

I. PRELIMINARY

Cook called the October 6, 2009, meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Roll Call

The following members were present:

Matt Cook, president
Jeanette Carmany, vice president
Peter Cukale, treasurer
Jane Barber, secretary
Judith Edberg, director
Mary W. Lewis, director
Amy Prince, director

Also meeting with the Board of Education were:

John L. Barry, superintendent of schools
Tony Van Gytenbeek, deputy superintendent
Barbara Cooper, chief equity and engagement officer
Rod Weeks, chief financial officer
Kari Allen, chief personnel officer
William Stuart, chief academic officer
Anthony Sturges, chief operating officer
Tonia Norman, assistant to Board of Education

Pledge of Allegiance/Welcome to Visitors

Lewis led the Board and audience in the pledge to the flag. Cook welcomed visitors to the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

The October 6, 2009, agenda was approved as written.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Education held September 15, 2009, were approved as written.

II. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Reports from the Board of Education

Carmany attended several staff and community events over the past three weeks as follows:

- Superintendent's Quarterly Award ceremony to honor award recipients
- staff development for early childhood that was very powerful on diversity
- Aurora Education Foundation luncheon
- North Middle School 50th Year Anniversary Celebration

Parent events:

- DAAC meeting

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- ARC meeting with parents, staff, and representatives from APS and Cherry Creek to discuss special education student needs
- Parent meeting at Hinkley with an extremely powerful speaker that highlighted what parents could do to help their students be successful.

Edberg announced that this is her last official Board meeting. She hopes to be present for the first part of the November 10 Board meeting.

It has been an honor to serve on the APS Board of Education. I leave with a real sense of sadness, but have a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and optimism in regard to the direction the district is heading. I am proud of what has been accomplished by the Board during the last few years.

Each person on this seven-member Board has been a real inspiration to me, and I am constantly impressed with your generosity, wisdom, enthusiasm and dedication to the district.

I would like to thank Superintendent John Barry. I cannot think of a better person to lead this district and I am thankful that you are at the helm.

I would like to thank Deputy Superintendent Tony Van Gytenbeek. It has been a pleasure to work with you and see your ability to think outside the box.

I would like to thank Rod Weeks and the entire leadership team. It has been a pleasure to work with all of you and I appreciate all of your hard work.

A special thanks to Brenna Isaacs, AEA President, for being so supportive to the Board.

I would like to thank the entire district staff. We truly have a staff that cannot be equal by any other district. Thanks also to the Aurora community for passing the bond and mill levy. It was a real show of support for the district.

Prince noted how sad she felt in this being Edberg's last Board meeting.

Prince attended the APS Education Foundation luncheon. It was a wonderful luncheon, and everyone was very supportive of APS students. I hope a ton of money was raised for the foundation.

Prince attended the safety news conference at Peoria Elementary. Thanks to all the parents who put our student's welfare as a priority. They have done so much for the school in terms of safety and I am so proud of them. They stepped up to the plate and hit a grand slam.

Prince attended the Gateway/Hinkley football game. Both teams played very well and a great time was had by all. I would encourage everyone to attend a high school football game if they have a chance.

Prince attended the Superintendent's Quarterly Awards celebration. All of the winners were very deserving. We also celebrated staff who recently received their college degree at the quarterly awards celebration. We have a well-educated staff at APS.

Barber attended the ARC special education forum with staff from APS and Cherry Creek. ARC advocates for special education students. It seems like there are many differences in terms of education for special education students.

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I hope one day we can come together. The next night, I saw two children in the Aurora LIGHTS program speak at North, and I thought, this is the promise and is where it is going to happen. I was very excited.

Barber attended the Superintendent's Quarterly Awards celebration. I was heartened by the comments of the honorees. They are always so humble and feel as if they do not deserve the award, but they do. It makes me feel good to see our honorees stand up and receive their awards.

Barber attended the Aurora Education Foundation luncheon. I was really proud of the high school students who were selected to be recognized and honored at the luncheon.

Barber attended the diversity training that was held for administrators and professional technical staff. Barry will provide more information on the training.

Lewis noted that Board members were present at many of the same events over the past three weeks, and shared highlights of the North Middle School 50th Year Anniversary Celebration. It was such fun. Many former principals and staff members attended the event and everyone had a wonderful time. It is always fun to know that every APS middle school has a pool.

Lewis attended one of the programs sponsored by the Elks for drug awareness. The parent program in the evening was sparsely attended, but the event held during the day was very well attended. The speaker was very powerful. We need to celebrate the Elks' participation and involvement in the district, and make sure that the message is heard by as many students and parents as possible.

The APS Education Foundation lunch was really amazing. The high school students that the principals selected to honor and their stories were wonderful. It was a great luncheon.

Lewis attended the Superintendent Quarterly Awards celebration. It is so exciting to be able to recognize excellence in the district. It is a great program that the APS Education Foundation helps to fund. My favorite awards ceremony is for maintenance and operations staff. They have such a good time with their quarterly awards ceremony and always have good cake!

