

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #107 (2006-2007)

December 4, 2006

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: PRIOR APPROVAL OF DISCRETIONARY GRANT: 21st CENTURY  
ALASKA COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

*ASD Goal: Establish and maintain a supportive and effective learning environment by providing safe, caring, and barrier-free schools; promoting health and wellness; continuing to retain, recruit, and train highly qualified staff; challenging each student academically; maximizing opportunities for lifelong learning; offering reinforcing extracurricular activities; and collaborating with other community agencies to maximize opportunities for lifelong learning.*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve and authorize the Superintendent to apply for a five-year grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development for after-school programs through the 21st Century Alaska Community Learning Centers Program.

PERTINENT FACTS:

This state competition for federal pass-through monies carries forward the 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative under the No Child Left Behind Act. The Anchorage School District has won five grants under federal and state competitions for 21st Century Community Learning Centers at high-needs elementary and middle schools. Currently the District has thirteen sites.

The District's application will propose the extension of the program at four existing elementary sites where state funding will end in July 2007. The four sites selected for continuation funding through this grant are Mountain View, Northwood, Willow Crest, and Taku elementary schools. The application also will propose the addition of Creekside Park Elementary School as a program site.

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program supports school-based centers

that create an enriching, safe, and drug-free environment for extended learning. Centers must operate with the support and involvement of the community. The new competition specifies expanded learning opportunities that assist students in meeting or exceeding state and local standards in core academic subjects, focusing on achievement targets delineated in No Child Left Behind regulations. The competition also calls for additional services for children, such as recreational and cultural activities that foster higher achievement. Programs are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program. Parent education programs will provide parents with skills to assist their children's academic success. Competition guidelines require collaboration with community organizations. Suggested program models call for qualified instructors and activity leaders, a low adult/child ratio, transportation, and nutritious snacks.

The preliminary budget estimate is \$1,000,000 each year for the five-year grant period. This amount will fund site staff and will help support District-level management and coordination for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Grant funds will provide staff development for teachers, paraprofessionals, and community members who deliver programs; added duty for teachers; contractual services; program materials; transportation for students; food; external evaluation; and ancillary items. The budget will not include release time. Staff development takes place out of school. The budget will coordinate federal funds directed to the work of the after-school programs. Local in-kind contributions will include training, principals' time, and use of school facilities.

The FY 2005-2006 evaluation report of Anchorage 21st Century Community Learning Centers by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories focused on teacher and student surveys to measure the mid-term impact of the program on students who attended regularly. Findings showed that academic, attendance, behavioral, and attitudinal improvements were most striking as the programs grew and as children accrued longevity in them. Evaluators suggest that centers continue to build on their successes and continue to focus on approaches that address individual student needs and reinforce retention.

CC/RG/VC/PM/BH/BT

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