jacobs, Jackie Plumbar, Dr. Farrell Howell, Doris Goodteacher, and Wayne Wells. She said this is the first year that focused schools have been operating as they intended to be and have grown together as a community, as a school, and partnered with the DPS, the Curriculum Department, Wayne Eckerling’s office, Rev. Gray’s office. We’ve coordinated activities outside. She introduced Jan Jacobs, their Literacy Specialist. Ms. Jacobs said they’ve purchased a number of American Indian themed books and are developing a bibliography for the Curriculum Department, as well as a lesson plan for each of those books, which they hope will be ready to go when school starts in August.

Rose Marie McGuire introduced Gracie Redshirt Tyon-Foot, who teaches the Lakota class at East High School. She said that indigenous languages are taught on the reservation, depending on the language, but DPS has been innovative in introducing this to the urban schools. In other districts or reservation schools, it is an after school program, and the kids do not get language credit for it. She thanked Dr. Eckerling and Roseanne Fulton for supporting this project. She noted that they have 27 graduates in DPS. Many of their students leave the DPS to go back to a reservation school, and she would like to see it tracked by the Research and Planning Department to see how many of them are graduating.
Ms. Redshirt Tyon-Foot spoke about the value of the American Indian language programs, and two of her students, Robert Granger and Shannon Wells, demonstrated their Lakota skills for the Board. They said they appreciate the opportunity to learn the language and to learn about the culture.

A woman spoke on behalf of the focus school program, saying that it is very important to have American Indian focus schools because the children are dispersed and oftentimes they lack a sense of belonging. She said they are grateful for the increase in support over the last two years, and they believe they can be visionaries in the field of Indian education in this region and in the country, and thanked the Board for its support.

Ms. Gantz Berman thanked them for a beautiful presentation.

Mr. Mejia said he is proud of them and proud to be part of a district that supports a program like this, and thanked the students, parents and mentors for coming tonight.

Mrs. Moss said she’s been attending the American Indian Education graduation awards ceremony for the last two years, and it’s a moving ceremony. She appreciates the great work they’re doing.

Mr. Patterson seconded Mr. Mejia’s remarks.

Rev. Guzman asked whether the students receive credit for this class. Someone said yes, it is given. Rev. Guzman asked whether students who are not American Indian can also take the class. Someone replied that about 21 students are enrolled in the Lakota class, and about 75% of them are American Indians, and they all get credit for the language course. Rev. Guzman said that this course is very important part of our District, and this program is a great way to honor the American Indian students as well as their ancestors, and said that academics is about enlightenment, which includes academic performance.

Dr. Wartgow thanked the Advisory Council for being such a positive, constructive, proactive group, and said it’s a pleasure for the District to provide the support.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

There were none at this time.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the Consent Agenda:

A. Superintendent’s Office

1. Gift Report (IV-A-1) – This report details public gifts received by the schools with a value of $500 or more.
2. Proclamation on School and District Climate (IV-A-2)- This proclamation is a declaration by the Board and the Denver Classroom Teachers Association Rep Council that positive school and district climate is a high priority.

B. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources
   a. Personnel Transaction Report (IV-B-1a) – This report contains information regarding employee activity such as appointments, resignations and transfers.
   b. Elimination of Retiree Life Insurance (IV-B-1b) – This is a motion to eliminate Life Insurance for all active employees who retire after December 31, 2005.

2. Facility Management
   a. Final Settlements (IV-B-2a) – These settlements close a specific contract such as closing out a building addition.
   b. Construction Contract (IV-B-2b) – This is a construction contract for approval by the Board of Education for the landscape project at Noel Middle School.
   c. Cooperative Agreement (IV-B-2c) – This is an agreement with the City and County of Denver for approval by the Board of Education to provide a bike path/trail to the City at Holm Elementary School.

C. Educational Services

1. Denver School of Science and Technology Charter School (IV-C-1) – The Board of Education will vote on a proposed new contract between the district and the charter school.

Board members requested that the following items be held for discussion:

   IV-A-2 Proclamation on School and District Climate
   IV-B-2-c Cooperative Agreement

Mr. Mejia made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as modified, which was seconded by Mr. Woodward. A roll-call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**Held Item: Proclamation on School and District Climate (IV-A-2)**

Rev. Guzman read the proclamation for School and District Climate (Appendix 03-10, IV-A-2).
Dr. Wartgow said that we’re working very hard in cooperation with the DCTA to keep the importance of school climate at the forefront, and although we know it’s there, it’s very important for us to state it. We have a very active and dedicated committee working on this and we want to get this proclamation into place so that as we begin the new school year in the fall, we can implement the recommendations of this committee. We will begin doing that immediately and continue to keep as a very high priority creating outstanding climate of collaboration and mutual respect in all of our schools. I know Andre Pettigrew, Darlene LeDoux, Dave Debus, are member of that task force representing the administration.