Carmany congratulated Superintendent Barry for earning the "Educator of the Year" award from Shades of Blue. Tuskegee Airmen, the first African American astronaut, and several people from the business community attended the event.

Superintendent's Celebrations

Cook shared that the Board likes to recognize district staff for all their hard work and efforts, and one of the most important employee groups in APS are classified employees. Colorado Classified School Employees Week is October 11- 17, 2009. Cook read a proclamation on behalf of Colorado Classified School Employees week:

WHEREAS, Colorado Classified School Employees are an essential part of the Aurora Public Schools education system; and

WHEREAS, classified employees are dedicated to assisting in the provision of quality education for the students of Aurora Public Schools; and

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WHEREAS, the classified employees of the Aurora Public School District perform the daily cleaning and maintenance of school property, safely transport students to and from school, prepare and serve nourishing lunches, maintain records and reports, assist in classrooms and on school playgrounds; and perform a variety of other tasks on behalf of our students; and

WHEREAS, classified school employees continue to seek solutions to prevent school violence, and are actively involved in countless school programs, and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate for the Aurora Public Schools to recognize the role of classified school employees in our education system and to salute these employees for the valuable service they provide to our students and our communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Aurora Public Schools Board of Education, proclaim October 11 through October 17, 2009, as

Colorado Classified School Employees Week

In honor of Colorado Classified School Employees Week, the Board held a drawing and selected sites to receive lunch on behalf of the Board as a small token of appreciation. Sites selected were: Boston K-8, Century, Educational Services Center 4, Facilities, Fulton, and Mrachek. Members of the Classified Employees Council shook hands with the Board and accepted the proclamation.

Barry and the APS Board of Education are extremely proud of the partnership between the Aurora Public Schools and The Children's Hospital. Annually, for the past three years, this partnership has overseen projects that benefit district schools.

In 2007, staff from both the hospital and the APS Maintenance and Operations Department joined efforts to landscape Montview Elementary School and paint the mobiles at Vaughn Elementary School. In 2008, they came together to landscape and paint North Middle School. Last summer, they landscaped, installed playground equipment and painted the parking lot and play area at Park Lane Elementary School.

Please give a warm thanks to Jerrod Milton, vice president of operations at The Children's Hospital; Lanetta Dixon, executive assistant; Melanie Sodini, assistant for people development at The Children's Hospital; Mark Davis, director of the APS Maintenance and Operations Department, and Debra Stoller, assistant and coordinator of the yearly project.

We deeply appreciate the hard work and dedication of all The Children's Hospital staff and APS Maintenance and Operations staff who generously labored on these projects. Each and every one of you played a key role in making these improvements possible. We cannot do this alone and the partnership that we want to continue to foster and develop is exemplified by The Children's Hospital.

Barry presented Jerrod Milton, Lanetta Dixon, and Melanie Sodini with a Superintendent recognition coin.

Barry recognized maintenance and operations staff for all their hard work, seen every day as we walk around the school district. You manifest the support backbone of the Aurora Public Schools. We hosted the White House Fellows on Saturday and several members of the group commented on how well maintained

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our facilities were. It is a great credit to APS and the maintenance and operations staff.

Barry asked the following staff to stand up and be recognized: Tim Stanford, Luis Arroyo, Steve Allen, Bo Bacon, Mike Rapone, Scott Repair, Mike Redding, Will Purdy, Kevin Katzenmeier, Craig Hall, Don Hull, Jason Flynn, Paul Schlough, Rick Barber, Randy Nesvold, Ryan Wamsley, Paul Amerine, Todd Stamus, Paul Katopodes, Gary Bicknell, Corey Emecheta, Tim Phillips, Erasmo Salazar, Tony Sanchez, Ron Gries, Ron Williams, Fred Hesser, Brett Whetstone, Anthony Johnson, Julian Bustamante, Jared Palma, Ashley Gerster, Cecily Stamus, Bill Cary, Ryan Hutchinson, Judy West, Gary Ovigian, Rick Stockton, Bob McLean, Josh Nelson and Isreal Nogueta.

Board of Education Appreciation

Barry shared that tonight we honor Judy Edberg for her tireless passion and efforts on behalf of APS students. A special tribute was presented to Edberg in recognition of her dedication and commitment to the APS community. The Kids' Clinic at Crawford will be renamed "The Judith Edberg Kids Clinic."

Edberg's family, friends and colleagues were in the audience. Mary Beth Rensberger, coordinator of Health Services and Medicaid Services, presented Edberg with a bouquet of flowers and thanked her for all her work and efforts with the district's first school-based health clinic.

Barry noted that the clinic has been in the forefront of Edberg's work for a number of years as an APS employee and Board member. It was her vision and leadership that help establish the first school-based health clinic in APS. Many students have received services through the school-based health clinic and we plan to implement more clinics in the future.

Edberg introduced her husband, Dan; daughter, Laurie; two grandsons, Josh and Tyler; and her son-in-law, Don.

Edberg shared that it was a wonderful honor and tribute. The school-based health clinic is a wonderful addition for our students and district. Barry presented Dan Edberg with a Superintendent recognition coin.

