

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #56 (2009-2010)

September 28, 2009

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SUMMER SCHOOL UPDATE

ASD Goal: *ASD Goal: Increase student academic achievement to ensure that each group as designated by No Child Left Behind and the Quality Schools Initiative makes adequate yearly progress.*

PERTINENT FACTS:

Anchorage School District Summer School 2009 provided classes and support for over 7,000 high school, middle school, and elementary school students. This year, the District provided several summer school sites, including five elementary schools, three middle schools, five of the comprehensive high schools, KCC and eight of the alternative schools. Following are reports from Linda Carlson, Executive Director, Elementary Education; Leslie Vandergaw, Executive Director, Middle School Education; Mike Henry, Executive Director, High School Education; Jerry Sjolander, Executive Director, Special Education; Christine Garbe, Supervisor, English Language Learners Program; and Doreen Brown, Supervisor, Indian Education Program.

**Elementary Schools**

The 2009 Anchorage School District elementary summer school program registered 1,232 students for classes and was able to place 934 students in 57 classes. Of those students, 880 (94%) completed the thirty-day academic program that addressed the core curricular areas of reading and math. (The completion data showed a significant increase from the 2007-2008 data that showed 83 percent of the students completing the summer school program.)

Elementary summer school provides a natural extension of the regular curriculum for students who are functioning as below proficient or far below proficient on state and/or district assessments. Approximately 18 percent of students served in summer school were also served in special education during

the regular school year. Fifty three of the registered students qualified for the ELL program during the regular school year. Sixty-nine of the students served qualified for the free/reduced lunch program.

Summer school was offered at five geographically diverse sites: Homestead, Chinook, Russian Jack, William Tyson, and Willard Bowman elementary schools. All sites offered a morning program (9-12). A breakfast and lunch program was provided by ASD Food Services at William Tyson, Chinook, and Russian Jack Elementary Schools.

Title I funded transportation from all Title I school sites to Tyson, Chinook, Russian Jack and Bowman Elementary schools.

The Multi-Sensory Instruction (MSI) summer school program was coordinated by Jan Maki, MSI specialist at Russian Jack Elementary.

### Curriculum

The Houghton Mifflin reading curriculum was used in kindergarten. The goal of kindergarten instruction is to assist students to master letter names and sounds and to read and write grade level sight words.

In the first through sixth grades, the "Early and Soar to Success" curriculum was used for reading. This is a guided reading program that aligns with the Houghton-Mifflin reading curriculum and has writing and comprehension skills infused into daily instruction.

"Fast ForWord" was used at all sites in combination with the elementary guided reading program at specified grade levels (first/second at Homestead, second at William Tyson and Russian Jack and first at Chinook and Willard Bowman). "Fast ForWord" is computer-assisted instruction that builds prerequisite reading skills in students who lack those basic building blocks.

Additionally, "Lexia" was used in grades K-6 in combination with the guided reading program at all sites. Lexia is a computer-based program that provides students with explicit practice in learning phonemic sounds and phonics. Lexia supports our core reading program and is aligned with Houghton-Mifflin.

In math, the "Summer Success Math" program addresses both computation and problem solving and aligns with state and district grade level expectations for the first through sixth grades.

“Skills Tutor” was also used to support math and reading instruction at this year’s summer school program. This was delivered online and was used as a one-on-one tutoring resource. Nearly 8,400 activities were completed using Skills Tutor.

### Reading- Parent Involvement Workshops

Jane Lister and Ann McLain, district reading specialists, offered parent support workshops during the summer school program. In total, 51 parents attended the five different morning workshops. Mrs. Lister and Mrs. McLain also assisted in providing the literacy training for summer school certificated and classified staff members.

