I. Call To Order

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

President Elaine Gantz Berman called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: Elaine Gantz Berman, Mrs. Susan G. Edwards, Rev. Lucia Guzman, Mr. James Mejía, Mrs. Michelle Moss, and Mr. Lester Woodward. Mr. Kevin Patterson was absent and excused.

C. Recognitions

1. Denver Nuggets/Colorado Avalanche Prep League Student Athletes of the Year

Lani Nobles, Director of Middle School Athletics, introduced Jim Weaver, President of Ikon Office Systems, which co-sponsors the middle school athletic program with the Denver Nuggets and the Colorado Avalanche.

Mr. Weaver said that he was pleased to be allowed to announce the winners of the male and female Athlete of the Year awards. He presented the awards to Adam Rabih, Henry Middle School, as the male Athlete of the year; and Rebecca Macari, Hamilton Middle School, as female Athlete of the Year.

He said that the focus of the prep league this year was sportsmanship, both in the schools and on the playing field. To present this years awards, he said, input was sought from school officials such as principals and teacher, and also from the officials refereeing the games, who get the chance to witness sportsmanship, or the lack thereof, first hand. He said that one school from both the Eastern Division and Western Division would be awarded the School Sportsmanship Award; Merrill Middle School was selected as the winner in the Eastern Division, and Rishel Middle School was chosen as the Western Division recipient. Each Division winner, he said, would receive a plaque and a check for $500 to be used at the discretion of the principal, either for athletics or academics.
Ms. Gantz Berman thanked Mr. Weaver and stated that the district would not be able to have such a fine middle school athletic league without the beneficence of Ikon, the Denver Nuggets, and the Colorado Avalanche. She also wished Ms. Nobles well as she takes on her new position as Assistant Principal at Thomas Jefferson High School.

2. Department of Food and Nutrition Services

Ms. Gantz Berman introduced Donna Wittrock, Executive Director of Food and Nutrition Services. Ms. Gantz Berman said that she had visited the Food and Nutrition Services Department earlier that day, toured the entire facility, met with staff, and learned a great deal about the district’s food services. She said that the district and the community should be very proud of the Food and Nutrition Services Department, as they are a nationally recognized leader in the field and very unusual in that it operates as an Enterprise Fund—totally self-sustaining and operational without additional district funding. She said that, this year, the department provided free breakfasts for all students taking Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) tests on the day of the test. The department, she said, is also acknowledged by many companies as a good place to hold pilot programs to test new products and conduct research; companies who have conducted pilot programs in the Denver Public Schools include Sunkist, the National Dairy Council, the California Raisin Board, General Mills, and the United States Division of Agriculture. She commended the entire staff of the Food and Nutrition Services Department for the excellent job they perform and the great service they provide.

She said that she especially wished to congratulate Ms. Wittrock for being named National President of the American School Food Service Association, that she would take office in July 2003, and that this recognition was an honor, not only for Ms. Wittrock but also for the Denver Public Schools. Ms. Wittrock, she said, is also to be commended on her long service with the district, beginning her career 27 years ago as a cook in the department to Executive Director.

Ms. Gantz Berman stated that Ms. Wittrock’s latest accomplishment was as recipient of this year’s Silver Plate Award in the Elementary/Secondary Schools—the most prestigious national award in the food service industry. She said that it was a great honor to have Ms. Wittrock in charge of the district’s food service department and that the district was very proud of her accomplishments.

Ms. Wittrock displayed the Silver Plate Award and said that it was presented in May in Chicago, at a dinner attended by approximately 1,000 people. She said that she felt as if she had won the Olympics and an Academy Award, and that the award was especially meaningful because it was voted on by her peers. She acknowledged that she could not have won the award without the assistance of her staff, who have always been professional and supportive, encouraging her to take the program to the national level.
Mrs. Edwards said that one of the concerns raised by the Student Board of Education was that students in school did not particularly like the food that was served as part of the school lunch program. She said that Ms. Wittrock and some of her staff attended a Student Board of Education Meeting and talked with the students, truly listening to their concerns. Following the meeting, she said, Ms. Wittrock wrote to each Student Board member, thanking them for their input and explaining that several focus groups of students would be assembled to taste test alternatives to the food products that the students found the most distasteful. She said that this ability to listen and take action was what had allowed Ms. Wittrock to win awards and garner honors in her field.

D. Approve Agenda

Mrs. Edwards moved that the Board of Education approve the agenda for this meeting. Mr. Mejía seconded the motion. A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mr. Mejía, Mrs. Moss, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Patterson was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

II. Board Member Reports

There were no Board Member reports.

III. Superintendent’s Reports

A. Recommendation for Teacher Dismissal

Superintendent Jerry Wartgow explained that he had distributed to the Board members a letter recommending the dismissal of a teacher. He said that the letter did not require action by the Board at this time and that the teacher has the right to appeal the decision, should he so desire. A copy of the letter, marked “Confidential,” is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, III-A.

B. Introduction of New Principals

Dr. Wartgow introduced Joe Sandoval, Northwest Area Superintendent, to introduce new principals at schools in the northwest quadrant of the city. Mr. Sandoval presented Linda Torres, who will be the new principal at Baker Middle School, explaining that Ms. Torres comes to the district from Ranum High School in Thornton, but that she also spent time in the educational field in southern Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. He said that Ms. Torres has a clear vision for Baker and that he feels that the Baker community was very impressed with her leadership qualities.
Ms. Torres said that she is honored to have been named Baker’s principal, and that she appreciates the opportunity to serve the community. She said that she looks forward to working with the community, students, parents, and staff in support of literacy and support for the children of Baker.

IV. Consent Agenda

Assistant Secretary Jacquie Lucero read the agenda items by section and number. In accordance with consent agenda procedures, Board members requested that the following items be held for discussion:

IV-B-1 Resolution 2784 – Citizens Ad Hoc Committee on Facility Needs
IV-B-4 Grant Proposal – Early Excellence Program – Harrington and Mitchell Elementary Schools
IV-C-1c Construction Contract for the John F. Kennedy High School Rockies Field Project

Mrs. Edwards moved adoption of the consent agenda and Mr. Mejía seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mr. Mejía, Mrs. Moss, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Patterson was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

The following items were approved under the consent agenda process:

B. Superintendent’s Office

1. Grant Proposal – U.S. Department of Education National Coordinators Program – Psychological Services/Safe and Drug Free Schools – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve submission of the above-referenced grant application, 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 this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-1.

2. Grant Proposal – U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History Program – Curriculum and Instruction – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve submission of the above-referenced grant application, 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 this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-2.
3. **Grant Proposal – Nuggets Community Fund and Avalanche Community Fund – Athletics Department – Maintenance and Expansion of Junior Prep League** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve submission of the above-reference grant application, 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 this grant application is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-3.

5. **Motion to Approve the District’s Assessment Plan** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Denver Public Schools Assessment Plan, as presented, and that the plan be implemented for the 2002-2003 school year. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-5.

6. **Resolution 2785 – Colorado High School Charter** – It was recommended that the Board of Education adopt Resolution #2785, approving the charter contract for Colorado High School. A copy of this contract is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-6.

C. **Administrative Services**

1. **Facility Management**

   a. **Final Settlements** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Final Settlements for Contracted Services. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-1a.

   b. **Construction Contract for the North High School Phase I Rehabilitation Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the construction contract for the North High School Phase I Rehabilitation Project and that the firm of W.M. Brown Construction be approved for the contract. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-1b.

   d. **Use of Additional Contingency Funds for the Lake Middle School Addition Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the use of additional contingency funds on the amount of $50,000.00 for the Lake Middle School addition project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-1d.
e. **Use of Additional Contingency Funds for the Lena Archuleta Elementary School (Gateway) Construction Project** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the use of additional contingency funds in the amount of $50,000 for the Lena Archuleta Elementary School (Gateway) construction project. A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-90, IV-C-1e.