Opportunity for Audience

Roma Clark, 296 Uvalda Street, Aurora, 720-949-1029, addressed the Board on behalf of her daughter, Sidnee Bryant-Mitchell, who is a junior at Aurora Central High School.

Clark voiced concerns in regard to communication efforts at Aurora Central. She shared that registration paperwork was not received prior to the start of school and Bryant-Mitchell was withdrawn as a result without prior contact from the school. Subsequent reenrollment at Aurora Central was very difficult.

Clark shared that her daughter recently became a parent. She spoke with her daughter's counselor and the attendance office about maternity leave, and has followed policy in regard to calling in absences. She shared frustrations in regard to receiving e-mails and phone calls that her daughter is missing one or more unexcused absences in a number of classes.

Clark shared that her daughter is enrolled in an online course and a work study

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course so she could continue to take classes while on maternity leave. She is glad Aurora Central has procedures in place for students who are not attending school, but emphasized that her daughter is not presently enrolled in classes on campus and should not be receiving attendance calls and e-mails.

Cook thanked Clark for addressing the Board. He requested that Barbara Cooper, chief equity and engagement officer, meet with Clark. Barry will provide a follow up to the Board.

Vanessa Frazier, 18256 E. Alabama Pl., Unit B, Aurora, 303-751-9081, requested information on standards-based grading.

Frazier asked how standards-based grading would translate into credits when students are applying to colleges and for scholarships. My daughter is presently in middle school, but I am preparing for the future.

Cook shared that the standards-based report card is not currently in schools. We are targeting implementation for next year.

Cook thanked Frazier for addressing the Board. He requested that William Stuart, chief academic officer, meet with Frazier and address questions about standards-based grading with Frazier. Barry will provide a follow up with the Board.

Superintendent's Report

Items of Interest

Barry announced that the Futures Academy at Pickens Technical College is up and running. This program helps high-aged students with low credits obtain a GED. One student in the Futures Program is enrolled in Community College of Aurora and may receive an associate's degree in the next couple of years. In this case, the Board has the authority to award a high school diploma dependent on how well the student does at CCA. This is another example of opportunities and visions created for students through some of our district programs. We intend to have a workshop with the Board to review high school graduation requirements in the near future.

The Whetstone consulting group will be meeting with APS staff on October 20 and October 22 to assist with the district's pathway model. The consulting group will provide a strong foundation for continuous growth for district pathway programs. Whetstone's mission is to enhance performance by aligning business operations systems and human capital. Their objective is to provide APS with an audit and assessment that clearly articulates how current initiatives and strategies for delivery career pathway programs compare against the leading workforce innovations model for delivering community level, needs-based approach, to career and technical education. Whetstone will be assessing strategic and accountable processes for program, pathway and P-20 development. The final evaluation will provide a customized findings and recommendations document that will allow the district to build a strong strategic portfolio framework. The Board will be provided with a report once findings are finalized.

The Board was introduced to Garrett Rosa, new pathway director, for the P-20 campus earlier this evening. We will be depending on his leadership as we progress toward the development of the P-20 campus.

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The boundary committee for the P-20 campus will host four open houses on the following dates and times:

- October 14, Clyde Miller, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- October 15, Rangeview, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- October 21, Murphy Creek, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
- October 22, Aurora Frontier, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

The boundary committee is comprised of community members, parents and staff. Lewis is also a member of the committee. The committee will provide boundary recommendations to the leadership team on November 24. The Board will be briefed in December.

Race to the Top is a program that provides federal funding for select states that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform. Colorado is competing for federal funding and APS is in the process of working with the Colorado Department of Education to establish funding guidelines. The district is required to submit a memo of understanding that the Board, Superintendent, and the Aurora Education Association would be required to sign if Colorado is selected to receive federal funding. We will continue to keep the Board apprised of the selection process.

Recent Updates

The charter application for School Without Borders, the only charter submission this year, is still being processed. We will provide an evaluation of the submission to the Board within two weeks. Information will then be communicated to the proposed charter.

The VISTA 2015 Town Hall Kickoff will be held on Tuesday, October 20, at 6:30 p.m. at Gateway High School.

A press conference will be held on November 5 to highlight the number of grants that APS has acquired by our amazing grants office. Recent grants received include:

- Big Brothers/Big Sister grant, \$125,000 per year, four years
- safety grant through a partnership with APD for \$250,000
- continuous grant to fund pilot schools

We are in the process of providing equity training to district staff. Barbara Cooper and team have done an amazing job organizing training. Administrators and professional technical staff members participated in equity training in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League on Monday. We have increased our situation awareness in regard to the value of equity and our ability to not prohibit anyone's ability to maximize their potential. This year's focus is on equity leadership development. Next year we will build an equity team with the focus on teachers, parents and students. Equity training is not only for the benefit of staff. We want to be able to better communicate with APS students and understand where they are coming from so we can have a constructive environment that allows students to maximize their fullest potential.

Barber participated in equity training on Monday and shared that groups were so dedicated and opened to suggestions from trainers. Our staff really cares about APS children and their fellow employees. I was very proud to be part of the

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group. Cook shared that the APS Board is scheduled to receive equity training on November 4.

