



Monthly Update



Anchorage School District



This month at the Anchorage School District

- **December 22** – end of second quarter. In-service day, no school for students
- **December 25 - January 1** – all district support and administrative offices closed
- **December 25 – January 5** – winter break, all schools closed
- Many district departments are moving from 4600 DeBarr to the ASD Education Center at Boniface and Northern Lights. During the transition, please call 742-4000 or visit www.asdk12.org to check the department's location before visiting.

Construction News

Ahead of schedule, under budget

Anchorage residents can be proud of the new Nicholas J. Begich Middle School, a voter-approved construction project that is ahead of schedule and under budget. Scheduled for completion in April, the building construction will finish this month. Work on the site continues through July.

Solid fiscal planning and construction management brought the project in \$1.5 million under budget. The surplus will fund instructional technology and security upgrades.

Begich Middle School will draw students from East Anchorage and relieve some overcrowding at neighboring schools.

Top priority - Clark Middle School

Clark Middle School is overcrowded and doesn't meet student academic needs. Heating, ventilation, plumbing, and electrical systems are inadequate in the 47-year-old building. Many students learn in relocatable classrooms.

Voters recognize the need for renewing Clark and approved funding for planning. Clark is the district's number one school construction priority and the project qualifies for 60 percent debt reimbursement from the state.

Retiring debt

Since the last school construction bond was approved by voters, the district has retired more than \$84 million in bond debt and is saving an additional \$5 million by refinancing current bonds at a lower interest rate. Over the next five years the district will pay off between \$43 million and \$50 million in bonds each year. The state will contribute approximately 50 percent toward this debt retirement.

Announcements

Rising costs

As the district administration grapples with the 07-08 school budget, utility costs continue to increase. Heat, water, electricity and other necessities have increased exponentially. The chart below shows the continued increases the district pays to provide heat to elementary schools.

Heating elementary schools



Funding for school-related items must be reallocated to cover rising costs such as utilities. (a-actual expenditures; p-projected)

Welcome home Strykers

The ASD is proud to welcome home 3,800 members of Alaska's 172nd Stryker Brigade. The soldiers recently returned from a 16-month deployment in Iraq. Many of our students and staff have family members and friends serving this country in all branches of the military. We are extremely thankful for their service. Please keep the sacrifices of military families in mind as you celebrate the season with your family.



A Word from Carol Comeau, Superintendent

On Thursday evening, volunteer Budget Review Teams delivered sobering reports to the Anchorage School Board. Eliminate positions, reduce summer school services, increase class size, downsize sports and other activities, cut teacher training. Such recommendations are the result of six weeks of work by volunteers who pored over budgets trying to cut 5 percent.

Soon the school board will have to make very difficult decisions to bridge a fiscal gap created by rising costs for utilities, retirement programs, supplies and employee contracts. It's unclear what recommendations will be adopted, but two things are certain: people will lose their jobs and valuable student services will be eliminated.

Being committed to making fiscally sound decisions, I will do what can be done to protect programs that benefit students. Over the past decade we have cut supplies, administration, support staff, and non-academic programs to reduce the impact on classrooms, but not much flexibility remains in these areas. I applaud our employees and students for making steady academic progress with restricted budgets, and regret having to once again cut programs and positions that make a difference for kids.

In January I'll submit a budget to the school board that includes the cuts needed to bridge a \$20 million fiscal gap. We'll draw from our savings account, the fund balance, and reduce the need for cuts to roughly \$17 million. Our fiscal gap could grow by an additional \$68 million without resolution of the state's retirement system shortfall.

The success of our students depends on predictable and sufficient funding. But each year, we struggle with unpredictability and insufficient funding that leaves out inflationary increases or adjustments for maintenance of our infrastructure. This only further clouds the future for our students.

We have a new Legislature convening in Juneau in January. This is an opportunity for parents, staff and students to impress upon the new policy makers that swift justification of education funding is vital. Every child needs stability, and that is what could be provided with the Legislature's cooperation.

I'm grateful for those who volunteered to share the burden of developing our budget. Community members, staff and students gave up much of their personal time to generate ideas for cuts as well as program efficiencies. Their contributions are like gifts of the season, sincerity in action that unites us in a common cause: to complete our mission of educating all students for success in life.

Thank you and Happy Holidays,

Carol Comeau



Meetings of the Anchorage School Board

agendas current as of 12/1/06

ALL MEETINGS ARE BROADCAST LIVE ON CABLE CHANNEL 14; SEE REBROADCAST SCHEDULE BELOW SPECIAL MEETING—AGENDA December 4, 2006 4:30 p.m. 4600 DeBarr Road, Room 320

Call To Order, Roll Call Jeff Friedman, Presiding School Board Comments	Executive Session - (Personnel/Finance/Negotiations/Litigation) 1. Uncontested Student Hearings	Superintendent's Update Adjournment
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REGULAR MEETING—AGENDA December 4, 2006 6:30 p.m. 4600 DeBarr Road

