I. Call to Order – 5:00 p.m.

The Barrett Elementary School Fourth and Fifth Grade Choir performed for the Board and audience.

The North High School Drama Department presented two scenes from their play “Zoot Suit Riots” for the Board and audience

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

President Lester R. Woodward called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: Ms. Elaine Gantz Berman, Rev. Lucia Guzman, Mr. Bruce Hoyt, Mrs. Michelle Moss, Mr. Kevin Patterson, Ms. Theresa Peña, and Mr. Lester Woodward.

C. Recognition of Million Word Campaign Winners

Darlene LeDoux, Assistant Superintendent of School Community Partnerships, introduced Susana Cordova, Director of Literacy, to give an overview of the Million Word Campaign across the district. Ms. LeDoux then recognized Kaiser Elementary School (for the second year), Hamilton Middle School (for the second year), and West High School for winning Million Word Campaign trophies for the highest percentage of students in each school that read one million words during the current school year.

E. Recognition of Two Students with “Perfect” ACT Scores

Mr. Woodward introduced Andrea Durrell, ACT Regional Consultant. Ms. Durrell said that last year 43,351 juniors in Colorado took the ACT test and that eight of those students received a perfect score. Two students with perfect scores were from the Denver Public Schools. She introduced and congratulated Adam Brock, graduating senior from East High School; and Brian Davidson, graduating senior from George Washington High School.
D. Recognition of South High School JROTC

Mr. Woodward introduced Lieutenant Colonel Perry Roberts, Director, Military Science. Colonel Roberts introduced the Senior Army Instructor, Colonel Paul Patrick, and members of the South High School JROTC, winners of the Board of Education Trophy for the fifth year.

II. Board Members Reports

Reverend Lucia Guzman presented the final membership list for the Commission on Secondary School Reform. Ms. Gantz Berman moved adoption of the list of members with one correction: Ann Greenfield, Principal, Merrill Middle School, will be the middle school representative. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. A copy of this list is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, II-A

Dr. Wartgow said that this is an outstanding commission, with representation from all sectors of the city, with a very important task. The Commission will look at high schools in order to instill high expectations, close the gap between better and poor performing students, and improve the performance of all students.

Mr. Patterson reported that the Black Education Advisory Council’s first summit will be held on Saturday, May 22, at Gove Middle School. He said they are going to have some very interesting speakers and encouraged everyone to attend.

He said that he also wanted to extend congratulations to Rachel Noel for receiving two honorary doctorates, one from the University of Colorado at Boulder and one from the University of Colorado at Denver.

Ms. Gantz Berman reported that the students from Lincoln Elementary School who gave the phenomenal presentation on nutrition at the Board meeting of May 6, 2004, lost by one point to an eighth grade class in the state competition.

She said that congratulations were in order for Dr. Wartgow who also received an honorary degree from the University of Colorado at Denver.

She also expressed her gratitude to everybody in the community that helped make the second annual Denver Public Schools Foundation Gala a success. She said that over a 1,000 people attended, along with the Mayor and the Governor, and that the Foundation made over $1.2 million.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

Dr. Wartgow reported that since the last Board meeting it has been an upbeat, positive time. The Shakespeare Festival, with 3,000 students participating, was a huge success; and North High School’s production of the “Zoot Suit Riots” was a sellout, with a
return engagement scheduled in June. Horace Mann Middle School held a tremendously energetic assembly where Denver businessman, Alex Cranberg, stepped up and guaranteed every Horace Mann student that money will be available for them to attend college, if they graduate from high school. Also, the law firm of Hogan and Hartson, led by Tom Strickland, adopted Cheltenham Elementary School and provided $30,000 for after-school programs over the next few years. The month culminated in the very successful DPS Foundation Gala. He said it is fun to be Superintendent when you have this string of positive momentum going into the end of the year. He thanked all teachers, administrators, and parents for a wonderful year.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacque Lucero read the agenda items by number and sequence. In accordance with Consent Agenda procedures, the following items were removed from the Consent Agenda and held for discussion:

IV-B-1b  Motion to Approve Amalgamated Transit Union Tentative Agreement
IV-B-3  Motion to Approve School Meal Price Increases

Mrs. Moss moved that all matters on the Consent Agenda, not held, be approved; Ms. Gantz Berman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the following items were approved:

A. Board of Education


2. Policy Review

   a. New or Revised Policies

      1. Policy GDBD, Employee Fringe Benefits
      2. Policy IMBD, Patriotic Exercises

      Copies of these policies are appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-2a-1 and IV-A-2a-2.

   b. Deleted Policies

      1. Policy GCBD, Professional Staff Fringe Benefits
      2. Policy GCCAG, Instructional Staff Restoration of Health Leaver
      3. Policy GCCBA, Administrative Staff Sick Leave
      4. Policy GCCBC, Administrative Staff Maternity/Paternity/Parental Leave
      5. Policy GDCA, Support Staff Sick Leave
      6. Policy GDCC, Support Staff Maternity/Paternity/Parental Leave
7. Policy GDCG, Support Staff Restoration of Health Leave
8. Policy GDQC, Retirement of Support Staff


3. Finance and Audit Committee

a. Land Sale - A copy of this report, the sale of land at Ash Grove School, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-3a.

b. Use of Additional Contingency Funds - A copy of this report, the use of additional contingency funds for the EGOS Aircraft Training Center project, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-3b.

c. Architect Selection - A copy of this report, the architect selection for the Byers Renovation Project, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-3c.

d. Construction Contract - A copy of this report, the construction contract for the Hallett, Marrama, and McGlone Elementary Schools Renovation Project, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-3d.

4. Gift Report – A copy of this report is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-A-4.

B. Administrative Services

1. Human Resources

a. Motion to Approve Personnel Transaction Report – A copy of this report is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-B-1a.

2. Facility Management

a. Construction Advisory Committee Final Report - A copy of this report, the Construction Advisory Committee’s Final Report for the Career Education Center Addition Project, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-B-2a.

b. Construction Advisory Committee Final Report - A copy of this report, the Construction Advisory Committee’s Final Report for the Northeast Bus Terminal Project, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-B-2b.
IV-B-1b  Motion to Approve Amalgamated Transit Union Tentative Agreement

Mr. Hoyt said he held this item to commend and publicly thank district bus drivers and the Amalgamated Transit Union for agreeing to a contract which cuts transportation by an additional $650,000, including $520,000 of reduced compensation. He thanked them for being great partners and for helping in these difficult budget times.

Mr. Hoyt moved adoption of the tentative agreement. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. A copy of this report is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-B-1b.

IV-B-3  Motion to Approve School Meal Price Increases

Ms. Gantz Berman reported that school meal prices are being marginally increased to reflect the increase in food prices, but that it will not affect students who qualify for free and reduced-lunch.

Ms. Gantz Berman moved adoption of the School Meal Price Increase. Mrs. Moss seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. A copy of this report is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, IV-B-3.

V. Old Business

There was none.

VI. New Business

The following matters were presented for information:

A. Budget and Finance

1. Financial Services

a. Statement of Revenue Allocations, Appropriations, Commitments, and Expenditures for the period July 1, 2003, to April 30, 2004 – A copy of this status report of year-to-date revenues, expenditures, and inter-fund transfers for each fund as compared to the current-year budget and as compared to year-to-date totals for the prior year, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, VI-A-1a.

b. Receipt of 2004-2005 Proposed Budget – A copy of the Superintendent’s 2004-2005 Proposed Budget, submitted prior to the June 1, 2004, statutory deadline is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, VI-A-1b.
Dr. Wartgow said, in presenting the 2004-2005 Proposed Budget, that it has been a very difficult budget year for Denver Public Schools, and that the budget building process has been extremely complicated. He said, under state law, the Superintendent is required to present a balanced budget to the Board of Education, but when the anticipated expenditure budget exceeds the available revenue by $25.3 million, we are faced with a particularly serious challenge.