Barry shared that the district has been able to make considerable improvements on school buildings and district facilities as a result of the passage of the bond last November. The price of labor and materials also decreased on some of the scheduled construction projects, and cost savings will allow the construction of a new Aurora Hills Middle School building instead of remodeling the current site.

Barry presented slides that highlighted some of the features of the new building. The building will contain modules for separate containment of grade levels. The library will be split into smaller sections that will be housed in front of the modules. Bidding will start after winter break. The new Aurora Hills building is expected to open in the fall of 2011 barring any construction delays.

Lewis asked what the student capacity was. Sturges replied about 1,000 students.

Prince commented that small learning communities were incorporated in planning at the P-20 campus. Is there a plan for something similar at the new Aurora Hills building? Barry shared that the plan is to start at grade level. Our goal is to have all four pathways at every middle school and high school.

We are learning from Mrachek in regard to separating grade levels. Sixth graders are housed in outside modules, seventh graders are housed on the ground floor, and eighth graders are housed on the top floor. It has created such a difference at Mrachek. Student behavioral concerns have decreased as a result of being with their own age groups.

Barber noted that playing fields in site plans were close to Mississippi Avenue. She asked if a fence would enclose fields. Sturges replied yes.

The Board will receive a pilot school program evaluation report. APS pilot schools are required to exceed district metrics in certain specific areas. William Smith High School has exceeded district metrics in three areas in their first year as a pilot school. Lisa Escárcega, chief accountability and research officer, and staff in the Division of Accountability and Research have done an amazing job creating the pilot school evaluation framework. I would also like to commend Jane Shirley, principal of William Smith, and staff on how well they have adjusted and what they have accomplished in such a short period of time. This is true example of our vision in that pilot schools would be a significant contributor to student achievement in APS.

The open enrollment committee is reviewing open enrollment policies and procedures. We are hoping to have a written policy in place in January prior to the opening of the P-20 campus. We are reviewing temporary guardianship procedures and priority placement data from other school districts, and our intent is to have a written policy in place and systematically utilized throughout the district. The committee will provide recommendations before the end of the year. Information will be presented to the Board no later than January.

Input was requested from district employees in regard to how best to utilize extra funds from a dental surplus. Approximately 3,900 district employees opened the e-mail. Approximately 400 employees responded negatively and more than 100 employees responded positively. We hope to e-mail final results to staff sometime tomorrow. We are taking inputs and evaluating as we work through

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the process. We are also working with the district insurance committee comprised of members from CEC, SEA and AEA.

This is another example of trust, teamwork and transparency, and is something to celebrate. There are not too many school districts that would request this type of input from staff. This is a true credit to the Board in their charge to be transparent in funding and budgeting. The question could have been posed to staff better, but this was our first attempt. Staff felt comfortable and confident about sharing their thoughts, and the survey was completely anonymous.

Camany asked if another vote would be requested in the next e-mail forwarded to staff. Barry replied no. We want to answer questions received from staff inputs. Carmany noted concerns in that the e-mail regarding the surplus was sent during an extremely busy period for teachers and staff with October count, parent/teacher conferences, and report cards. Many people opened the e-mail but may not have had time to read it.

Informational Report Submissions

Barry shared that the following informational reports were submitted to the Board in advance of the October 6, 2009, Board meeting. All four reports will be included in the minutes and officially submitted for the record, so we stay true to our theme of trust, teamwork and transparency.

- Communication Audit/Plan
- Adequate Yearly Progress
- Fifth Block
- VISTA 2010 Report Card

Cukale asked for clarification under next steps of the communication audit/plan informational report, and asked if there would be any type of action in the monthly or weekly broadcast as to all the good things occurring in APS. This would be a good avenue to broadcast information to the community on a continuous basis. Barry reminded the Board that the Superintendent's Bulletin is sent to staff every two weeks and communications are via e-mail from the Superintendent. Leadership Team agendas, Department of Instruction meeting agendas, principal meeting agendas and VISTA Forum meeting agendas, which are comprised of representatives from AEA, CEC, SEA, are posted on the Web site so staff are apprised of current issues and events in our continuing efforts to be transparent. Cukale appreciates the many communication efforts to staff, but asked how the community is kept apprised of what is occurring in APS. Georgia Duran, chief communications officer, shared that we utilize the back page of the Aurora Sentinel. We provide information for parents in the Aurora Youth Matters guide that is published once a quarter. Barry noted that information is provided to the press and noted the recent P-20 press conference that the governor, commissioner of education and mayor of Aurora attended.

Lewis asked how many community members are on the Community Connection e-mail list. Duran replied about 2,000. Lewis asked if anyone could sign up. Duran replied yes. We will provide a card that explains how to sign up for Community Connection when we begin meeting with community groups as part of the VISTA 2015 Listening Tour. Barry added that we plan to meet with 95 district and community groups between October 20, 2009, and the end of March as part of the VISTA 2015 Listening Tour. This will provide an opportunity to speak to a number of community constituents about successes occurring in the district.