The workshops focused on providing resources and strategies for parents to support literacy development at home. This content emphasis included the five core areas of literacy from the National Reading Panel: vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, phonics, and phonemic awareness. Mrs. Lister shared multi-sensory approaches such as literacy games and manipulatives to maintain the child’s interest and engagement with the literacy activities. Examples of activities were modeled for parents and a variety of high frequency vocabulary words and trade books were provided for the parents to select and use at home to support independent reading at no additional cost.

### Math- Parent Involvement Workshops

Mary Murphy, district math curriculum specialist, offered parent support workshops to assist parents in helping their children with math learning activities at home. In total, five parent training sessions were held at each of the summer school sites in the morning (9-11:30) and 20 parents attended. The majority of parent workshop time was spent teaching math games that address key mathematical concepts for all grade levels to facilitate playing the games at home.

Ms. Murphy also provided math training for summer school certificated and classified staff members. The two-hour workshop focused primarily on the “Summer Success” program. Ms. Murphy guided participants through a virtual tour of the ASD web site so that participants could see available district resources, including the ASD performance standards and grade level expectations.

### Student Achievement - Reading

In kindergarten, a pre/post assessment of letter names and sounds was used to determine student growth. In first and second grades, letters and letter sounds assessments and the San Diego Quick (an assessment in which students read letters and words) were used to determine student growth.

Kindergarten	All students achieved gains. Specifically, 57 percent of students achieved 100 percent identification of letter names (43 percent increase from pre assessment) and 58 percent of students achieved 100 percent identification of letter sounds (52 percent increase from pre assessment).
Grade 1	Average growth = over one year's growth (1.16)
Grade 2	Average growth = one and one fourth year's growth (1.25)

The Gates-MacGinitie reading assessment (a standardized, norm-referenced assessment) was used to measure progress of students in grades three through six. As measured by the Gates-MacGinitie, 53 percent of the students who completed summer school made gains in reading vocabulary and 67 percent of the students made gains in reading comprehension.

In spelling, 82 percent of students in grades one through six cumulatively demonstrated an increase in spelling accuracy. The average increase was 11 percent when comparing pre/post assessments.

### Student Achievement - Math

A curriculum-based assessment from the "Summer Success" math curriculum was used to measure student growth. In grades one through six cumulatively, 95 percent of students achieved gains. The overall average increase was 22 percent when comparing pre/post assessments.

By grade level in math the following results were achieved:

Grade 1	100% of students achieved gains (25% average increase)
Grade 2	90% of students achieved gains (19% average increase)
Grade 3	90% of students achieved gains (18% average increase)
Grade 4	95% of students achieved gains (18% average increase)
Grade 5	100% of students achieved gains (25% average increase)
Grade 6	96% of students achieved gains (26% average increase)

### Parent Survey Information

Parents were surveyed for their feedback about the summer school program. The surveys provide information to elementary education for future planning.

Of the 392 parents who responded to the survey, 93-98 percent strongly agreed that their child's summer school experience was a good one (97.9%), that the school was welcoming (96%), that their child felt safe at summer school (97%), that summer school helped their child learn basic skills from a knowledgeable teacher (96.3%), and that they would recommend summer school to other parents (93%).

### **Middle Schools**

The 2009 middle level summer school program was designed to give students a chance to brush up on basic skills. The TICKET FOR SUCCESS! middle school summer Skill-Building Program included:

- Three summer school sites: Begich, Gruening, and Hanshew
- Five-week program
- Early release school day (8:15 - 12:15)
- Students organized on teams
- All students enrolled in reading, writing, and math classes
- Extended instructional class periods (75-minutes)
- Curricula resources different from the regular school year
- ELL reading class at the Newcomer's Center (geared toward students with beginning and intermediate English language proficiency)
- People Mover bus passes provided to families needing transportation assistance
- Free community breakfast/lunch sponsored at Begich
- Free S.O.L.A.R. program (Summer and Outdoor Learning Recreation) for Begich students coordinated through Anchorage Parks and Recreation

### **Curriculum/Training**

Summer school remedial classes were offered to help students brush up on the basic skills of reading, writing, and math. Strong curricula targeting state standards were used. Curricula resources differed from the regular school year to ensure students had a fresh approach to remediate gaps in learning. A standardized curriculum was taught at each summer school site. Teachers were expected to carefully follow the daily pacing guides. Teachers were also required to attend a full day of training in subject specific curriculum.