2. **Administrative Services**

   a. **Personnel Transaction Report** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve the Personnel Transaction Report. A copy of this report is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-2a.

   b. **Motion – DAEOP Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding** – It was recommended that the Board of Education approve salary, benefit, and compensation changes according to the Memorandum of Understanding attached to the motion, and tentative agreements between the Denver Association of Educational Office Professionals (DAEOP) and the Denver Public Schools, effective September 1, 2002 (July 1, 2002, for the Benefit Allowance Supplement). A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-2b.

**DISCUSSION AGENDA**

IV-B-1 Resolution 2784 – Citizens Ad Hoc Committee on Facility Needs

Rev. Guzman moved adoption of Resolution 2784 as follows:

- Whereas, the district’s overall enrollment is expected to continue increasing; and
- Whereas, the district’s infrastructure and systems continue to age and require renovation; and
- Whereas, new residential development is planned throughout the city; and
- Whereas, capital improvements are needed for the district’s educational programs; and
- Whereas, improvements to the district’s technology infrastructure are needed to support the growing requirements of educational programs and business applications; and
- Whereas, the district’s maintenance and code issues have grown as the age of the district’s schools has increased; and
- Whereas, the efficient use of district facilities and systems must be considered.

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Now, therefore, be it resolved that a Citizens Ad Hoc Committee on Facility Needs be formed to assist staff in collaboratively developing a plan that addresses:

1. Necessary new school construction and classroom additions resulting from enrollment growth;

2. Capital needs and costs associated with educational and business technology requirements;

3. Capital needs and costs to support educational and business technology requirements;

4. Maintenance of high quality facilities that meet code compliance, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and that cannot reasonably be addressed with annual operating funds;

5. Potential efficiencies in the use of educational facilities, support facilities, and systems; and

6. Opportunities for entering into partnerships with state and local agencies to develop multi-purpose facilities.

Now be it further resolved that this plan be presented to the Board of Education in November 2002 for discussion and possible action.

Mrs. Edwards seconded the motion.

Rev. Guzman said that one of the responsibilities undertaken by members of the Board of Education is to think ahead and plan with vision for the future of the Denver Public Schools. She said that the General Obligation Bond approved by the electorate in 1998 has fulfilled many of the district’s capital construction needs, but not quite enough of them. There are still many areas of new development in the city, she said, and those areas will need schools for the children who live there. Additionally, she said, the district’s existing schools continue to age and require constant care to keep them functional. She said that there are many things needed by the district in the area of technology that must be provided to support the educational goals and objectives of the Superintendent and Board of Education.

In answer to those concerns, she said, the Resolution currently before the Board proposes to set up a task force to examine the district’s construction needs and weigh the possibility of seeking new General Obligation Bond approval from the voters of Denver.

Dr. Wartgow said that the proposed Resolution setting up an Ad Hoc Citizens Advisory Committee on Facility Needs is the next important step in attaining the district’s goals. Meeting those goals, he said, is a very serious matter that requires advanced planning and diligence. He said that appropriate district staff would work closely with the members of the Ad Hoc Facility Needs Committee and other advisory groups between now and November 2002 to bring forth responsible recommendations regarding the future facility needs of the district. He said that he
looks forward to active participation in the process from many segments of the Denver Public Schools community and expressed certainty that their input would be invaluable as needs determinations are made and methods of meeting those needs are developed.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mr. Mejía, Mrs. Moss, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Patterson was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of Resolution 2784 is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-1.

IV-B-4  Grant Proposal – Early Excellence Program – Harrington and Mitchell Elementary Schools

Mr. Mejía moved that the Board of Education approve submission of the grant application entitled *Early Excellence: The Piton Foundation* 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. Mr. Woodward seconded the motion.

Mr. Mejía stated that Terry Pinney, representing the Piton Foundation, was present at the meeting to discuss the grant proposal.

Ms. Pinney said that she has always been especially interested in the matter of early childhood education and that the Piton’s latest grant program, *Early Excellence*, is an outgrowth of that interest. She said that for a long time, discussions about early childhood education centered on the question of how to get more preschools connected to schools and the same problems continue to stand in the way of that goal—space and money.

She said that she and others at Piton decided to look at the problem from another angle and asked the question of how they could empower elementary schools to be leaders in the community, and to create the conditions so that all children are ready for school and schools are ready for all children. Piton representatives wished to help schools invest in their future students through a variety of means by partnering with the community but without having to build a preschool building. Preschool is vital for children, she said, because it helps children come to school prepared to learn, and helps them be prepared socially, emotionally, and academically for the school experience.

Ms. Pinney said that the grant applied for by Harrington and Mitchell Elementary Schools would be a three- to four-year grant; Wyatt-Edison Charter school has also applied for such a grant, but that application does not require Board of Education approval. These schools, she said, are all in the Cole area, which is of particular interest and importance to the Piton Foundation. She displayed a map showing the locations of Harrington, Mitchell, and Wyatt-Edison, along with the locations of licensed childcare facilities in the area. The area’s current childcare situation, she said, has widespread facilities insufficient to serve the number of children and families in the

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area. She said that some young children attend licensed childcare facilities, some are looked after at home by their mothers, and some are left in the care of other family members or friends; these children receive a varying amount of preparation to ready them to enter school.

Ms. Pinney said that schools must accept children who enter kindergarten, regardless of their educational readiness. The purpose of the Educational Excellence grants, she said, is to form partnerships between parents and the community to come up with an array of programs or initiatives that will help prepare children for school. She said that the grants are based upon two beliefs: (1) that children who come to school prepared to learn perform better academically; and (2) that schools and their communities, given time and resources, can make the best decisions for themselves and the children they serve. These grants, she said, will fund a planning process for each school and its community, and will fund the implementation of the plan. She said that the Foundation would not dictate the plan to the schools, but would encourage them to form partnerships with existing childcare providers in their attendance areas to work together to prepare children for school. Another possibility, she said, would be home visitations by school staff to teach parents, or groups of parents, how to work with their children so that they know what they need to know to be successful in kindergarten. She said that the Piton Foundation would only require that the schools’ plans are based on proven research, have an identifiable track record, and meet the developmental and cultural needs of the children they serve.

She said that the ultimate goal, after four years, is to have neighborhoods in which parents and schools work together, and children who arrive in kindergarten on a level playing field with all of their peers. Under such a scenario, she said, parents and childcare providers will understand what is expected of a child entering kindergarten, and schools will serve as leaders in the community, assisting parents and childcare providers in helping students be ready for school. She said that the Foundation plans to keep track of the children participating in these programs to determine the measure of school readiness attained and the long-term effects of these programs on academic achievement. She explained that the Foundation hoped to have the district’s assistance in making these determinations, but that if the district chooses not to share that information, they would obtain the services of an independent evaluator.

Ms. Pinney said that there is a small matching amount expected of each school participating in the program, and that that amount would increase over the four years of the grant, totaling approximately eleven to twelve percent of the grant.

Mrs. Edwards noted that the proposed budget for the grant includes funding for a part-time program coordinator and asked Ms. Pinney how many hours per week it was assumed that the coordinator would work.

Ms. Pinney said that it became clear during the course of developing the Early Excellence program that schools did not have staff members with sufficient time to work closely with childcare providers, as well as gathering and analyzing data to maintain ongoing records on children participating in the program. It was evident, she said, that an additional staff person would be required to coordinate the program, and the Foundation envisions that this person will work twenty hours per week.
Rev. Guzman remarked that Fairview Elementary School might also be taking part in the program and asked when a decision about Fairview’s participation would occur. Ms. Pinney replied that she anticipated that a decision about Fairview would be forthcoming within the month and would come from Norma Giron, Fairview’s principal.