Barber asked how we are helping schools on corrective action. Barry shared that each school has a school improvement plan. Schools on corrective action are provided with additional resources through Title I funding and stimulus funds. Stuart echoed comments from Barry. All schools on any stage of corrective action must incorporate specific strategies with resources that are available through Title funding as part of their school improvement plan. We have monthly conversations with leadership team and student achievement directors on how to best support schools.

Barber asked if schools on corrective action received additional staff. Stuart shared that schools receive additional funding and have flexibility on how to best utilize funds. Site administrators will often hire instructional staff for intervention classes to assist students. Most Title schools are on corrective action and have resources available to hire additional staff.

Prince asked who comprised the fifth block committee. Escárcega shared that the fifth block committee includes:

- Sue Clark, facilitator
- Tony Van Gytenbeek, deputy Superintendent
- principals from each grade level
- AEA representatives
- human resources staff
- maintenance and operations staff
- grants staff
- budget staff
- accountability and research staff

Escárcega shared that the Fifth Block Program provided 23 days of additional instruction to 3,300 students in June 2009. This is the second year of the program. Our target next year is to fill 4,000 student slots. We target students who may not have received intervention during the school year and needed additional time to reach proficiency on state standards. Most APS sites ran a fifth block program. Students at school sites under construction were able to attend fifth block at alternate school sites.

Title elementary schools had additional slots as part of funding for Title schools. Each building hired staff to work during fifth block. Transportation was provided as well as nutrition services, which was a big incentive for many families. Students and parents received a report card and a survey by mail at the end of fifth block. A high number of the Hispanic student population group and the free and reduced student population group attended fifth block. Students who were selected primarily scored at partially proficient or unsatisfactory on the CSAP test. They were required to have good attendance and very few office referrals. Barry noted that fifth block is a voluntary program for students and families.

This student attendance rate for this year's fifth block was 92 percent compared to 93 percent last year. We collected attendance data during the last 10 days of fifth block when we felt it was most accurate. Data indicated:

- low- to- mid 90 percent range at the elementary level
- high 80 to low 90 percent range at the middle school level
- mid 80 percent range at the high school level

Office referrals entered into Infinite Campus were very limited; there were only

seven referrals for the 3,300 students who attended fifth block. Principals, teachers and parents were surveyed for both years to determine if they believe the program benefits students academically. About half of the principals responded and 75 percent believe fifth block benefits students. More than 90 percent of teachers believe fifth block benefits students, which was a 10 percent increase from the previous year. About 88 percent of parents believe the program benefits students and feedback received was very complimentary. Parents did request that information be provided on student progress during fifth block. The main concern from principals was in regard to filling spots based on set student criteria. The fifth block committee will meet with staff from sites that had good attendance to share ideas and strategies. Teachers were impressed with supports provided during fifth block including pacing guides and paraeducators in each class. Some struggles noted by teachers were in regard to engaging students for the full day. Concerns also arose in regard to online MAPS testing. The test was not difficult to give, but staff wanted instructions on how to interpret data to assist students. We used the online assessment as a pre and post test to look at student growth scores.

Cook asked if the 37 percent of parents that responded to the survey in Spanish was high. Escárcega responded yes. The response rate was high compared to other parent surveys.

Carmany asked about the percentage of teachers that responded. Escárcega responded that about two-thirds of the teachers responded. Teachers are requested to complete surveys as part of their contract. We plan to send a reminder to teachers earlier next year in order to get a higher response rate. Carmany asked if this was part of the principal's contract at the elementary school level. Stuart shared that elementary principals are not on a year-round calendar and their contract ended a week prior to the end of fifth block.

The assessment, built by the Northwest Evaluation Association, is intended to be given at the beginning and end of the school year. It can be given in the middle of the school year. The assessment is used to measure growth. We gave the assessment as a test to see if the effects of the achievement gains were large enough to pick up in just a five-week period. Eight grade levels were given a reading test and eight grade levels were given a math test. We saw an average increase in scores in 14 of the 16 tests.

Escárcega shared that scores of fifth block students were compared with scores of non-fifth block students who started at the same CSAP pretest score. The district's median growth percentile is above the state median, which is 50, in most areas. In math, non fifth block students had a median growth percentile of 56. Fifth block students had a median growth percentile of 62. By tenth grade, the difference is 14 percentile. Fifth block students were able to maintain and gain in growth percentiles. Writing was the same and was well above the growth percentile. There were mixed results in growth percentiles for reading among students.

Lewis asked what grade levels we were considering to add to meet the 4,000 student slot goal. Escárcega shared that we discussed kindergarten going to first grade and first grade going to second grade. We are still in the process of looking at full or half days for students this young. We are also looking at expanding fifth block to include proficient math students so they do not fall back.

Prince asked how many fifth block students from the previous year were invited back. Escárcega shared that the district did not keep statistics on the number of

students invited back.

Barber asked if discussion had occurred in regard to starting in July instead of June. Barry shared that input received from staff in regard to starting in July was not favorable. Most people take vacations in July, and it would be difficult to get students to return after they have been on vacation for a couple of weeks.