### **Organization**

Although traditionally a full-day summer program, an early release day was piloted at all sites. Students attended three-fourths of a school day. The remediation program was organized around a team approach. A team consisted

of a reading, writing, and math teacher. Extended instructional time, 75 minute class periods, allowed for teachers and students to drill deeper into skill development without interruption. Reduced class sizes of 15-20 students provided teachers the additional opportunity to differentiate instruction. Special education collaborators were at each site making accommodations as necessary.

### Team Planning Time

Organizing the summer school program using a team structure resulted in a daily, 45-minute team planning period for teachers. A major focus of this team planning time was devoted to responding to student writing and providing timely, personal feedback. All subject area teachers were trained in how to respond constructively to student writers. Teachers gave written feedback to students in an effort to develop stronger connections to them as learners and to deepen relationships. With careful planning, teachers rotated the student writing they were responsible for so that by the end of the summer, students had received feedback from all of their teachers.

Two additional staff development opportunities were provided as a result of the team planning time. Subject-area teachers at Begich, Hanshew and Gruening were required to attend 45-minute curriculum discussions during the second and fourth weeks of the program. Principal-designated teacher leaders and ASD support staff facilitated the subject area discussions. Principals were an integral part of these discussions, too.

### Technology

The technology instructional focus for the summer program was in the area of writing. All teachers used MyAccess, a computerized writing program. This supplemented the traditional six trait curriculum. Teachers were required to attend a half-day of training prior to the start of the summer program to increase their knowledge about MyAccess.

Zangle was piloted with summer school staff. Teachers received two hours of training prior to the start of the summer school program. Zangle was used to record daily attendance and for grades.

### Enrollment

School	Number of Students Completing Program
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Begich	<b>188</b>
Gruening	<b>105</b>
Hanshew	<b>182</b>
TOTAL	<b>475</b>

## Student Achievement Results

Overall, students demonstrated increased achievement in math at all grade levels. In reading, students demonstrated increased achievement at both sixth and seventh grade. There was no change in reading for students in eighth grade.

### *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test*

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Vocabulary Pretest</i>	<i>Vocabulary Posttest</i>	<i>Comprehension Pretest</i>	<i>Comprehension Posttest</i>	<i>Total Pretest</i>	<i>Total Posttest</i>
6th	39	42	36	38	36	40
7th	47	51	43	45	43	47
8th	48	49	45	41	44	44

(NCE = Normal Curve Equivalent, 50 is average)

### *AGS Math-Level Indicator*

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Math Pretest</i>	<i>Math Posttest</i>
6th	20%	32%
7th	34%	48%
8th	32%	35%

(PR = Percentile Rank)

## Survey Results

Parent surveys were distributed the last week of summer school. Surveys provide information to middle school education for future planning.

Of the parents surveyed, 77 to 79 percent felt strongly or very strongly that their student was more confident in reading, writing and math skills as a result of attending summer school. Eighty-two percent felt the length of the program was just right and 92 percent felt the length of the school day was just right.

## Future Planning

Middle School Education would like to thank the school board for its summer funding, which provided students extended year options for learning. Summer school is popular for families and increased student achievement is a direct result. The middle schools would like to maintain their current program in the future and will expand as funding allows.

## High Schools

During the summer of 2009, 5,114 high school students attended classes and earned 6,901 semester credits. Registration for summer school 2009 began in April and was completed online by counselors at the home schools. Students from the eight comprehensive high schools, as well as students from the alternative programs and charter schools, had an opportunity to register for the 2009 summer school.