In response to Rev. Guzman’s question about the matching fee required from each school, Ms. Pinney said that the Foundation would speak with school principals who decide that their school cannot afford the matching amount. The amount, she said, is minimal in comparison with how much the schools receive in return, and represents a way of schools taking ownership of the program. She said that Foundation representatives would counsel school officials and offer suggestions for obtaining the funds, including applying for a separate grant, and using Title I and Amendment 23 funds. She acknowledged that schools participating in the program would have to make a time commitment and a financial commitment, but that it is those commitments that help the schools feel invested in the program.

Mrs. Edwards noted that, after four years, if the program proves successful, it would be up to the district to continue funding it. Ms. Pinney said that at the end of four years, the opportunity would be available to discuss the possibility of the Foundation continuing to fund the program.

Mrs. Edwards said that one of the issues she raises when she speaks to the community is her belief that public education is given enough money to educate children if all the other issues of society did not fall upon the backs of school districts, such as safety and health issues, and social work matters. She said that she understands and agrees with the fact that children must come to school ready for education, but that she is also concerned with the fact that this might become just one more piece of society’s concern that gets unloaded onto people whose job it should be to educate children. She said that it is time for other people and organizations to step up and carry some of the burden, and that it seems to her that when the grants expire, a severe financial burden will fall upon the schools participating in the program.

Ms. Pinney agreed and said that, while it is unfortunate that these burdens fall upon schools, the reality is that they do, which is why the Piton Foundation wants to offer assistance in the form of these grants. One of the long-term goals of the project, she said, is to show governmental decision-makers that schools, without necessarily providing all the services, can effectively organize early care and education. The early childcare industry, she said, is inadequate to suit the need and woefully under-funded; therefore, families, schools, and childcare provider are all struggling to meet a very evident need with none of those entities able to cope with all the problems alone.

Mr. Woodward asked if there were specific plans to help parents fulfill their job to help make children ready for school. Ms. Pinney replied that each school community would have their own plan, but that she believes that the schools see parental involvement as a high priority and would, almost certainly, include such a program in the planning process. She said that her discussions with school officials have already revealed that principals and teachers are anxious to become more involved in helping parents work with their children at home to support what goes on in the classrooms.
Dr. Wartgow said that he wished to offer his support to the program and his thanks to the Piton Foundation for stepping forward to address such an important problem. He said that the Piton Foundation has long been of great service to the district, most recently with a donation of $50,000 to help fund the Principals’ Institute. The Piton Foundation’s assistance, he said, is a vote of confidence in the Denver Public Schools and he looks forward to working with the Foundation for many years to come.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mr. Mejía, Mrs. Moss, and Mr. Woodward. Mr. Patterson was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of the grant application abstract entitled Early Excellence is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-B-4.

IV-C-1c Construction Contract for the John F. Kennedy High School Rockies Field Project

Mr. Mejía moved that the Board of Education approve the construction contract for the John F. Kennedy High School/Colorado Rockies Youth Field Project, the firm of SportOne for the construction contract, and the amount of $270,000 as the construction budget. Rev. Guzman seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was recorded as follows: voting “aye,” Ms. Gantz Berman, Mrs. Edwards, Rev. Guzman, Mrs. Moss, and Mr. Woodward; voting “no,” Mr. Mejía. Mr. Patterson was absent and excused. The motion was declared duly carried.

A copy of this motion is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, IV-C-1c.

V. Old Business

There was no old business.

VI. New Business

A. Information Only

1. DCTA/DPS Pay for Performance Annual Report

Mr. Woodward said that the Denver Public Schools/Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) Pay For Performance pilot program has reached the end of its third year. He said that, under the astute leadership of the Pay For Performance Design Team, the pilot is moving forward very successfully. Without question, she said, the program has gained momentum over the past year and, as a pilot, its function is to learn new things, which is an ongoing process.
Mr. Woodward said that the team continues to work toward finding additional ways to ensure that the pilot program becomes an integral part of the effort of this district to increase student achievement for all students. He introduced Brad Jupp, Pay For Performance Design Team Leader, to provide an overview of the current status and future of the program.

Mr. Jupp said that he was pleased to be able to give the third annual report regarding the Pay For Performance pilot project. He said that, first, he wished to relay an experience he had had that afternoon when he received a telephone call from the personal assistant of Charles Garrett, Chief Executive Officer of the Intel Corporation. The assistant stated that Mr. Garrett was going to deliver a speech to the Western Governor’s Conference regarding public education and that he wanted more information about the Pay For Performance pilot project in order to be able to relay to the governors the progress being made in a new and exciting method of teacher compensation. Mr. Jupp said that that is evidence of how the eyes of the nation are looking toward Denver to lead the way in that area.

He said that the coming year would mark the fourth year of a four-year pilot and that the level of attention to the program must be raised to the level of those around the nation who are looking toward the Denver Public Schools to produce results. He said that he could spend a long time talking about where the pilot program is because it is a very exciting and interesting topic that speaks to the heart of public education. The program, he said, is about how teachers do their work, how principals work with those teachers, and how children learn. However, he said, in the interest of time, he would concentrate on what the pilot is and what it has accomplished over the past twelve months.

Regarding the current status of the pilot program, Mr. Jupp said that, over the past year, both the district and DCTA have obtained new leaders, and that the new leadership has provided both organizations with additional focus, direction, and momentum. He stated his belief that, without Dr. Wartgow as Superintendent and Becky Wissink as President of DCTA, the pilot program would not have near the level of success it has had thus far.

He said that this was the first year that the project has had a full complement of schools—twelve elementary schools (Centennial, Colfax, Columbian, Cory, Edison, Ellis, Fairview, Mitchell, Oakland, Philips, Southmoor, and Traylor); two middle schools (Horace Mann and Lake); a high school education complex (Manual); and a traditional comprehensive high school (Thomas Jefferson). He said that having a full complement of schools is exciting not only because there is such a wide range of programs, but that it also is a very good example of the diversity of the district’s schools and students. The schools, he said, include four schools that have received “unsatisfactory” grades; eight schools that have received “low” grades; two “average” schools; one “high” school; and one “excellent” school. He said that some of the schools have English Language
Acquisition (ELA) programs, and that the schools range from seven percent to 97 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.

The schools participating in the pilot, Mr. Jupp said, have a combined total of 633 teachers, each of whom submit two objectives in collaboration with their principals; who then ensure that those objectives are of high quality. If the teachers meet those objectives at the end of the year, he said, they are awarded bonuses.

He explained that the program had received a midterm report from the Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC), which stated that the objective-setting process had been useful and effective, and was believed to be a tool that could be used to improve classroom performance. He stated that the CTAC report had been very valuable to the Design Team and that the team was moving forward on the recommendations contained therein.

Mr. Jupp said that, for the first time, the Pay For Performance pilot program was fully funded with financial assistance in the form of grants of $1 million from the Rose Community Foundation, $500,000 from the Daniels Fund, and $1 million from the Broad Foundation. These grants, he said, were anchored by a $1 million grant from the Rose Foundation in April 2000, and the generous support of the Donnell-Kay Foundation, the Piton Foundation, the Sturm Family Foundation, and anonymous donors. He said that he wished to make it clear that the Denver Public Schools is also supporting the program, but that the additional financial support had been vital and very much appreciated.

The district, he said, puts in $1.5 million per year to pay the cost of teacher bonuses and the operation of the systems needed to support the project; the district is committed to making sure the pilot thrives. He said that funds from foundations and private sources are used to support the research study that is being conducted by CTAC, which is an important vehicle for credibility for district teachers, administrators, and the community as a whole. Foundation support, he said, has also provided technical support to the Design Team, technical support to the Joint Task Force on Teacher Salary, and support for communication efforts. This support, he said, has lent the project strength, momentum, focus, and direction to the work of the Design Team, allowing them to make their work as important as it truly is.