Carmany commented that when we originally talked about fifth block it was only for students who were not quite proficient. Have we opened fifth block to students who are proficient or advanced. Escárcega shared that priority is given to students who are unsatisfactory or partially proficient in both reading and math. We generally do not invite many advanced or highly proficient students to participate in fifth block. Carmany asked if any thought had been given to high school students who are proficient in one area, but not the other. Stuart replied that high students who are not proficient in one area can attend for half day.

Escárcega shared that the cost of fifth block was \$439 per student, which was similar to the overall cost per student from the previous year. Barry shared that there has been a great deal of interest in the fifth block program throughout school districts in Colorado and Ohio. The governor had discussed instituting a 20-day extension of school for a limited number of students in Colorado.

VISTA 2010 Report Card.

Barry shared that the VISTA 2010 report card reflects how we did to adhere to the VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan. This was a five-year plan and we are in our fourth year. We have made some significant gains. The VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan is a living breathing document with strategies to connect ends to means. What is important are the ends and the means, and goals and objectives centered under PACE – people, achievement, community and environment. We were very hard on ourselves and gave marks that were appropriate. I am pleased on what has been accomplished in the district in the last two implementation years.

Escárcega shared that VISTA 2010 was published in November 2006. Two revisions have occurred within the plan, December 2007 and November 2008. The goals in the plan did not change in the four areas: people, achievement, community and environment. The original version had 13 goals, 34 revisions and 94 tasks. The current version, following two revisions, contains 12 goals, 30 objectives and 65 tasks. Most of the tasks were collapsed as a result of duplications or completions. There are a total of 113 metrics that we are following as a team.

Our goal was to keep the report card simple. We decided to review each metric and make a judgment. A three point scale was used to evaluate progress on each metric as follows: 1 – little or no progress; 2 – substantial progress, or 3 – goal for the metric was met. In some instances, the goal was not 100 percent, and was previously established for the year by the four divisions corresponding to each of the letters in people, achievement, community and environment. We had to stay true to the established goal. The Division of Accountability and Research rated each metric, and met with the corresponding division chief to determine if they agreed or not. We only changed three of the metrics from the Division of Support Services. The overall report card grade for the VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan came from the entire leadership team. We met or exceeded 63 out of the 113 goals, which was 56 percent. We had substantial progress in 37 percent of the metrics, with only eight different tasks that had little or no progress.

Most tasks with little or no progress were trailing indicators such as ACT or graduation rates. The overall grade for the VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan was a B plus.

Barry shared that the proficient/B plus grade was conservative. I would like to commend the entire district staff and the APS Board. We put our goals in writing and held ourselves accountable. We have enough metrics completed to move to the next level and kickoff VISTA 2015. I am impressed and grateful for the hard work and efforts of the entire district staff. If you stay true to a strategic plan, hold it and yourself accountable, it provides a focus and vision for the future.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board has set forth in policies items that are operational and items that are considered Board work. These are items that the Board is legally responsible to take action on. If a Board member has an issue or concern with any item for action on the consent agenda, the item will be brought forward for further review. If there are no concerns from a Board member or a community member who has signed up to address an item on the consent agenda, all items submitted for action will be voted on collectively.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Monitoring Reports

Governance Policy 3.2 – Treatment of Staff

Cook shared that the Board receives monitoring reports from the Superintendent on various issues that the Board outlined in policy as part of policy governance.

Barry noted that monitoring reports are the accountability that the Board requires so we stay true to policy governance. This report focuses on the treatment of staff. The climate surveys that we use are very transparent and highlight good, bad or indifferent inputs and feedback from staff. Surveys are posted on the Web site for all to review. They also provide a strong measuring tool for continuous improvement as a district.

Stuart shared that climate surveys are used annually to measure organizational climate and employee satisfaction. We feel it is our responsibility and a measure of accountability, and has been noted in the VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan from the beginning. Three years ago, we realized that staff climate was a considerable concern at many sites and Superintendent Barry heard it from many district employees during the first listening tour. Acton 91, in the original VISTA 2010 Strategic Plan, called for us to do an annual survey.

Stuart shared that staff, parent and student climate surveys are becoming a strong part of our culture. We take it very seriously and emphasize it repeatedly throughout the year.

The survey was developed in collaboration with the Aurora Education Association in 2007. Licensed, classified, and administrative/professional technical surveys are administered annually, and the return rate is extremely high.

- licensed survey return rate was 87 percent

- classified survey return rate increased to 70 percent compared to 41 percent the previous year.
- administrative/professional technical survey return rate was 100 percent.

Barber attributed the increase return rate for classified surveys to the decrease in fear among employees and hard copies of the survey at school sites. Escárcega noted that more employees are becoming comfortable in realizing that surveys are completely anonymous.

