

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #27 (2009-10)

August 24, 2009

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM
DISORDERS AWARENESS DAY

ASD Goal: Promoting health and wellness.

PERTINENT FACTS:

Physical and mental birth defects can result from a woman's alcohol consumption during pregnancy. Children born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders may experience brain damage, facial deformities and growth deficits as well as internal organ defects. These individuals may also experience difficulty with learning, attention, memory, and problem solving. Their physical, mental and behavioral disabilities can last a lifetime. According to the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, FASD is the leading known preventable cause of mental retardation and birth defects in the nation.

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services considers alcohol to be Alaska's number one health concern. Alaska has the highest known incidence of FAS in the nation with approximately 1.5 per 1,000 live births diagnosed with FAS and 16.3 identified with FASD.

The Anchorage School District, as a partner in the Anchorage Council on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, recognizes the importance of providing students, teachers and parents with information about FAS and FASD. Through the Special Education Department's STEP Center, disability information and resources are provided to the community via an extensive lending library, Web site, teacher toolkits and new online training about FAS and FASD accessible to all ASD teachers.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day is recognized internationally on September 9—the ninth day of the ninth month each year—to spread the word that

there is no known safe amount of alcohol consumption at any time during the entire nine months of pregnancy.

The administration recommends the Anchorage School Board support the Anchorage Council on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders by adopting a resolution recognizing Sept. 9, 2009 as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day.

CC/HS/RD

Prepared by: Ronnie Dent, Communications Specialist

Approved by: Heather Sawyer, Executive Director, Communications

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL BOARD

ASDR 2009-2010-01

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDERS
AWARENESS DAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2009

WHEREAS, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders are a leading cause of preventable mental retardation and birth defects in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Alaska experiences the nation's highest rates of FAS and FASD and is among the states with the highest prevalence of binge drinking among women of reproductive age; and

WHEREAS, FAS and FASD are not exclusive to any racial or socio-economic group, and cost individuals, families and society untold heartache and billions of dollars in direct costs; and

WHEREAS, the district strives to promote health and wellness, maintaining an extensive lending library of books, DVDs, online training and resources covering a wide range of information on disabilities, including FASD, that is open to students, parents, teachers and community members;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage School Board recognize September 9, 2009 as "Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day" in the Anchorage School District and join the Anchorage Council on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, and others around the world, in promoting awareness that there is no known safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy; and to help families, teachers and the community identify children with FASD characteristics, and to help them learn and live productive lives.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 24th day of August, 2009.

John Steiner, President

Jeff Friedman
Pat Higgins
Crystal Kennedy

Jeannie Mackie
Kathleen Plunkett
Tim Steele

Carol Comeau, Superintendent