Mr. Jupp said that the Design Team has developed two major themes for the 2002-2003 school year:

1. The end of the pilot is rapidly approaching – The district and DCTA have set Friday, March 19, 2004, as the date when balloting by teachers regarding acceptance of the program will be complete.
2. The Design Team is ready to bring the good practices of the pilot into the mainstream of district operations – The team will report to Sally Mentor-Hay, Chief Academic Officer, which will place the team’s work at the center of the district’s instructional programs.

Dr. Wartgow said that, since his arrival in the district, he has been trying to think of a way to bring the Pay For Performance pilot into the mainstream. He said that many positive results had already occurred as a result of the pilot program and that he and his Cabinet had had many discussions about the program and how to incorporate it into the life of the district. Having it part of the responsibilities of the Chief Academic Officer, he said, would go a long way toward establishing communication on a daily basis and ensuring that the district’s resources and manpower would be able to help support the program.

Mr. Jupp said that the Pay For Performance program is ready to begin implementation of seven new initiatives to help achieve buy-in by the teacher membership at large.

1. Move forward with the DCTA/DPS Agreement.

2. Develop a different teacher compensation system based, in part, on student achievement.

3. Construct an assessment system aligned to the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) that closely measures student growth.

4. Make major improvements in the objective-setting process and begin using it in some schools outside the pilot.

5. Work forward from OASIS (Online Assessment Scores Information Systems) to provide teachers and principals with better access to student achievement data.

6. Link teacher objectives to school improvement planning through a set of school performance indicators.

7. Begin a communications effort that will connect with every school at least four times in the next 22 months.

Mr. Jupp said that the first initiative is extremely important because the DCTA/DPS Agreement provides the groundwork for a successful pilot program. He introduced Becky Wissink, President of DCTA, to provide input and feedback.

Ms. Wissink said that a major part of the negotiations around the Agreement was revamping the teacher evaluation form, incorporating the subject of student performance into the form, with an eye toward web-basing it. She said that it is
important to standardize this form so that all teachers are judged on the same basis and to make it easier to determine whether objectives are actually made. With 4,700 teachers each providing two objectives, she said, there would be nearly 10,000 objectives to look through and having a standardized, linked evaluation system would make the process easier.

Ms. Wissink said that it is also important to consider the pursuit of different forms of alternative teacher compensation. Currently, she said, the district offers alternative compensation for National Board Certified teachers, and the possibility will be explored of having alternative compensation for other individuals who hold national certification in their field.

She said that both the district and the DCTA are committed to continuing to build a strong and collaborative labor-management relationship through shared projects, including the commission on school climate, the commission on Collaborative Decision Making, and the Agreement Review Committee. She said that teachers most likely would not vote in favor of the pilot program if they do not feel that the district is being collaborative in other areas.

Richard Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Finance, said that he and Gary Justus, of the DCTA, serve as co-chairs of the Joint Task Force on Teacher Compensation. He said that the Joint Task Force has been part of the DCTA Agreement for a few years, but that it has only recently been activated and is charged with making the actual recommendations to the district and the DCTA regarding compensation systems. He said that the Joint Task Force would take the work of the Design Team into consideration, as well as reports from such sources as CTAC, but that the recommendations would be owned by the Joint Task Force.

Currently, Mr. Allen said, the Joint Task Force is in what is known as the “seminar phase,” during which they are trying collectively to learn how different compensation systems work. He said that they expect to have that phase completed by early fall, after which they will enter the “design phase,” with the idea of producing a preliminary recommendation to the district and the DCTA by spring 2003. The preliminary recommendation, he said, would be open for public comment and input, and most likely a districtwide discussion would occur; based on that input, the Joint Task Force would redesign its recommendation before presenting a final recommendation to the Board. He said it is important to remember that the Joint Task Force is solely interested in designing a new compensation system that includes Pay For Performance components, rather than designing a Pay For Performance add-on to the existing compensation system.

He said that the Joint Task Force identified a series of goals that should be able to be applied to any sound compensation system: it should include a set of career goals, so that educators can have a career and the district can recruit teachers; there should be a set of motivational goals to encourage teachers to stick with
their objectives; there should be a set of professional goals around the teaching profession; and there should be system goals, such as fairness and affordability to the district. As time goes on, he said, it will be apparent that the work of the Joint Task Force will become increasingly separated from the work of the Design Team.

Sally Mentor Hay, Chief Academic Officer, said that she is looking forward to having a direct role in the Pay For Performance project. She said that she has attended many of the meetings of the Design Team and the Joint Task Force and found that the conversations that occur in those meetings strike directly at the heart of ways of improving student achievement. She said that if there is a way to use goals and objectives to focus every teacher on what is important for students to learn, and if those results are measured exactly with the knowledge of the value-added in each classroom, then it makes sense to be able to link pay to that contribution that each teacher has made to students’ learning. However, she said, in order for that to happen in the time left in the pilot program, it is imperative that the district make dramatic improvements to its assessment capabilities, which is the job that she is taking on. She said that she is excited about the challenge of that job and is pleased to report that there are already a number of possibilities underway that will play directly into that objective.

She said that her goal is to construct an academic achievement system aligned to CSAP that closely measures student growth. To accomplish this, she listed the following activities:

- **Expand the use of the CSAP test within the Pay For Performance pilot** – This is critical, as schools are being judged by CSAP performance, rather than by any of the other assessment measures teachers or schools might have in place. The district will survive as a district based on the results attained on the CSAP, and each teacher needs to focus on the content and structure of CSAP examinations in order to produce better results and more highly rated schools. In the recently-approved district assessment plan, staff recommended that the district begin to phase out the use of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and other assessments that measure the same things as the CSAP, so that teachers direct their instructional focus away from the ITBS and redirect it toward CSAP.

- **Develop or improve basic literacy, writing, and mathematics assessments** – The goal of this activity is to zero in on the notion of quarterly assessments. Goals cannot be based solely on CSAP, and have instructors teaching toward that goal without some means of checking their progress along the way. There must be interim data that can be used to determine if a teacher needs to change the course or method of instruction. As part of the new literacy plan, district staff has defined quarterly assessments for reading and writing at the elementary level, and as part of the Reading and Writing Studio course that more than 180
middle and high school teachers will be offering starting in the fall of 2003. This will provide teachers with an excellent opportunity to gain experience in the use of quarterly assessments for planning purposes. The process in the school would then be to examine those quarterly results and respond on an individual basis to the information gathered.

- **Develop rigorous end-of-course tests for secondary education** – At the secondary level, an initiative will be launched at the Middle and High School Principals Institute that is designed to focus specifically on the content and the quality of the classroom programs in science, social science, mathematics, and English classes beyond the Reading and Writing Studio course. As part of that initiative, district staff will work with teachers and the teacher leadership to examine the drafts of the end-of-course exams that the district has been working on, and piloting, for the last two years. Some of these exams need improvement and the goal is to have teachers work with district staff to improve those exams so that there will be a better measurement of the content and standards that are expected of students in each of those courses. This will provide an opportunity to focus on teaching strategies that will provide the students in those courses a more engaged and enriched opportunity to learn. The process of focusing on the content and how best to teach it, will bring about increased student achievement. Having tests matched to courses that are consistent across the district is very important to the concept of Pay For Performance, so that teachers are working on a level playing field from one school to the next.

- **Develop guidelines for teacher-made tests** – More than half of district teachers instruct in subjects and classes that do not fall within the parameters of current CSAP testing, but these teachers need to be part of the Pay For Performance system. Therefore, it is important to improve the guidelines for tests that teachers make themselves and perhaps including a review process for those tests. Many different assessment instruments, with a very broad range of complexity, have been used in the first three years of the Pay For Performance pilot. Even if the same assessments are not used from teacher to teacher, it is important to ensure that teacher-made or teacher-selected assessments are of high enough quality to accurately measure student achievement across the board.