Rev. Guzman moved that the proclamation be adopted. Mrs. Edwards seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken and the Board unanimously adopted the proclamation in conjunction with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association.

Becky Wissink, DCTA President, thanked the Board for passing the proclamation, and said that they will be working on this at their Rep Council meeting and will be passing a similar proclamation, adding that climate is the responsibility of everyone.

**Held Item: Cooperative Agreement (IV-B-2-c)**

Mr. Mejia read the motion, seconded by Mrs. Edwards, for the construction of a pedestrian trail/bike path at Holm Elementary School (Appendix 03-10, IV-B-2c). Mr. Mejia said that he wanted to make it clear that he wears two hats with regard to this project: as manager of Denver Parks and Recreation, and as a member of this Board. He said this project illustrates the kind of cooperation that continues to happen between the School District and the City, and Parks and Recreation in particular. This is another step in strengthening a relationship where this works together very well, our adjacent properties and our common interests. Britta Herwig, a Denver Parks and Recreation planner, said the project is a simple one, designed to make use of a piece of DPS property to continue a bike path from Holm Elementary in the southwest of Denver, from Hampden Heights Park to Bible Park, the last link in that regional trail. She explained that the agreement is that Denver Parks and Recreation will be building the trail on DPS land, and in addition will be constructing a playground at Holm Elementary School. Denver Parks will also be maintaining a natural area, they’ll be mowing it, and they have added connections to the community adjacent at two cul de sacs south of the school. Jim Metcalf, the Principal of Holm, thanked the Department of Parks and Recreation for the work and planning that went into this. He said this first came up about three years ago, and they had been developing a master plan of our own when Denver Parks approached them with this idea, and the two pieces just fit together, although there were many things that had to be worked out, and a lot of people worked very hard to make it happen, including the teachers and parents at Holm who also helped to design the playground to suit the needs of the children. Mr. Mejia thanked Facilities Management for their work in cooperation with the City, and Councilwoman Joyce Foster, an advocate for this and many other projects involving collaboration.

Mrs. Edwards asked Mr. Metcalf if they still have the wetlands between Holm and Hamilton Middle School. Mr. Metcalf said there is a partnership between Holm and Hamilton, it is a wetlands area between the schools, and they’re a little concerned about West Nile so they’ve been cutting it back a little bit just because of standing water, but they’re trying to maintain it and it’s a learning area, which both schools use for nature activities.

Ms. Gantz Berman noted that this is another example of a very innovative partnership with the City of Denver and the Department of Parks and Recreation, where they’re providing us with a
playground and we’re allowing them to build a bike path. She thanked Mr. Mejia for his work on this project.

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

III. Superintendent’s Reports (presented out of order from the agenda)

Dr. Wartgow submitted a recommendation for a teacher termination and Ms. Gantz Berman acknowledged it has been received by the Board, a copy of which is attached to the minutes and marked Appendix03-10, III-A.

V. Old Business

Second Reading for Proposed Policy Revision JEB - Entrance Age Requirements (V-A-1).

Information Only.

Dr. Wartgow said we did introduce a proposal for the Board at the last meeting and had a lot of conversation at the public hearing and we received a lot of helpful feedback on this proposal from throughout the District. Based upon that feedback, we’re proposing some modifications to the proposal, not the essence of the proposal or the educational elements of it, but more in terms of the roll-out and the execution of it, and the timing.

Cheryl Caldwell, the Director of Early Childhood Education, explained that originally, the proposal was to be implemented in the 2003-2004 school year, changing the entrance date for the age at which children could begin school from September 15th to November 15th. We are now proposing a two-year implementation period, and that those schools who are ready and want to begin the implementation in 2003-2004 could do so, and those who need more time for planning could implement it in 2004-2005. That is the modification, and the procedures that are part of this packet just give principals and the public a better understanding of how this process would work.

Dr. Wartgow said that another area of concern, related to the timing and when people can sign up for this program and when the schools close, but the area superintendents have already volunteered that they would be registering people, since their offices are open throughout the summer.