Call To Order, Roll Call, Flag Salute Jeff Friedman, Presiding Approval Of Agenda Announcements Awards/Recognitions/Presentations 1. National Veterans Wheelchair Games Presentation 2. Memo 146 - Recognition of the Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award Winner 3. Memo 147 - Recognition of the Alaska Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Alaska Healthy Educator of the Year 4. Memo 148 - Recognition of Terry Higley K-12 Teacher Award Winner Special Advisory Reports 1. Student Advisory Board 2. Military Delegate 3. M.E.C.A.C. Persons To Be Heard On Non-Agenda Items (30-minute time limit) Consent Agenda 1. Approval of Minutes a. Regular Meeting - August 23, 2004 - Amended	Regular Meeting - November 6, 2006 c. Special Meeting - November 13, 2006. 2. Memo 87 - 2007 Legislative Priorities 3. Memo 135 - Appointment of Minority Education Concerns Advisory Committee Members 4. Memo 111 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 143 - Policy Development Principles (Second Reading) 5. Memo 154 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 343.34 - Accessibility of Records (First Reading) 6. Memo 107 - Prior Approval of Discretionary Grant: 21st Century Alaska Community Learning Centers 7. Memo 109 - Appointment of Controversial Issues Review Committee Members 8. Memo 129 - Approval of Rilke Schule German School of Arts and Sciences 9. Memo 130 - Approval of Alaska Native Cultural Charter School 10. Memo 122 - Award of Contract: South Anchorage High School New Closed Circuit Television System 11. Memo 128 - Approval of Schematic Design for Clark Middle School Renewal 12. Memo 134 - Personnel Report	Superintendent's Report 1. Memo 131 - Project Status Report 2. Memo 132 - District Improvement Plan for the 2006-2007 School Year 3. Memo 75 - 21st Century Community Learning Center 2005-2006 Year End Report 4. Memo 99 - Six-Year Instructional Plan Evaluation for 2005-2006 School Year 5. Memo 116 - Class Size Report 2006-2007 6. Memo 121 - First Quarter Suspension/Weapons/Expulsion Report 2006-2007 7. Memo 133 - Treasurer's Report/Financial Recap: October 31, 2006 Persons To Be Heard On Non-agenda Items Communications & School Board Comments Executive Session - (Personnel/Finance/Negotiations/Litigation) Adjournment
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*The meeting will be aired live on cable channel 14 and will be rebroadcast Dec. 6 at 5 p.m., Dec. 7 at 12:30 p.m., Dec. 9 at 12:30 p.m. and Dec. 10 at 7:30 a.m. The meeting will be closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. The agenda is available in Braille by calling 742-4153. The ASD telephone number is 742-4000. A message may be left after hours.

SPECIAL MEETING—AGENDA December 7, 2006 9:30 a.m. 4600 DeBarr Road, Room 320

Call To Order, Roll Call Jeff Friedman, Presiding School Board Comments	Executive Session - (Personnel/Finance/Negotiations/Litigation) 1. Superintendent's Evaluation	Adjournment
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SPECIAL MEETING—AGENDA December 11, 2006 4:30 p.m. 4600 DeBarr Road, Room 320

Call To Order, Roll Call Jeff Friedman, Presiding School Board Comments	Executive Session - (Personnel/Finance/Negotiations/Litigation) 1. Student Hearings 2. Live Student Hearing (5:15 p.m.)	3. APA/AEA Negotiations Update Superintendent's Update Adjournment
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REGULAR MEETING—AGENDA December 11, 2006 6:30 p.m. 4600 DeBarr Road

Call To Order, Roll Call, Flag Salute Jeff Friedman, Presiding Approval Of Agenda Announcements Awards/Recognitions/Presentations 1. Goldenview Orchestra, Mary Alice Donaldson director 2. Presentation by the Alaska Music Educators Association 3. Memo 149 - Recognition of the Alaska State History Day Winner 4. Memo 150 - Recognition of Alaska Art Educator of the Year 5. Memo 151 - Recognition of Career Technology and Education Award Winners Special Advisory Reports 1. Student Advisory Board 2. Military Delegate 3. M.E.C.A.C. Persons To Be Heard On Non-Agenda Items (30-minute time limit) Consent Agenda 1. Approval of Minutes a. Regular Meeting - September 25, 2006 b. Regular Meeting - October 2, 2006 c. Special Meeting - December 4, 2006 2. Memo 142 - Superintendent Evaluation and Contract Changes 3. Memo 152 - 2007 General Obligation Bond Recommendations 4. Memo 154 - School Board Policy Revision: Section 343.34 - Accessibility of Records (Second Reading) 5. Memo 155 - Continuation of Right Start Contract: North Star, Williwaw, William Tyson, Mountain View, and Big Lake Elementary Schools 6. Memo 137 - Acceptance of Grant Award: Alaska Energy Cost Reduction Projects 7. Memo 136 - Award of Contract: Magna Brand Furniture 8. Memo 138 - Award of Contract: William Tyson Elementary School Security System Upgrades 9. Memo 140 - Personnel Report	Superintendent's Report 1. Memo 141 - Project Status Report 2. Memo 144 - Profile of Performance 3. Memo 143 - 2006-2007 Ethnicity Report 4. Memo 139 - First Quarter Parent/Teacher Conference Report 2006-2007 Persons To Be Heard On Non-agenda Items Communications & School Board Comments Executive Session - (Personnel/Finance/Negotiations/Litigation) Adjournment
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*The meeting will be aired live on cable channel 14 and will be rebroadcast Dec. 13 at 5 p.m., Dec. 14 at 12:30 p.m., Dec. 16 at 12:30 p.m. and Dec. 17 at 7:30 a.m. The meeting will be closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. The agenda is available in Braille by calling 742-4153. The ASD telephone number is 742-4000. A message may be left after hours.

For more information

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MECAC: The mission of the Minority Education Concerns Advisory Committee (MECAC) is to serve as the voice for families in the Anchorage School District and to promote educational success for minority students. The MECAC meets the first Wednesday of every month at 4:30 p.m. and the third Thursday of every month at 12 noon at 4600 DeBarr Road, Room 320.

4600 DeBarr Road, Anchorage, AK 99519-6614 • 742-4000 • www.asdk12.org • Tune in to cable channel 14