- **Work with building instructional leadership to integrate district approved assessments into the objective setting process in pilot schools**

Ms. Mentor Hay said that another goal was to make major improvements in the object-setting process and begin integrating it into schools not participating in the pilot project. Included in the Design Team, she said, has been a very positive support effort in helping teachers learn to set objectives and experiment with the process. She said that there is power in having teachers zero in specifically on the
content of the course, understand the assessment, and set reasonable targets that push their students and themselves. The process is not easy, she said, and it is rare that a teacher and principal get it right the first time they try it; they need to learn to understand the instrument well enough, and to have confidence in their students and in their own teaching ability.

Ms. Mentor Hay said that this is a very important part of the project and one that must be expanded beyond the pilot program and into schools outside of it. This will be accomplished, she said, as part of the implementation of the Literacy Program at the elementary levels and within the Reading and Writing Studio course at the secondary level. She said that part of the teaching model within those programs will focus on the achievement of students as individuals, and teachers will learn to set goals with students for their own achievement.

Mr. Jupp said that in the first few years of the pilot, members of the Design Team stated repeatedly that it was important to get the entire district to begin struggling with some of the more difficult issues around assessing student achievement. The amount of training that will be necessary to get to a point of being able to construct an academic achievement system aligned to CSAP is daunting, he said, and the staff development needed to bring a thorough and rigorous instructionally driven objective-setting process to all the schools in the district is going to be an additional challenge for the Design Team.

He said that the district must work forward from OASIS to provide teachers with better access to student achievement data. He said that OASIS has been well-received by teachers and principals, but that they are anxious to move past the current Phase I of OASIS and into Phase II, which will provide more thorough information. Phase III, he said, will provide demographic, discipline, and other information that is relative to support staff such as social workers, psychologists, and nurses. He said that Phase IV would provide teachers with information about their own performance over time; this is the most daunting phase, and the one that is ultimately the most important to teachers. To get to this phase, he said, members of the Design Team will have to work collaboratively with the Department of Testing and Assessment and the Department of Technology Services to ensure that future plans for any large-scale data management system places the highest priority on presenting teachers and principals with useful information about academic growth.

Mr. Jupp that the goal of linking teacher objectives to school improvement planning would require a valid set of school performance indicators that describes the performance of all schools. He said that this would allow principals and teachers to see the areas in which good performance is occurring in an effort to identify why it is happening and repeat that success under other circumstances. The school improvement planning process, he said, should be the vehicle whereby district staff and area superintendents work with principals, so that the principals...
feel that they are making informed decisions about the future direction of their schools, rather than simply making good guesses.

One of the most difficult tasks for the Design Team, Mr. Jupp said, would be to begin a communications effort that would connect the team with every school four times in the next 22 months, before the end of the pilot program. He said that they have received sufficient perceptual data from teachers and principals to assume that most educators remain thoroughly skeptical about Pay For Performance as an abstract concept. A study by Floyd Circuli and Associates, he said, showed that teachers responded negatively when asked if they would approve of Pay For Performance, and he suspected that the same response would come from principals and central office staff if they were asked the same question. He said that a teacher in a focus group stated that he would not support Pay For Performance because he felt that it would mean that he was being paid less to work harder. In order to overcome this skepticism, he said, the Design Team must go out to teachers and principals and convince them that the concept is sound and one upon which they can base a thriving career. If the Design Team cannot demonstrate that fact, he said, teachers have every right to reject the concept when it is time to take the final vote.

To make this communications effort happen, he said, the district and DCTA must collaborate over the summer to build a set of key messages about district improvement that includes Pay For Performance as only one part of a larger effort. He said that teachers and principals must see Pay For Performance as part of a bigger picture—not simply a way of altering their salary, but a way of making their school work better. To do this, he said, the intensive and effective communications effort must present the work of the pilot program to district educators and leaders. He suggested that all principals and building leaders be briefed about the program sometime during the first few days of school. He said that on August 15 or 16, every principal and building representative should be gathered and informed about the work of the Design Team and the proposed communication efforts because data from several sources indicates that personnel in schools outside the pilot program do not know what is happening within the program. In order to make people comfortable with the concept of Pay For Performance, they must be given basic information, through a combination of quadrant meetings and visitations to individual schools.

Mr. Jupp concluded his presentation with an overview of dates of major events that will occur prior to the conclusion of the pilot program. He said that the last year the Design Team will be working in the schools is the 2002-2003 school year; in June 2003, they complete their work with the sixteen schools participating in the pilot, after which they begin to compile their data to present to everyone in the district. In November 2003, he said, the Joint Task Force on Teacher Salary will present its final recommendations to district and DCTA officials for integration into a final recommendation on teacher salary. He said that in December 2003, CTAC will make its final report to the Board and DCTA,
and in January 2004, district staff and DCTA leaders will present their final recommendations to the Board and district teachers for their deliberation. Finally, he said, on March 19, 2004, the teachers and the Board of Education will complete their final decision. He expressed hope that, following that vote, implementation of Pay For Performance can begin on a districtwide basis in 137 schools, with 4,700 teachers throughout the entire system.

Mr. Jupp said that the Design Team has been supported by a wide variety of people and organizations. He said that it is important to recognize that the organizations funding this program have seen the vision of what Pay For Performance could mean and have been very generous in their support. He thanked Cal Frazier for his services as a liaison with the Rose Community Foundation and for his enthusiastic espousal of the program in visits with principals and teachers in schools. Richard Allen, he said, has been of invaluable service to the program by showing that there are ways to build support for the concept both administratively and throughout the schools. He thanked Becky Wissink, both as a colleague and a personal friend, and said that it has been exciting to see what has happened in DCTA under her leadership.

However, his greatest thanks, he said, must go to the Design Team, who came together and have done things that no one would ever expect from K-12 educators in the United States, and who have exceeded their own expectations on a daily basis. He praised Design Team member Henry Roman, fourth grade teacher from Columbian Elementary School, stating that he is “the school district’s only fourth grade bilingual econometrician.” He urged district officials to talk to Mr. Roman about how teacher objectives can be linked with student achievement assessment, and how student growth can be measured at the smallest level. He said that the Design Team has also benefited greatly from the wisdom of team member Cheryl Betz, whose insight and knowledge of district systems have been tremendous assets. He gave special thanks to Shirley Scott as the only original Design Team member besides himself, praising her creative drive and passionate zeal.

Mr. Mejía said that he wished to extend the Board’s thanks to Mr. Woodward, who has represented the Board on the issue of Pay For Performance with diligence and enthusiasm. He said that Mr. Woodward had kept the Board informed at every step and helped them understand all the nuances involved in the issue.

Mr. Woodward said that the Board has a substantial challenge over the final 22 months of the project to do whatever is necessary to help the Design Team convince a skeptical cadre of teachers and principals of the soundness and worthiness of the Pay For Performance concept. In order to be convincing in this role, he said, it is imperative that the Board have a complete understanding of the program, its successes, and potential drawbacks. He said that members of the Board need to be spokespersons for the validity of the concept and its implementation potential, and supporters of the proposition that the plan should
be attempted on a districtwide basis. He said that, with the leadership and the expertise of the Design Team, he believes that the Denver Public Schools has a better than average chance of accomplishing a vast change in the educational system that can be of tremendous benefit to the children of the district.

Mr. Jupp said that the communications effort is going to require the assistance of people at all levels of administration. He said that he had spoken with several members about holding regular meetings with the Board to apprise them of the status of the pilot program, and the consensus opinion was that bi-monthly luncheon meetings would be the easiest to fit into everyone’s schedules. Starting in August, he said, the Design Team would meet every other month with the Board to answer questions and provide information; similar meetings will be held with the DCTA Board of Directors.

