

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #20 (2006-2007)

August 28, 2006

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD POLICY REVISION: SECTION 831 PARENT INVOLVEMENT (SECOND READING)

ASD Goal #3: Ensure public accountability through effective communication with students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board adopt on Second Reading the recommended policy changes for School Board Policy 831, Parent Involvement

PERTINENT FACTS:

The Anchorage School District believes that parent involvement is critical in student success at school. The District, its schools, and parents must work as knowledgeable, respectful partners in the education of our students. We must be intentional about these efforts, make plans for success, and evaluate the efficacy of our efforts together with our parents.

The No Child Left Behind Act also sets forward certain requirements related to parent involvement. One requirement is that the District's parental involvement policy undergoes annual review with the input of parents. To achieve this, principals met with parent groups during the first semester of the 2005-2006 school year to discuss the existing policy. Questions included identification of particularly effective and ineffective parent involvement practices, challenges and barriers to be overcome in order to achieve meaningful involvement, and specific recommended changes to the existing policy. Information from these discussions as well as from discussions with various District advisory groups resulted in recommended policy changes. The Policy subcommittee then discussed the proposed language at numerous meetings making several additional changes in light of ongoing feedback.

The School Board Policy Subcommittee unanimously passed the recommended policy language at its meeting on July 17, 2006. The proposed changes passed on the consent agenda at the August 14, 2006 School Board meeting

CC/RG

Attachments

Prepared by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Approved by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

831 Parent Involvement

Given the key role of parents in promoting effective schooling, the Anchorage School District administration will assist schools in developing comprehensive, continuing programs of parent involvement at all grade levels. The district will provide welcoming opportunities for parent participation in resolving concerns. The major goal is to promote greater student success in all curricular areas by making schools and parents more productive partners in their children's education. To support the mission of Anchorage schools to educate all students for success in life, schools and parents must work as knowledgeable, respectful partners.

a. Definition

The term "parental involvement" means the participation of parents in regular, two-way meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including providing opportunities and support for the following:

1. That parents play an important role in supporting their child's learning and the overall educational program and environment of the school;
2. That parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school and at home; and
3. That parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child. The district shall provide full opportunities for the participation of all parents, including those with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children.

b. Planning

As part of their annual improvement planning, schools and the district, with the involvement of parents, will develop and evaluate comprehensive plans for parent involvement. These plans should be designed to detail ways in which the district or school will:

1. Involve parents in developing district or school improvement plans
2. Offer technical assistance and coordination to help schools plan parent involvement activities to improve student and school academic performance
3. Build school and parent capacities for strong parent involvement
4. Coordinate and integrate parent involvement strategies with other programs
5. Annually evaluate with parents the effectiveness of the policy as implemented in each school and the district in achieving academic improvement. The evaluation must include identification of barriers to parent involvement, especially barriers to parents who are economically disadvantaged, disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or belong to a racial or ethnic minority.

c. School and District Responsibilities

1. Help parents understand state and local assessment of their children's progress and how to monitor progress and work with educators
2. Provide parents with materials and training to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training, use of technology, and enhancing parenting skills
3. Educate teachers, administrators, and other school staff about the value of and methods of reaching out to parents as equal partners
4. To the extent practicable, ensure that information about school and parent programs is in a format and language parents can understand.

d. District Support

The District will support schools and programs in their efforts by doing the following:

1. Publicizing its commitment to parent involvement in the public schools
2. Identifying promising programs and practices related to parent involvement
3. Targeting funds for the development of programs, demonstration projects, and evaluations
4. Providing technical assistance and support to develop effective parent involvement programs by doing the following:
 - A. Sharing information and research on parent involvement and effective practices;
 - B. Developing in-service education programs on cultural awareness and parent involvement for teachers, administrators, and parents that will assist in meeting the individual needs of diverse cultural and linguistic populations; and
 - C. Working with colleges and universities that train teachers and administrators to develop effective pre-service programs in school and family connections.
5. Complying with state and federal parent involvement requirements; and
6. Providing ongoing follow-up and evaluation of the parent involvement efforts as required
7. The superintendent or designee will develop a method for measuring and reporting the results of each school's annual evaluation.

831 Parent Involvement

Given the key role of parents in promoting effective schooling, the Anchorage School District is assisting schools in developing comprehensive, continuing programs of parent involvement at all grade levels. The major goal is to promote greater student success in all curricular areas by making schools and parents more productive partners in their children's education. To support the mission of Anchorage schools to educate all students effectively, schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners.

a. — Comprehensive programs of parent involvement require schools to involve parents at all grade levels in a variety of roles. These programs should be designed to:

- (1) Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support their children's efforts in learning.
- (2) Provide parents with the knowledge of techniques designed to assist their children in learning at home.
- (3) Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.
- (4) Promote clear two-way communication between school and family about school programs and children's progress.
- (5) Involve parents in instructional and support roles at the school.
- (6) Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership in governance, advisory, and advocacy roles.

These six types of involvement are not mutually exclusive and require a coordinated schoolwide effort. Success cannot be the sole responsibility of any single program (for example, Title 1) or group of individuals. Although parents come to the schools with diverse cultures, languages, and needs, they overwhelmingly share the school's commitment to the educational success of their children. The District and schools, in collaboration with parents, must establish and develop programs and practices that enhance parent involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and families.

b. — The District will support schools and programs in their efforts by:

- (1) Publicizing its commitment to parent involvement in the public schools.
- (2) Identifying promising programs and practices related to parent involvement.
- (3) Targeting funds for the development of programs, demonstration projects, and evaluations
- (4) Providing technical assistance and support to develop effective parent involvement programs by:

- a) Disseminating information and research on parent involvement and effective practices;
- b) Developing in-service education programs on cultural awareness and parent involvement for teachers and administrators, that will assist in meeting the individual needs of diverse cultural and linguistic populations; and
- c) Working with colleges and universities that train teachers and administrators to develop effective pre-service programs in school and family connections.

(5) Complying with state and federal parent involvement requirements by:

- a) Incorporating specific program criteria for effective parent involvement into the programs; (procedural manuals will include specific guidelines for parental involvement by program) i.e., Title I, Bilingual Education, Indian Education, Migrant Education, Special Education, the Gifted Program, and Community Education Department; and
- b) Providing ongoing follow-up and evaluation of the parent involvement efforts as required.

Notes: No Child Left Behind requires that parents be given the opportunity to participate in and develop jointly with the district, the NCLB-consolidated grant application outlining how funding will be used to help students meet rigorous academic standards as described in section 1112.

NCLB further requires that the District will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy in improving the academic quality of the Title I schools, including identifying barriers to greater participation by parents, and use the findings to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary, the parental involvement policies.

NCLB section 1116 requires that parents be provided information in an understandable format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents understand, regarding the process of school review and improvement.