A major function of the high school division summer school program is to provide prescriptive remediation and credit recovery opportunities for students. But, again this summer, courses were offered to all students during summer school. Students who wanted to get ahead, students wishing to provide flexibility in their academic schedules and students who just wanted to go to summer school were encouraged to take a class.

The regular summer school session of 26 days was held at KCC, Bartlett, Chugiak, East, Dimond, and West high schools. The number of students who attended the regular session totaled 3,859.

MyHigh had an online enrollment of 372 students for the summer session. Most of the enrollment was in Alaska Studies and Economics courses. Teachers and students both completed their work over a period of 35 days, with 24 hour/day access. The online summer program is one of the fastest growing.

In addition to the regular session, summer programs were conducted at each of the alternative schools. Students were able to continue their progress toward graduation without leaving their own program. The number of students that were served at the alternative schools was 395.

### **2009 High School Summer School Enrollment Data**

**10 Day Extended Year** - designed for students in the comprehensive high schools who needed more time to pass a course. 9th grade students were the target group for this program. All students in the 10 day extended year were able to complete this program in time to enroll in the regular summer school session.

Bartlett	42
Chugiak	38
Dimond	51
Eagle River	37
East	101
Service	49
South	63
West	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>444</b>

**Alternative School Mini Summer Session** - designed for students in the alternative high schools who want to earn additional credit in the summer. Students were able to stay at their home alternative school and continue progress toward graduation. The Mini Sessions ran from the last day of school until June 27.

AVAIL	11
COHO	16
Continuation	9
Crossroads	35
MYC (28 days)	123
SAVE I	105
SAVE II Benson	62
Search	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>395</b>

**Regular Summer School** - Credit recovery, original course attempt and online courses for students who were interested in taking the 5 week class.

Bartlett	408
MyHigh Online	372
Chugiak	337
East	1,000
KCC	308
Dimond	850
West	554
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,859</b>

**Other** - Credit By Choice programs for high school credit.

CITC	112
Gifted Mentor	25
Parks Program	20
Native Mentors	15
Other CBC	132
Transition	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>416</b>

		Year	Total Number of Students	Credits Earned
10 Day Extended Year	444			
Alternative School Mini Summer Session	395			
Regular Summer School	3,859	2009	5,114	6,901
Other CBC Summer School	416	2008	4,422	6,358
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,114</b>	2007	4,159	5,998
		2006	2,917	4,694
		2005	2,264	3,259
		2004	1,861	2,521

## Extended School Year

Some students who receive special education services qualify for Extended School Year (ESY) services as part of their Individual Education Program (IEP) defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). ESY services provide a different focus from general summer school programs. The goal of an ESY program is to assist children with disabilities with the emergence, maintenance, or critical generalization of specific IEP objectives learned the year preceding the ESY. These may include goals related to self-sufficiency, behavior, socialization, communication, or academics.

Each year a large number of special education students choose to participate in the general education summer school programs of the district. This participation was not prescribed in the IEPs of the students, yet they received prescriptive academic support beyond the requirements of the IEP. Students perform well in these summer classes which offer prescriptive instruction in a single content area for a concentrated timeframe.

The ESY and summer services provided to students with disabilities by the Special Education Division during the summer of 2009 included:

### Pre-School and Elementary Extended School Year (ESY) services

Of students with disabilities found eligible for ESY services in preschool through elementary grades, 292 students registered for services this summer, and 262 of those students actually participated. Site-based services were offered at Rogers Park Elementary, and 205 students participated over a period of seven weeks of the summer. Twenty-six students received itinerant services at their homes or in community locations. Thirty-one students participated in ESY services at Mt. Iliamna.

### Kindergarten Transition Summer School Program

ECE Special Education established a transition program for preschool students with disabilities enrolling in kindergarten in the fall of 2009. Two classes at Nunaka Valley Elementary served students in morning (9-11:30) and afternoon (1-3:30) sessions per week. Seventeen students registered for the program, and 15 students attended with an average attendance rate of 85 percent.