Mr. Woodward added his thanks to the Design Team for their monumental efforts on behalf of Pay For Performance. He said that it is exciting to see what started as a small idea a few years ago grow into a great movement toward improved student achievement across the district. Most of the business world, he said, compensates its employees for their successes and value to the continued operation of the enterprise, and he expressed hope that the Denver Public Schools could also do so in a fair and equitable manner. On behalf of the district and the Board of Education, he also added his thanks to the project funders, without whom the program would not have been as successful as it has been. He said that it is heartening to know that the Denver community has a group of philanthropists who are so concerned about the educational growth of the Denver Public Schools, and who are willing to back a concept that is so new in the world of education.

A copy of the report entitled *Teacher Pay For Performance Pilot: June 2002* is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, V-A-1.

**RECESS AND RECONVENE**

Ms. Gantz Berman recessed the meeting at 6:43 p.m. for the Board’s dinner break and reconvened the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

**VI. New Business**

A. Information Only (continued)

2. District School Improvement and Accountability Council (DSIAC) Budget Response

Jesse Sutherland, representing the District School Improvement and Accountability Council (DSIAC), explained that DSIAC is directed by state
statute to provide recommendations regarding the prioritization of budget
expenditures each year to the Board of Education. To fulfill that obligation, he
said, DSIAC has reviewed a variety of information, as listed in their report, and
based on that review and analysis, focused their recommendations on three areas:
budget priorities, format, and process.

Budget Priorities

Dr. Sutherland stated that in the proposed budget, the district has attempted to tie
the budget to district goals and has recognized major funding issues, including
maintaining current levels of service to schools and reducing one-time funding
sources. DSIAC members, he said, identified several budget items as standout
priorities – the impact of using one-time money; funding for the district’s Literacy
Project; funding for the substantial increase in teachers’ salaries and benefits;
across-the-board departmental cuts; and added budget requests.

He said that DSIAC and the Citizens Budget Task Force have consistently
opposed the use of one-time money to fund continuing district programs, and that
DSIAC members were pleased to see that issue addressed in the current budget
with reductions in the use of one-time funds from $17 million to $12 million.
While this reduction is a very positive step, he said, more should have been done
in this regard, and with about $27 million in sustainable funding as a result of
Amendment 23, greater reductions could be achieved. He said that DSIAC would
like to see more of these new sustainable funds used to reduce the budget’s
reliance on one-time funds.

Dr. Sutherland said that the $8.9 million instructional coach program, supported
by Title I funding, holds promise for effective staff development and an overall
consistency of instruction for district students. However, he said, DSIAC cannot
fully endorse this program, as some facets of it appear to be unrealistic, and the
program would be disruptive to schools that already had planned specific
programs using Title I funding. He said that DSIAC members are most concerned
about a lack of an evaluation component for the program and recommends that
the district, prior to implementing the program, develop an objective method to
measure whether or not the program truly is effective in increasing student
achievement.

DSIAC, he said, supports the commitment of substantial funds to increase salaries
and benefits for teachers, using available funds from Amendment 23. He said that
the Council also believes that increased compensation for the other employee
groups should keep the district competitive in the Denver labor market. Contracts
for other employee groups likely will not be finalized prior to the adoption of the
budget on June 20, he said, and as a result, the Council is concerned that the
settlement with DCTA might unduly restrict the district’s options in dealing with
other employee groups.
Dr. Sutherland said that another area of concern to DSIAC is the proposed across-the-board cut of 1.5 percent in the departmental budgets. The Council, he said, could not see a rationale behind the 1.5 percent figure and believes that departmental cuts should be made based on evaluation, so that well-run, cost-effective departments are not made to suffer cuts when, in some cases, their departmental budgets should be increased.

He said that DSIAC is aware of several requests for funding that have been discussed before the Board since submission of the proposed budget, including continuation of the Truancy Reduction Project; multiple projects from the Department of Technology Services (DoTS) to improve Lawson and SFG software; providing additional discretionary school supply funds to teachers; providing additional staff development for building administrators; and providing opportunities for new teachers to visit other classrooms. On a conceptual basis, he said, these proposals find broad support among DSIAC members, who naturally feel supportive of the idea of empowering teachers to make direct purchases of instructional supplies for their classrooms or the idea of having computer systems that provide readily accessible and useful data to school personnel.

However, Dr. Sutherland said, DSIAC cannot lend its wholehearted support to these proposals for several reasons, including the fact that, to the best of the Council’s knowledge, none of the proposals includes an evaluation plan. He said that such a plan would need to contain measurable goals and objectives and a specified timeframe in which to accomplish them. He said that all of the proposals, with the exception of the request to continue funding the Truancy Reduction Project, appear to lack research data showing them to be effective in meeting the district’s goals. He said that even though the Truancy Reduction Project request did include data showing an impact on school attendance and achievement, that impact has not been evaluated in terms of cost effectiveness.

He said that the Council is aware that the proposed budget indicates that the district’s beginning reserve balance will be reduced to about $3 million, and feels that figure is dangerously low. He said that it is DSIAC’s recommendation that an increase in the reserve should have a very high priority. Similarly, he said, if any funds should become available to the district as a result of advantageous wage settlements with other employee groups, those funds should be used to further reduce the district’s reliance on one-time funding.

He said that, given the current budget circumstances, DSIAC does not support funding any of the proposed projects by the commitment of additional General Fund resources in the 2002-2003 fiscal year. In the event that new projects emerge that might warrant consideration, he said, proposed funding requests should not be considered unless they are based on supportive data, contain appropriate evaluation criteria, and outweigh the problems presented by the low reserve funds and the use of one-time funds for continuing programs.
Budget Format

Dr. Sutherland said that DSAIC members find the budget format much improved, as it presents the essential budget information in a manner that is more easily understood by the average citizen. He said that the budget narrative describes many of the issues involved in the development of the budget, and that inclusion of all funds that are part of the district’s financial plan was a valuable addition to the budget. He provided the following DSIAC recommendations regarding the budget format:

- Increases or decreases in district administrative personnel should be identified, as it would be helpful in assessing the validity of criticism that the district is “top heavy” and has too many administrators.

- The budget format gives little indication that any programs or projects were increased, reduced, or terminated as the result of an evaluation process. Funding of programs and projects, both instructional and administrative, that have been increased, reduced, or terminated should be identified, and the rationale behind that decision given.

- Since the DCTA and the district have reached agreement on teacher salaries and benefits for 2002-2003, the impact of this agreement on the General Fund should be specified in the budget before the adoption in June.

Budget Process

Dr. Sutherland says that the DSIAC is particularly gratified by the fact that the district and the DCTA have reached an agreement on a contract for the future prior to the adoption of the 2002-2003 budget. He said that both the DSIAC and the Citizens Budget Task Force, as well as other community groups, have recommended for a number of years that contract negotiations be completed prior to the adoption of the budget.

However, he said, DSIAC has the following concerns regarding the budget process:

- The largest concern is in the delay in presenting budgetary information. Essential budget projections and specific budget information were not available until the presentation to the Board of Education on March 21, 2002. DSIAC says that such delays should be eliminated with the addition to the budget of Amendment 23-generated funds, which should make it easier to predict the amount that will be forthcoming under the School Finance Act.
There have been very few budget discussions by the Board and district administration, and work sessions dealing with the budget have been held at hours and in places that make it difficult for the general public to attend. DSIAC hopes that future scheduling of budget discussions will be consistent with the Superintendent’s Eighth Action Step to communicate fully with all stakeholders.

Ms. Gantz Berman thanked Dr. Sutherland for his presentation and said that DSIAC members spend a great deal of time and effort on their review of the budget and preparation of their report.