Escárcega shared that climate survey items are classified in six different areas including:

- clarity of purpose
- communication
- trust and respect
- work environment
- morale
- support for programs

When we did the baseline in 2007, we selected “trust and respect” as the focus for the 2008-09 school year because it had some of the lowest agreement rates. The administrative/professional technical survey had the least improvement, but had the highest agreement rates. One out of five items showed meaningful improvement on the classified staff survey and no items declined. The largest increase occurred on the licensed staff climate survey with 63 percent of items showing a five percent or larger improvement in agreement rates. One item related to trust and teamwork declined by five percent.

We originally asked staff if there was “trust and teamwork within your building” and is there “trust among staff.” Feedback and inputs received from administrators and school staff suggested that both questions be separated out. The agreement rates improved in both areas; 27 percent in one and 40 percent in the other. Trust and teamwork among staff is approaching 80 percent.

Stuart shared that principals are expected to share survey results with staff and post information on their school Web site and in data rooms. The Division of Accountability and Research publishes all climate surveys on its Web site. School administrators are responsible for establishing goals as part of their school improvement plan. Plans include specific actions and measures to address need areas. We stress the importance of noticing and naming things that are occurring in buildings with site administrators as a result of feedback and inputs from staff climate surveys. All principals have an opportunity to meet with leadership team during state of school meetings. We always have questions on staff climate surveys and outcomes to build and improve in specific areas identified at the start of the year. The climate survey is given in January and has become a mid-year assessment. Climate surveys have become part of our work. It is institutionalized and part of the APS culture.

Stuart reviewed next steps for the 2009-10 school year including:

- notice and name actions taken in response to surveys
- establish new communication protocols that show transparency with leadership team agendas and district level meeting agendas
- emphasize the need to recognize staff, students, parents, and community contributors on a monthly or annual basis with site administrators
- next set of climate surveys will be administered in January

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Stuart shared that the licensed staff climate survey was given the most attention originally because we heard most of the issues. We have three surveys, and need to look just as carefully at parent and student surveys at the secondary level in order to determine commonalities and trends in our continuing efforts to improve and address concerns from all groups.

Barry shared that we made some mistakes in noticing and naming. We heard the input, but not recognize the person that provided the input and did not share the final outcome or solution with the person. We have become better at noticing the issue, recognizing the input and naming the solution. Issues or concerns may not always be completely solved, but we have a direct connect. Barry recognized both Stuart and Escárcega for helping with noticing and naming efforts.

Lewis commented that one of the most amazing things about the APS climate surveys are that results are published on the Web site for everyone to review. Stuart noted similar comments from a colleague in regard to published survey results on the district Web site. It is a real tribute to APS and shows what we are building in terms of culture and climate. Cook shared that culture changes usually take between three to four years and we are starting to see some of the results. I would like to recognize classified staff in the audience and the Aurora Education Association. It took a leap of faith for you to step down and meet us halfway. It started as a grassroots effort, not top down but bottom up. This is important work, and is an area where the Board can be highly effective, which is one reason why we looked at the policy governance model.

Stuart shared that climate survey results will help increase student achievement over time. Creating a welcoming and supportive climate for staff, students, parents and the community is the right thing to do.

DIVISION OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESEARCH

No Items

DIVISION OF FINANCE

No Items

DIVISION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Classified Personnel

Licensed Personnel

Non-Licensed Administrative and Professional/Technical Personnel

DIVISION OF INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Instructional Materials Adoption

DIVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Lewis moved and Edberg seconded to adopt the consent agenda as presented.

Prince questioned why monitoring reports were included on the consent agenda.

Cook shared that monitoring reports are included on the consent agenda because the Board is adopting what was presented and agreeing that it met our policy. If the Board elects not to accept the monitoring report, we would need a motion that it did not meet our policy and request that Superintendent Barry revise the monitoring report or the Board could review policy language for further clarity.

Prince voiced concerns in that the Board just received the monitoring report and is expected to vote on it. Cook asked whether the Board wanted to include the monitoring report as informational and adopt it at the November 10 Board meeting.

Carmany commented that the Board does not receive agenda packets until Friday afternoon and does not always have time to review all of the information. Prince noted that at the August 11 Board workshop we agreed that reports would be provided seven to 10 days in advance of the meeting via e-mail.

Cook reviewed governance policy 3.2, treatment of staff, for the Board. Barber noted that all items listed under governance policy 3.2 should be addressed in monitoring reports presented. Lewis concurred.

Barry asked for clarification on how the Board wanted items addressed in monitoring reports. The staff climate surveys are moving in the right direction and addressed a number of items under governance policy 3.2. Lewis shared that it would be helpful to address each item under the governance policy during the first few monitoring reports.

The motion is to remove monitoring report, governance policy 3.2, treatment of staff, from the consent agenda and adopt it at the November 10 Board meeting.

Lewis moved and Edberg seconded to adopt the amended consent agenda as presented.