### Summer Reading Clinic

Twenty students participated in a Lindamood Bell reading clinic for three days a week for six weeks. Individual student progress was mapped through pre-test

and post-test on several standardized measures including the Word Attack Subtest of the Woodcock Johnson Reading Test, Test of Written Spelling, and Ekwall/Shanker Oral Reading Passages. On the average, students demonstrated significant gains on each test.

### Secondary Special Education Extended School Year Services

Secondary Education provided Extended School Year (ESY) services to 97 students with disabilities in two different locations. ESY and credit recovery programs served elementary, middle school, and high school students at Whaley School. Students of secondary Life Skills 1, Life Skills 2, and Autism classrooms received services across the street at the Trust Authority Building (in the ACE/ACT classrooms). The programs were integrated sharing nursing, related services, intervention coaches, counseling, administrative, and all other supports.

Most of the Whaley students enrolled were eligible for the ESY program due to regression/recoupment issues. The requirement of the program was to maintain their level of functioning in the various identified areas of need, not necessarily to increase their ability. Even as such, many of the students demonstrated growth throughout the summer months. Programs used to support the students during their summer school sessions included Read 180, Fast Forward, TransMath, Touch Math, Why Try?, as well as other various curriculum adopted by ASD and teacher made materials.

Each student in classes at the Trust Authority came with his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to be implemented during the period of time they were in the program, and included academic content, life skills goals, and behavioral supports. The specific curriculum for each student was defined by that individual's IEP and was implemented to meet that student's educational needs, whether academically or behaviorally. Attendance for students enrolled in the life skills; autism and elementary ESY programs were consistent across the weeks.

The Whaley School students were divided between two sessions, morning and afternoon for two hours and 45 minutes, three days a week for six weeks. Approximately 70 percent of the students attended more than half the time, and approximately 50 percent attended three quarters or more. A significant decrease in attendance occurred following the week-long break in July. It is presumed that extremely favorable weather and an increase in student illness were significant factors in the marked decrease in student attendance during the second session of ESY.

## English Language Learner Summer School

### Elementary

During the summer of 2009, an Immigrant Grant provided the opportunity for English Language Learner Summer School. Classes were held at two locations, William Tyson Elementary and Russian Jack Elementary. Russian Jack Elementary had one ELL teacher, with students in first grade through fifth grade representing seven different countries. Nine students attended Russian Jack's ELL classroom, while thirty eight students representing at least thirteen different countries attended classes at William Tyson Elementary School. William Tyson Elementary had students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade with three teachers and three tutors. Summer school was the perfect opportunity for students identified as English Language Learners who were new to the country to practice language in an environment where the students felt safe taking risks with language. Students gained confidence and experience in oral language skills, as well as reading and writing skills. Students were placed in classes by English Language Proficiency level and lessons were tailored to the language needs of the students.

Curriculum was designed by the teachers to focus on language needs while incorporating life experiences relevant to particular students. The Carousel of Idea program was used with monolingual students. Two classes used Rigby materials as part of the curriculum. Given more time and resources the ELL department would be able to research various materials to be used as a self-contained summer school curriculum. The majority of materials created for English Language Learners is not designed for such a short time period. Because of this, summer school staff used a variety of materials available through the ELL department. These materials focused on language acquisition, reading and writing for ELLs. Students at William Tyson and Russian Jack used Lexia.

### Summary

The students displayed an overwhelming enthusiasm for summer school experiences. Students expressed a sincere appreciation for the opportunity to improve English Language skills. Many students requested more time at school in the form of longer days, as well as a genuine desire to continue attending classes when summer school came to an end. This clearly demonstrates the importance these students place on the development and improvement of English language skills.