Richard Allen, Assistant Superintendent of Budget and Finance, said that he appreciates the work done by the DSIAC members. He said that he is in complete agreement about the danger of the district’s over-dependence on one-time funds, which he sees as a major fiscal problem. He explained that the district is on a plan to phase out the use of one-time money over three years and said that, while he would have preferred that the phase-out occur more quickly, the program budgetary demands would not allow such acceleration.

He said that he was gratified to hear that DSIAC members found the budget format much easier to use than in previous years. A great deal of thought and discussion went into the revised format, he said, and he was pleased that the result was a more user-friendly budget. He said that the budget format would continue to be revisited with the ultimate goal of presenting multiple budget formats designed for different audiences and different purposes.

Rev. Guzman said that she, too, appreciates the work of the DSIAC and said that their recommendations over the past several years had been very helpful. She noted that the improved budget format is the result of a past DSIAC recommendation, as were improvements made to the program evaluation process, although more progress needs to occur in that area. She said that, due to the leadership of the Superintendent and his staff, the district has clear goals and this year’s budget does address those goals. The concerns expressed by DSIAC are justified, she said, but she also stated her appreciation for DSIAC’s support of the district trying something new in the Literacy Program being implemented in the 2002-2003 school year.

Mr. Woodward said that he, too, is very much in favor of thorough program evaluations to ensure that programs that are implemented are cost effective as well as educationally effective. However, he said, regarding the Literacy Plan, the district’s CSAP scores should serve as an evaluation tool to gauge the effectiveness of the program. He said that he is very optimistic that CSAP results will show that the Literacy Plan is, indeed, a worthy and effective program.

Dr. Wartgow said that he appreciates the constructive comments from DSIAC, as well as acknowledgement that the district is moving in the right direction. He
expressed his agreement that there is still a long way to go, especially in the area of program evaluations, which is a subject that has been discussed by the Board in other contexts. He said that the Board would discuss the DSIAC recommendations and how to move forward with them.

A copy of the report entitled *Review and Recommendations Regarding the Proposed DPS Budget* is appended to the official minutes of this meeting as Appendix 02-10, VI-A-2.

**VII. Public Comment – First Thursday of Each Month**

Mary J. Armstrong, retired teacher and DSIAC member, gave a humorous presentation regarding the district’s funding and retirement system.

Don Amburn, representing the Civil Rights Commission Task Force, said that, prior to his retirement, he had spent his life as a teacher, first at an inner-city school in St. Louis, Missouri, then at Kepner Middle School and Thomas Jefferson High School. He stated that he had written a book entitled *A Survival Bible for Public Schools*, and presented each of the Board members with a copy of it.

He said that the book contains 17 incentives for students to misbehave; students can get what they want through misbehavior, or can avoid doing something that they do not want to do. He said that he has been a substitute teacher in the district since his retirement in 1990, and that he still sees practices that promote student misbehavior, such as crowding too many of them together at a table and expecting them to work quietly. He urged the Board and district staff to look at his list of incentives and see what could be done to correct ongoing behavior problems in the district.

Charles Black, representing Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1563, said that at the last Board meeting, he had been told that there is a Board of Education policy regarding the use of sick leave at retirement. He said that, in reading the policy, he discovered that it had to do with retired employees being reimbursed for unused sick time. What he had actually been referring to, he said, was the need for a policy that speaks to the use of end-of-career sick leave that covers such issues as the circumstances under which it can be used, whether physician’s excuses are needed, and what kind of documentation is required. He said that he has accumulated names of many people who were allowed to use end-of-career sick leave without having to produce any documentation, but that that practice is not being applied equally from employee to employee.

Frank McLaughlin, representing ATU Local 1563, said that he wished to report that there had been some progress made between transportation workers and management. He said that representatives from each side had met recently regarding equalization, which is the distribution of extra work to bus drivers. Another meeting, he said, was set up by André Pettigrew, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, to address the various contract
issues brought up by transportation workers at previous Board meetings. He said that salary negotiations would begin on July 10.

Mr. McLaughlin said that the only issue they wished to raise at this meeting is the fact that drivers on summer school routes are made to drive older buses with yellow roofs rather than the white roofs on newer buses. He said that the older buses are hotter and are unpleasant for both students and drivers, but drivers are still directed to drive them so that mileage on the newer buses stays low. Management representatives, he said, have stated that the difference in temperatures between the new buses and the older ones is negligible, and invited drivers to test the fact for themselves. He said that several drivers would conduct such tests and that he would report the results back to the Board at the August public hearing.

Laura Pietarinen, social worker at Bryant-Webster Elementary School and for the Teen Parent Programs at West, Lincoln, and Montbello High Schools, said that social work is a profession that works with human behavior in a social environment. People do not live in isolation, she said, but rather in social environments that profoundly impact their lives, and it is the social worker who helps people deal with the stresses and problems that inevitably occur as a result of interaction between people.

She said teen parent programs in the district implement social work practices to assist pregnant and parenting teens in graduating high school; social workers also work closely with school-based clinics on teen pregnancy prevention. She said that a graduate from West High School was present to talk about the obstacles she faced as a parenting teen and how the program helped her.

Ms. Pietarinen said that the Truancy Reduction Project is a prime example of social work theory in practice. Most elementary students, she said, are not willfully truant, but miss school due to family issues. She said that an elementary school social worker works with the child, the child’s family, and the community to improve the child’s attendance. Sometimes, she said, the intervention needed is something as easy as reminding parents that there is a school attendance law or help families obtain appropriate clothing for their children to attend school. More often, she said, issues are more complex than that; sometimes children want to stay home to protect a parent or guardian from domestic violence; sometimes a parent or guardian has a substance abuse problem and is unable to get the child to school; the student might be ill and the family does not know how to get medical assistance or might be undocumented aliens who fear being discovered and deported.

Elementary school social workers, she said, work in multi-disciplinary teams to conduct special education assessments and to recommend interventions. It is evident, she said, that schools need to provide resources to a student with a learning ability, but the question often arises as to what responsibility a school has when a student’s learning is impacted by social/emotional issues. She said that there are so many traumatic things that can happen to children that distract them from their learning—instances of abuse, murders or violent deaths within families, evictions, or deportation. Suddenly, she said,
social issues become school issues that have a serious ability on children's ability to learn. She said that school social workers have the training and ability to help children in situations like that; they work with students individually, in small groups, and in the classroom helping them build coping and social skills. Additionally, she said, social workers assist teachers with strategies to help struggling students learn, or strategies to help children who have been abused or who have witnessed violence. She said that social workers worked in teams, visiting schools to help children deal with the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Social workers, she said, have the training to link families to community resources and to assist parents to become partners with the school in creating a safe learning environment.

Josefina Granados, 2001 graduate of West High School, said that she became pregnant at the age of 15 while a freshman at West. She said that her initial plans were just to marry her boyfriend and be a mother to her baby; however, her boyfriend left her when she was four months pregnant, which destroyed her plans and left her in a depression that she was having a hard time coping with by herself. Finally, she said, she met with the Teen Parent social worker at West, who made her realize the importance of her education and helped motivate her to finish high school. She said that she was very proud of herself for graduating and that she owes a debt of gratitude to the social worker, who helped her keep her resolve to finish school and attend college. She said that friends of hers had similar stories and that they, too, had been encouraged and motivated to stay in school and had also graduated and were attending college. Also, she said, she is in a better position to motivate her younger siblings to stay in school and make the most of themselves. She said that she volunteers for West’s Teen Parent Program, relating her story and helping other girls stay on track and do what is best for them and their children.

Sarah Friend, social worker at Hill Middle School, urged the Board to continue to consider during budget deliberations maintaining funding for the Truancy Reduction Project. She said that the project has positively impacted attendance rates districtwide, and has made profound differences in the lives of many families. Before the Truancy Reduction Project, she said, social workers could only deal with students with the very worst attendance records; now work begins with children who are just starting to show signs of attendance problems.