Dr. Wartgow said that even though the district received an increase in revenue from the state legislature, three main issues remain that required reductions be made in schools and central office spending. First, the district’s contribution to the Denver Public Schools Retirement System is currently under-funded and an additional $7.9 million dollars is needed. Second, district enrollment in neighborhood schools is expected to drop, while charter school enrollment is expected to grow. Third, the district is in its third year of a fiscally responsible three-year plan to eliminate the use of one-time money, this added an additional $6.2 million to the budget.

He said that in order to close this gap, while at the same time minimizing the impact on schools and keeping it as far away from the individual classrooms as possible, they have implemented budge cuts throughout the district. Cuts will come first from central administration. Central administration will a take a 13.8 percent reduction, with a three percent reduction coming from the schools. One of the central administration cuts proposed is to eliminate the position of Assistant Superintendent for School/Community Partnership and eliminate the entire organization that falls beneath that office—Community Relations and Community Education. Positions eliminated from these departments include a secretary and professional staff. Every department in this district will take significant cuts.

Schools have been ask to cut their budget by three percent. In order to give them additional flexibility, schools have been empowered to work with their Collaborative School Committees, which consist of parents, teachers, administrators, and classified staff, to decide what reductions can be made which would least impact their ability to meet our three goals of high expectations, improving the performance of all students, and closing the gap between better and poorer performing students.

Dr. Wartgow said that these have been very difficult decisions, and that there are ongoing discussions with seven different unions. He commend DAEOP, the secretaries union, for accepting the tentative agreement and for being willing to take their share of these difficult cuts. The Denver Classroom Teachers Association has requested mediation and the district has agreed to a mediation process.

He said that it has been a very difficult time for many of our employees. We are eliminating positions, but we are not eliminating support for the vital services and functions. Support will be provided in a different manner.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that many people have asked how the current budget situation will affect the $20 million mill levy the voters passed in November. Mill levy money is earmarked to be used for art and music teachers, textbooks, high school reform, school revitalization, and school maintenance, as we promised.
She said that the schools are facing two factors. One is the three percent reduction, the other is that many schools have to reduce staff because they are not anticipating the same level of enrollment next year as they have this year, due to changing demographics and enrollment shifts. Some schools are facing a double whammy: The three percent cut that we have asked them to do, plus the change in enrollment. Therefore, some schools are getting hit much harder than other schools.

Ms. Gantz Berman said that she believes that the enrollment shifts are causing more damage than the three percent cuts, but together they will definitely have an impact. She said that it is not anticipated, in most cases, that there will be any impact on class size.

Dr. Wartgow reiterated that many of these reductions, as mentioned earlier, are due to shifting and changing enrollment; therefore, if a school has to reduce teachers, it is because they have fewer students, which would not affect the overall class size.

Dr. Wartgow stated that it is extremely important, if we want to achieve our goals, that we be competitive in the marketplace. He said that he would not be happy until the Denver Public Schools are in a position to offer top salaries to everyone—teachers, food service workers, custodians. He said that in November 2005, we will enthusiastically ask the voters to help us with a mill levy increase to put an additional $25 million into teacher compensation, and he is optimistic that they will do it. If you assess the value of a school teacher to society and what they provide for future generations, a teacher’s value to society is immeasurable, he added.

Velma Rose, Chief Financial Officer, said that the Public Hearing on the budget will be held on June 3, 2004; and the Proposed Budget will be on the Board’s agenda for adoption at their June 17, 2004, meeting. The budget is accessible through the district’s web site.

Mr. Woodward acknowledged the hard work of Dr. Wartgow, the Cabinet, staff, and Board members. He said that the Board does not get to decide what money the district gets; that is done by another body, and that this has been a very difficult process. He said that he feels we have done as well as we could to make sure that the schools, and more importantly the kids, are protected.

B. Student Services

1. Expelled Students Report – A copy of this report is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, VI-B-1.

C. Policy Review

1. Repeal and Re-enactment of Policy – A copy of Policy JQ, Student Fees, is appended to the minutes of this meeting as Appendix 04-15, VI-C-1.
VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Woodward adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

Michelle Moss, Secretary
Board of Education