Roll Call: Barber, Carmany, Cook, Cukale, Edberg, Lewis, Prince #8105

Approved on a vote of 7-0

V. BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK

BOARD REPORTS

Cook requested that Board members bring the APS Board Policy Manual to each Board meeting. Cook asked Board members if it was their preference to address each specific item listed under governance policies in monitoring reports. Prince asked for clarification on informational reports and monitoring reports. Informational reports that were presented on September 15 did not include presentations. Cook shared that we can specify on the agenda when informational reports would include public presentations. Barry shared that reports presented tonight were an extension on his voice. Prince concurred and shared that prepared questions were answered during the presentation. Barry shared that staff would provide a statement on each item listed under governance policies in monitoring reports. Cook asked Tonia Norman, board assistant, to list reports that would include a public presentation separately.

Barry commented that this is an excellent way to format monitoring reports and ensure all items are covered. Monitoring report, governance policy 3.2,

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treatment of staff, will be sent to the Board for review on November 2 and included on the November 10 Board consent agenda.

Concerns or Issues

Prince just completed her second term on the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning Board. Many board members in area districts serve on the RMSEL board, and they are currently in the process of electing new officers. Prince asked if anyone on the APS Board was interested in replacing her. Cook asked Prince if there were term limits. Prince replied no. She wanted to open it up to other Board members in case anyone was interested in serving. She will continue to serve on the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning Board. APS currently has 20 students in the program.

Cook is considering running for an open seat on the CASB Board of Directors in Region 5. Carmany will write a recommendation letter on behalf of the Board. Cukale is also considering running for an open seat on the CASB Board of Directors at-large.

Conference Updates

Cook spoke to Jane Urshel, executive director at CASB, in regard to the policy governance session for practicing school districts that is being offered at the Colorado Association of School Boards convention. Cook was not sure about the registration process or fee charge for the invitation-only policy governance session. Norman will register interested Board members for the policy governance session.

Lewis asked if there was a chance for two Board members serving on the same board to be elected to the CASB Board of Directors. Cook and Cukale shared that two Board members serve on the CASB Board of Directors in Denver and Jefferson County. Barber noted that Board members would be able to vote for candidates running in all regions and at-large.

Prince asked if fellow Board members were planning to attend any of the pre-sessions at the National School Boards Association Convention in Chicago. Cook will leave it to each Board member to determine.

Prince also asked about flights and hotels for the convention. Cook noted that the hotel is usually based on the least expensive and most accessible to the convention. Lewis will provide hotel recommendations for Board members to Norman.

BOARD SELF-MONITORING

Policy Governance Practice – Addressing the Media

Cook noted that as part of policy governance, the Board will either do some type of scenario or have a general conversation about policy governance.

Tonight's practice will highlight how a policy governance board interacts with the media. In the scenario, a Board member makes a comment in which he or she states an action that the Board should take in regard to an issue or concern. How should the Board address this under policy governance? The Board is accountable to itself and one of our biggest policies is unity of voice. Spirited discussions are encouraged, but once the Board speaks, we speak in one voice.

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Cukale suggested calling for an executive session. Cook commented that an executive session might not be appropriate. The Board could discuss concerns in this type of forum. Cukale asked how many strikes would a Board member get before some type of action is taken by the Board as a whole. Carmany commented the Board is voted on, we cannot vote anyone off. Cook pointed out that under 1.5 Board members' code of conduct, in the APS Board Policy Manual, it explains a number of things in regard to Board conduct. We would probably meet with the Board member and remind him or her of policies that we agreed upon. Carmany voiced concerns in regard to the entire Board meeting with a member and voicing concerns. The Board president or Superintendent should meet with the Board member the first time and remind him or her of the policy. If it becomes habitual, the entire Board would then meet with the Board member. Cook shared that the policy in the Board members' code of conduct is explicit in that the Board speaks with one voice. It is up to the Board to be accountable and this is the forum to discuss it. Prince said that it is important to give the Board member an opportunity to clarify a statement. Comments are often taken out of context.

Edberg shared that it would be helpful for a new Board member to have a conversation with the Board president about governance policies and practices. Lewis noted that Edberg served as her mentor when she was first elected to the Board. She will serve as the mentor for JulieMarie Shepherd, the new Board member.

Cook shared that the Board did a good job with policy governance tonight. This is exactly how policy governance is supposed to work. If there is something that the Board sees or if the policy or process is not explicit, we address it to staff. This is the strength of policy governance.

Cook commented that the October 6 Board meeting began at 6 p.m. He asked the Board if they were interested in continuing the earlier start time. Lewis asked Brenna Isaacs, AEA president, if the earlier start would conflict with their meetings. Isaacs shared that AEA meetings usually end at 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. Carmany also noted that the Board should check with new Board member, JulieMarie Shepherd, before determining a start time. Cook shared that the Board meeting start time would be tabled until December.

VI. CONCLUDING ITEMS

Opportunity for Audience

Correspondence

Next meeting date

The VISTA 2015 Listening Tour Kickoff will be held on October 20, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the theater at Gateway High School.

The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held November 10, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. in the Dr. Edward and Mrs. Patricia Lord Boardroom.

Adjournment

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Cook moved and Lewis seconded for the Board to recess into executive session to discuss a recently disclosed matter involving personnel and individual students pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-(402)(4)(f)(I) and (402)(4)(h).

The regular meeting of the Board of Education adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

President

ATTEST

Secretary