All components of the Truancy Reduction Project are necessary, she said, and funding only part of it would cause the program to lose its integrity. She said that social workers, truant officers, catch-up classroom teachers, the student attendance review board, and truancy court all band together to get at the heart of why children do not attend school. However, she said, when those reasons are determined, people involved in the Truancy Reduction Project are able to take appropriate action because they have the time and resources to intervene directly with families.

Ms. Friend related the story of a seventh grade girl at Hill who began missing more and more days as the year progressed and in November, Ms. Friend invited the girl to the Student Attendance Review Board meeting. She said that she and her aunt attended the meeting and were very nervous sitting in front of a large group of community members,
but they still shared their situation. It became evident, she said, that there were serious issues causing her to miss school. She said that the girl relayed that she did not take part in after-school activities because she had been harassed by a group of students on the late bus; she had an older sister who dropped out of school; she had a teacher with whom she was having problems. The Attendance Review Board, she said, discussed with the girl their expectations for the rest of the year—regular attendance, check-ins with Ms. Friend to ensure that things were on track, and calls from her aunt if the student was ill and would not be able to attend school. In return, she said, the girl was promised that Ms. Friend would discuss the bus situation with the student advisor and the student would stay late two days per week—one to attend tutoring sessions and the other to join a club in which she was interested. Ms. Friend said that she also set up a meeting with the student and the teacher with whom she was in conflict to help resolve the problems between them. The student, she said, returned to school knowing that a group of adults cared about her and her education, and she finished the year with few absences, raised her grade point average from 2.5 to 3.2, joined the club and attended every meeting, and came to the end of the year Attendance Review Board party with her entire extended family. It was incredible, she said, to see how the support from her family and the affirmation from the Attendance Review Board spurred the student to do her very best.

Ms. Friend said that she is convinced that without the Truancy Reduction Project, this child would have slipped through the cracks. She said that the project’s success stories run the gamut between amazing, and often immediate, shift in student attendance and attitude to the more frustrating cases, where very little movement or impact can be seen. Yet, she said, in the two years she has been involved in the program, she has seen students who appeared to be completely lost turn themselves around and succeed.

She said that all of the district’s good efforts—the push for literacy, higher standards and expectations, and excellence in classrooms—are all for naught if the students are not in school, ready and able to receive the sterling education Denver Public Schools is capable of providing them. She said that she is aware that the Board understands the value of the Truancy Reduction Project, but that she still wished to urge Board members to give the project their support.

Regina Huerter, representing the Denver District Attorney’s Office, said that she heads the Juvenile Diversion Program and that she wished to convey her support of school social workers and, especially, the Truancy Reduction Project. She said that she has been involved with the project since its inception, and that a great deal of work had gone into building a program that is starting to have some very positive influence on the lives of many children and their school attendance. Although most agencies are facing times of budget difficulties, she said, it is still important to consider the impact that losing the Truancy Reduction Project would have on the district and its children. She said that the Truancy Reduction Project is the front line, accountable party that her office goes to for information about truant students, their state of truancy, and collaboration about how to address the situations of individual students. Her office, she said, has worked in close partnership with the project to ensure that there is a large continuum of services available to children and families to address the problem of truancy.
Reduction Project personnel are also the ones to help formerly truant students get back into the educational mainstream, welcoming them when they have not felt welcome or wanted in the past. School social workers, she said, advocate for children, intervening on their behalf to ameliorate situations that might have been an obstacle for children to attend school. She said that she and her staff call school social workers first when they encounter family situations that might be keeping children from going to school because social workers have the training and resources to make an impact in many such situations. Social workers, she said, are the link to the community for both the schools and the District Attorney’s Office.

Budget cuts in so many agencies, Ms. Huerta said, have signaled a desperate time for children and without school social workers, many of these children will be completely without resources because many of the other governmental and private agencies that used to help troubled children do not exist any longer. She said that many students start out being truant, but that truancy soon leads to delinquency, which, in turn, leads to children entering the juvenile justice system. School social workers, she said, can intervene in these situations and break the chain that leads children to be in trouble with the law. She said that school is the most important factor in keeping students out of the justice system and is the most common place where students can learn self-esteem and competency, and school social workers play a vital role in that process.

Ms. Gantz Berman stated that every member of the Board of Education understands the importance of school social workers, and that they are very carefully examining the budget in an attempt to maintain the Truancy Reduction Project.

Mary Brown, parent of two children attending school in the district, said that she read an article in *The Rocky Mountain News* about Mr. Mejía’s concerns about racial and economic imbalance in the Denver School of the Arts (DSA) and, as a result, felt obligated to come before the Board to describe the discrimination experienced by her and her son because of her son’s disability, which is covered by a 504 classification. After years of progress and one academically successful year at DSA, she said, the second year at the school became a nightmare, as the school totally disregarded her son’s 504 education plan. She said that she attended two meetings at DSA to make school staff aware of the growing problems, but that neither meeting was attended by the appropriate staff; no one who attended the meeting was qualified to review the education plan or authorized to make the changes that were necessary. After hearing about the work of school social workers, she said, if one of them had been present at the meetings, she believes the problems would not have escalated as they did.

She said that she has sought due process from district administration, has filed a federal complaint against DSA staff, and is still seeking resolution to this matter. If the Board of Education is prepared to reward DSA with a purported $30 million campus, she said, they should investigate the school’s shortcomings, as a school that receives that kind of funding should provide appropriate staff to resolve the issues that can accompany a person with disabilities. She said that there should be a districtwide task force formed to
investigate the issue of racial and economic imbalance at DSA, and that they should also question other forms of discrimination that occur there.

Phil Hernandez, chairman of the Hispanic Education Advisory Council (HEAC), acknowledged Belinda Garcia, who received the first César Chavez Community Leadership Award on March 22, 2002, and is a teacher at Mitchell Elementary School. He said that Dr. Luis Torres, former HEAC chairman and current HEAC member, also won a Community Leadership Award, and is nationally recognized as a professor of Chicano Studies at Metropolitan State College.

He said that HEAC has some concerns that he wished to bring before the Board. The Council, he said, supports the idea of a task force to review the situation at DSA, and wishes to bring forth the issue of under-representation of Hispanic students in various district programs. He said that the introduction of this issue stirred some controversy in the community and some disparagement against Mr. Mejía, but that he feels that it would be very appropriate to form a task force to investigate the issue.

Both district and DSA leadership, Mr. Hernandez said, recognize that there is a problem with under-enrollment of Hispanics at DSA, and HEAC would like to assist in creating a pool of students who would be qualified to apply to the school. He said that several Board members attended a special presentation by the Mexican Consul General, at which students from Valverde Elementary School performed several folk dances. He said that it is obvious that arts programs are occurring at the elementary level and that those resources should be tapped when seeking out applicants for the DSA. He suggested that staff examine the situation at DSA to see if multi-cultural arts programs are being pursued, such as Mexican folk dance or mariachi music.

He said that HEAC is also concerned about under-representation of Hispanic applicants for principal positions.

Mr. Hernandez said that he read the disparity study published by the Civil Rights Commission and that many of its recommendations are valid issues for all persons of color—not just African Americans. He urged the Board to carefully consider the recommendations put forth in the study, prioritizing them for implementation.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mrs. Edwards said that she wished to acknowledge a community service project undertaken by the Hamilton Middle School community, during which they collected in excess of 6,000 used books for adults and children. She said that students sorted, organized, and boxed them for distribution to eleven elementary schools in the district to be shared with children and their families. She congratulated the Hamilton students and thanked them for their effort.

She also thanked those who sent flowers and letters of condolence upon the recent passing of her mother.
VIII. **Adjournment**

Ms. Gantz Berman adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Susan G. Edwards, Secretary
Board of Education