Ms. Gantz Berman asked how it will be determined whether a child is ready to move on to first grade and whether they’ve met the developmental and educational milestones. Ms. Caldwell said there are two ways that those decisions are made: 1) If a child is in a preschool classroom the preschool teacher might make recommendations about kindergarten, and if they’re in a kindergarten classroom, the kindergarten classroom teacher will, early in the year, in the middle of the year, begin to see that this may be a student that might not be ready to go on to first grade, and there are retention policies and procedures that will be followed. 2) Both as part of our educational program and as part of federal No Child Left Behind ??????? (NCLB), every kindergarten student receives a pre-test and a post-test on two instruments. If the child doesn’t score at a particular level, then they are on a “watch” status. If the kindergarten teacher thinks the child is ready for first grade if they have more support, they would still be on a watch and they would be assessed in the fall, and if they’re still behind, then they would be automatically referred to the Reading Recovery program.
Mr. Patterson referred to the concerns he had raised about this proposal: 1) equity, and the process of how we were putting this out and how it would be offered across the District; 2) the implementation and timing of it; 3) space, in terms of in most of the schools in the northeast are already pretty much at capacity. But I think this proposal at least allows kids to receive some early childhood education, appropriate for the level that they’re at. And it offers some way that we try to meet children’s needs considering that we’ve had to make changes, in what we’ve done with ECE and with the state funding, and I just want to thank the staff for making some good changes to the proposal that are responsive to the concerns raised, and I look forward to continue discussing this proposal.

Ms. Gantz Berman said and it will be voluntary if a parent chooses to put their child in kindergarten, because kindergarten is not mandatory in the state of Colorado. The parents have the option of waiting another year before enrolling their child.

Budget and Finance

Dr. Wartgow: the financial services statement is presented for your information. Mr. Allen will be presenting a balanced budget proposal consistent with the requirements of the Board and statutes for next year. We’ll have an opportunity to discuss that at the public hearing the first week in June. What this budget represents is an accumulation of many decisions that the Board has already made for various parts of the budget, including such things as the restructuring of summer school, charging for ECE, increase of the class size in the middle schools and high schools, and our major adjustment of the central administration budgets. There are union contracts that still remain to be settled, but there’s an amount in there that we’re working with. We’re going through this very difficult process right now, I sent a letter earlier to all employees and tried to address this in each of the last Board meetings that we’ve had, so this kind of consolidates it, the presentation here, and we’re certainly interested in hearing comments and receiving feedback. This proposal will be refined as it goes along and the community will have a chance at the public hearing to get into this in depth.

Proposed Budget

Rich Allen said this proposed budget is now available to the public in a comprehensive fashion and is now published in its entirety on our website. There is a public hearing scheduled for June 5th where comments can be made and we are planning on adoption of the budget after in changes that the Board desires on June 19th. We will then, as usual, come back with the amended budget on October 2nd. Supplemental budgets may be requested throughout the year as needed. I’d like to recognize Velma, Kendra and the entire budget staff for putting this together. Their work is by no means done, in fact it’s barely begun, because they will have to work through all of the school budgets. There’s a tremendous amount of work yet to be done by the school staffs as well, in terms of translating the overall District budget parameters into school specific budgets and working with their CDMs and their staffs. The proposed budget is an amalgam of the various discussions that the Board has had over the last several months. It was a very difficult and painful process, we had to deal with about a $30 million difference between the way would have liked to have budgeted and the revenue that was available, and we had to close that gap, and again many things were done in that process that were not optimal but we had to do it. Under the law we had to present a balanced budget. On page 11 there are a series of uncertainties that won’t be resolved by the time the Board has to adopt, and that’s why we have the amended and supplemental process later in the year. There is still widespread discussion about potentials of a state recision of the revenue that we did get in the School Finance Act, so we’ll need to watch that as we go
through the coming year. At this point we don’t know what our enrollments are going to be, we’ll find that out and we’ll start to get a handle on it in mid-September through November 1st. The Specific Ownership Tax, which is the tax on cars, continues to be very soft and we’re going to have to watch that. In addition there’s a whole variety of more routine things that we have to do, but are still uncertainties. The biggest of those, most of the union contracts are still out. We have put a budget item in here of 2.8% in total compensation for all of those contracts, but of course they do have to be negotiated, and we’re still working on that with a number of the bargaining units. Those are the high points, or perhaps the low points, of this budget. It is presented for your consideration and eventual adoption next month.

Mr. Woodward: on behalf of myself and the Board, this is obviously a very difficult endeavor that we’re involved in and I hope that the community has some appreciation for the complexity. I have been very pleased with the extent to which we have managed to do this without impacting, I think, classrooms, though I don’t think you can take $30 million out of anybody’s budget and not affect some things. We’ve had very public discussions about some things, such as the elimination of the paid-for ECE, substantial cuts in the administration which will effectively mean some reduction of the support of our educational activities in the schools. And there will be a number of places where the losses of some kind of support will be felt, or the lack of dollars will be felt within a school. And it starts with the fact that the state cut back textbook dollars, and the state does not have the revenue that is necessary to do the kind of things, educationally, that this District wants to do. I can’t express clearly enough my appreciation for the quality of evaluation that’s gone into this process and I hope that we can take this on to a final conclusion without a lot of people feeling that we have reduced in any substantial way the quality of education that the children of DPS will receive.

Ms. Gantz Berman: we started today’s Board meeting by hearing from students and the dancing and then recognizing the Million Words, and I just want to add to what Mr. Woodward has said, that while these are very challenging times for the District because of the cuts that we have to make, that we realize are translating into people’s employment and people’s lives, we have no intention of impacting the education that’s going on in our schools. We’ve had an extraordinarily good year educationally and we should not lose sight of the fact that we have made some excellent progress and we have every reason to believe that progress is going to continue. We look forward to more discussions on the budget, I know Board members have questions on individual parts of the budget, we look forward to the public hearing the first Thursday in June, and we want everyone to know that we are taking this budget and the budget cuts very seriously. Thank you to Rich Allen, Velma Rose, and to the Superintendent.

Ms. Gantz Berman announced the conclusion of this part of the Board meeting. This concludes the regular Board meeting. I am now going to call on Mr. Mejia for a point of personal privilege.

Mr. Mejia: because of out-of-state opportunities that I’ve been pursuing and the timing of those opportunities, tonight I reluctantly announce my resignation from the Board, effective June 26th, which is the last expected vote on the budget. I made a commitment to the voters of this city some four years ago, and more importantly to the children of Denver Public Schools, upon taking this term, and so it’s very difficult to now need to step down. Completed over 90% of the term, but will not be able to serve through November. I do believe it is in the best interest of the children of the District to step down at this point, given the recess in July that the Board will take, and given that towards the end of July or early August I’m likely to be leaving Denver for at least one year. Stepping down by the end of June will allow a new Board member to come in for the month of July to get up to speed and hit the ground running by the first Board meeting in August. I regret having to step down at this time especially, given all the momentum in the District. After the first
couple of years might not have been as hard, but this District has a tremendous amount going for it at this point, and I think the leadership that this Board has shown, the leadership that Superintendent Wartgow has shown, and the fact that this community is really pulling together behind DPS makes this an ideal time to be involved in this great endeavor. I also apologize to the Board for leaving at this time, because of the momentum, but also the extra work that I know that you’ll have to undergo to fill this position. It’s not an easy thing, and having gone through a vacancy on the other side, trying to fill a vacancy, I know that it’s difficult. I will miss the District, I will miss my colleagues, but I believe I’m acting in the best interest of the kids in stepping down now.

Dr. Wartgow: while the Board may not want to comment now and will have many opportunities to comment on the contributions Mr. Mejia has made, we’d love to have him stay through November, but given the tremendous and exciting opportunities Mr. Mejia has, I think it’s extremely professional of him to do this at this time, and fully support this, and I’m glad James that you’ll be sticking with us through the budget. I think you have nothing to apologize to anyone for, you’ve made a tremendous contribution and stepping down now, I think as you’ve outlined, you’re doing what you believe and most people understand is in the best interest of the District. Thank you.

Ms. Gantz Berman announced that the majority of the Board members are going to hold their comments until the end of June, but she asked Rev. Guzman to speak on behalf of the Board at this point.

Rev. Guzman: “On behalf of the Board and certainly personally, Mr. Mejia, our friend and colleague James, we are delighted about your opportunities, and at the same time, saddened that this journey that we have taken together will come to an end sooner than we thought. On a personal note, I feel very connected to you, we’ve talked about serving on the public school board together, we planned our campaigns together, we lived in the same area of Denver for awhile, we have a lot of things in common. You have served this city and this Board and the children of DPS in an impeccable way, not only through your intelligence and insight, but through your soul and the spirit of who you are, the spirit of Denver, the spirit of family, community. We have been honored to have you as part of this Board, and we know that you’re really beginning, you didn’t start to serve in this capacity in order to gain other opportunities, these are things that have come your way, and it’s just the beginning, I’m sure. Wherever you go and whatever you do, you will continue to serve in the same impeccable way. So how does one say thank you and goodbye and the best to you? We will have plenty of weeks to think about that. But just as an intro to your statement tonight, know that we have been honored, we will continue to be honored, and we all feel that you have completed, in a very just manner, your role. You have been responsible to the constituents of this city. Congratulations to you.”

Mr. Patterson read the moved that the Board accept Mr. Mejia’s resignation, effective June 26, 2003. Ms. Guzman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Voting “aye” were: Mrs. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, Mr. Patterson, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Mejia recused. The motion passed.

Adjournment

At 7:26 PM, Ms. Gantz Berman announced the adjournment of the regular meeting.
Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education