## Middle and High School

Newcomers' Center Summer School focused on reading. Two ELL teachers served 25 students. One class consisted of 11 students in grades seven and eight. The second class contained 14 students in grades nine - twelve. Materials used included High Point Basics, which is a curriculum used to accelerate reading comprehension, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary and writing conventions. Achieve 300 was also used. This is a web-based program which differentiates high interest news articles at the students' reading level, while also working on reading comprehension, vocabulary and writing proficiency. Students also were able to take field trips to local libraries and bookstores to explore different types of books interesting to students.

Assessment included the High Point Pre and Posttest. All students made gains on this test ranging from a 5 percent gain to 60 percent gain with the average gain being 22 percent.

Benefits of Newcomers' Summer School include providing additional instruction in reading while focusing on the specific needs of individual students. The classes also were able to strengthen basic skills necessary for students who enter the school system late.

## Parent Component

Through the Immigrant Grant the ELL Department was also able to provide parent classes at the Newcomers' Center, which focused on learning English, helping students at home as well as a literacy component. Eleven parents consistently attended the parent classes. Classes were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays from June until mid July. Parents also used Achieve 3000.

## Title VII Indian Education

The Indian Education division delivered a wide variety of opportunities to engage Native Youth in academic, social and cultural enrichment activities: the Summer Enrichment Program, the Summer Intern Program, the Walk and Write program, and the Denali National Park: The Untold Stories Media Project.

The Summer Enrichment Program served 130 students in first grade through eighth grade for five weeks, with a wait-list of 200 students. The program offered three Alaska Native languages and cultural enrichment activities. In addition, there was direct instruction for reading, math, writing, music, and

physical education. Each instructor used and prepared culturally relevant materials and curriculum. Bus transportation was provided from six sites throughout the Anchorage area and a hot lunch was served each day.

The results of a parent survey of the Enrichment Program were very favorable. Most parents rated the overall program as above average. Parents also rated the Alaska Native language instruction as the most beneficial part of the program, while expressing strong appreciation for the other components.

The Summer Intern Program coincides with the Summer Enrichment Program. Eight high school students were hired to work at the Summer Enrichment Program as teacher aides. Many of the interns have an interest in pursuing a degree in education, so this position can be very rewarding for them. Each of the interns also has an option to earn a .5 high school elective credit.

During the July *Denali National Park: The Untold Stories Media Project*, seven Native high school students spent three days at a field camp in the Denali backcountry. Students hiked and explored the park with a Park Ranger, produced a digital story about the experience, participated in an archeological dig, and had the option of earning a .5 high school elective credit. In an exciting development, students interviewed Ken Burns about his upcoming PBS documentary series, "The National Parks: America's Best Idea". The students' digital story will become part of an interactive exhibit at Denali National Park.

The Walk and Write Program enticed 19 middle school students the first week and 10 high school students the second week. Students were involved in nature hikes and writing at a variety of locations in and around the Anchorage area: Kincaid Park, Johnson Trail, Arctic Valley, Byron Glacier and Portage Creek. Technology was used to broaden the students' depth of knowledge before, during and after each excursion.

For example, while learning about glaciers, students were exposed to multiple sources of information. Students used iPods on the bus rides to and from the site. The iPods contained films, primary and secondary documents, and Dena'ina traditional oral histories about glaciers. Then, for the writing component, scientific field writing, journal writing, and feedback were completed prior to, during and after the hike. While hiking the Trail of Blue Ice to Byron Glacier, experiential learning was emphasized by staff and park personnel. This included a search for ice worms living in the glacier. Rafting Portage Creek the following day further enhanced the students' knowledge of glaciers. This comprehensive approach was used during all of the other excursions as well.

CC/EG/LC/LV/MH/JS/CG/DB

Prepared by: Linda Carlson, Executive Director, Elementary Education  
Leslie Vandergaw, Executive Director, Middle School Education  
Mike Henry, Executive Director, High School Education  
Jerry Sjolander, Executive Director, Special Education  
Christine Garbe, Supervisor, English Language Learners  
Doreen Brown, Supervisor, Indian Education

Approved by: Ed Graff, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction