

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #19 (1999-2000)

August 9, 1999

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: FOURTH QUARTER AND END OF 1998-99 SCHOOL YEAR  
SUSPENSION/WEAPONS/EXPULSION REPORT

PERTINENT FACTS :

Information regarding suspensions and expulsions for various offenses, including weapons, is collected from the elementary, middle, and high schools each quarter. This information, as well as year-end summaries by school and category for each level for the 1998-99, is shown in the narrative information below and in Attachments A through L.

The 1998-99 school year should again be characterized as a year where the schools, the Administration, and the School Board continued to aggressively pursue the School Board's adopted goal of "Establishing a supportive learning environment by providing safe and caring schools which are barrier free, by promoting health and wellness, and by collaborating with other community agencies where appropriate." This goal has been supported by the employees at each school as well as by the students and their parents and the business and general community. The attached discipline/suspension reports from the elementary, middle, and high schools show the statistics for the recently completed school year and the fourth quarter and the schools' efforts to address this important goal.

It should be noted that the concerted efforts of the elementary, middle, and high school principals, assistant principals, deans, interns, their teaching and support staffs, their students, and their parents have resulted in schools with strong, yet fair, disciplinary standards and practices. There is a growing recognition on the part of everyone that parents and school staff must communicate more frequently and earlier when students are showing evidence of challenging the accepting rules and policies of the school and the District. The Instructional Division made this a priority goal for the 1998-99 school year; this will continue into 1999-2000.

**It is significant to note that there were no firearm offenses during the second and third quarter of 1998-99 at any level.**

**Fourth Quarter Expulsions**

A total of 12 middle school and 23 high school students were expelled by the School Board during the fourth quarter for a total of 35; no elementary students were expelled. Of these middle school expulsions, five were for weapons (knife, hammer, pellet gun), three were for threats, one for sexual harassment, one for assault, and two for second drug/alcohol offenses. High school students were expelled for the following reasons: weapons (2), firearms (2), drug/alcohol (13), threats (2), and bomb threats (4)

**Expulsions During 1998-99**

A total of 100 middle school and high school students were expelled by School Board action during the 1998-99 school year for various reasons; there were no elementary students expelled. One middle school age student who had a firearm on a high school campus at the end of the 1997-98 school year was expelled as a precaution at the beginning of the 1998-99 school year. This student is not reflected in the total of the 100 students expelled during the 1998-99 school year. The high school level had 72 expulsion recommendations brought to the School Board for drug/alcohol, weapons, or dangerous activities, such as assaults, but only 71 were expelled (40 for drug/alcohol violations and 31 for violence or weapons-related offenses). There are two recommendations for expulsion at the middle level and seven at the high school level that are currently pending. These will be taken to the School Board in August, prior to the beginning of the 1999-2000 school year.

Ten recommendations for expulsion from middle schools were not brought forward due to a finding of causality of the IEP team. The following incidents and causality are reflected below:

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Disability</u>	<u>School</u>
Assault/staff	(1) Other Health Impaired	Clark
Dangerous Acts	(2) Emotionally Disturbed	Wendler, Clark
Drug/Alcohol Sale	(1) Mentally Retarded	Clark
Threats/staff	(1) Other Health Impaired	Clark
	(1) Emotionally Disturbed	Romig
Weapons	(1) Learning Disabled	Mears
	(1) Emotionally Disturbed	Hanshew
Threats/Assault	(2) Emotionally Disturbed	Wendler

Three high school students who had been found to have causality were brought forward to the first level of appeal. Upon determining that causality had been found, it was decided not to bring these forward to the School Board. There was a limited amount of information on causality at the high school level last year. A method for tracking this

information will be in place for the 1999-2000 school year. The three cases for which there is any information for the 1998-99 school year are as follows:

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Disability</u>	<u>School</u>
Second Drug/Alcohol	Emotionally Disturbed	Dimond
Second Drug/Alcohol	Unknown	Chugiak
Second Drug/Alcohol	Unknown	Service

### **Discipline Reports**

The elementary, middle school, and high school discipline summaries follow; these are show for fourth quarter and for the entire school year. Fourth quarter information by school and category for elementary schools is shown on Attachments A and B; elementary cumulative information is shown on Attachments C and D; middle school fourth quarter information by school and category is shown on Attachments E and F; middle school cumulative information is shown on Attachments G and H; high school fourth quarter information by school and category is shown on Attachments I and J; and high school cumulative information is shown on Attachments K and L.

### **Elementary Schools**

The attached suspension reports for the 1998-99 school year (cumulative, reasons for suspension, and suspensions for the fourth quarter) are attached for your information (Attachments A-D). We have also provided you with a comparison between the fourth quarters of the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years on weapons, drugs and alcohol, gang-related, and racially-motivated incidents. There were no expulsions of elementary students during the 1998-99 school year.

Suspensions during the fourth quarter decreased eight percent from the fourth quarter of 1997-98; 277 for 1998-99, 298 for 1997-98. There were six weapons incidents during the fourth quarter compared to 18 during 1997-98. There were zero drug and alcohol suspensions for the fourth quarter compared to 19 during 1997-98. There was one gang-related incident reported this quarter compared to zero in 1997-98. There was one racially motivated incident reported during the fourth quarter of 1998-99; one was reported for 1997-98. Three police contacts were made during the fourth quarter in elementary schools.

### **Middle Schools**

The total number of suspensions for the fourth quarter of the 1998-99 school year for grades 6 (Mirror Lake only), 7 and 8 was 654 suspension for all categories. During the same period in 1997-98 there were 682 suspensions and in 1996-97, 568 suspensions.

This is a 14.7 percent reduction from the third quarter of 1998-99. Ninety-five (95) of the suspensions were repeaters. Of the suspensions, 175 were girls and 479 were boys.

### **Middle School Suspensions**

#### **Quarterly Summary**

<b><u>Offense</u></b>	<b><u>Quarter 1</u></b>	<b><u>Quarter 2</u></b>	<b><u>Quarter 3</u></b>	<b><u>Quarter 4</u></b>
Fighting	116	166	182	142
Weapons	8	1	12	8
Firearms	0	0	0	0
Drugs/Alcohol	22	64	92	62
Profanity	63	64	92	62
Other	298	358	389	380
Total All Categories	507	653	767	654

The reduction from third to fourth quarter reflects reductions in the areas of fighting, a decrease of 22 percent representing a reduction of 40 from 182 to 142; and profanity, a decrease of 32.6 percent representing a reduction of 30 suspensions from 92 to 62.

### **Middle School Suspensions**

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Quarter-Yearly Comparison**

<b><u>Offense</u></b>	<b><u>1996-97</u></b>	<b><u>1997-98</u></b>	<b><u>1998-99</u></b>
Fighting	130	120	142
Weapons	2	6	8
Firearms	1	0	0
Drugs/Alcohol	11	29	14
Profanity	80	62	
Other	424	447	428
Total All Categories	568	682	654

A comparison of the fourth quarter suspensions for the 1998-99, 1997-98, and 1996-97 school years show a decrease in the total number of suspensions during the fourth quarter of 1998-99. Fighting suspensions increased by 18.3 percent, from 120 to 142. However, profanity suspensions decreased by 22.5 percent from

80 to 62, and drug/alcohol suspensions decreased by 51.7 percent from 29 to 14. Most other categories showed little change. Once again, the decrease in drug/alcohol suspensions is of special note.

To address the issue of suspensions for fighting, all middle schools participated in an initiative to utilize CASE manager addenda to provide additional violence prevention programs for students. One very promising program was a Saturday School that was set up in lieu of suspension for certain offenses at Clark Middle School. The students who attended were introduced to RCCP training, refusal skills, and other programs to assist them in avoiding violence. One of Clark's counselors participated in and supervised the program. Through the use of the Saturday School Program, Clark was able to reduce its overall suspension rate by 32 percent.

### Middle School Suspensions

#### Cumulative Yearly Analysis

#### Year-to-Year Comparison

<u>Offense</u>	<b>1996-97 (7,8)</b>	<b>1997-98 (7,8,6 <u>Mirror Lk.</u>)</b>	<b>1998-99 (7,8,6 <u>Mirror Lk.</u>)</b>
Fighting	593	585	607
Weapons	12	21	30
Firearms	3	0	0
Drugs/Alcohol	80	106	63
Profanity	237	285	281
Other	1,473	1,294	1,599
Total All Categories	2,398	2,291	2,580

The total number of suspensions for the 1998-99 school year is 2,580. This is an increase of 12.6 percent or 289 suspensions from the 1997-98 total of 2,291. A large portion of the change was a result of the reinstatement of the truancy

policy. There were nine suspensions for truancy during 1997-98 and 84 suspensions for truancy in 1998-99. Other increases included 22 additional suspensions for fighting from 585 to 607; 30 additional suspensions for tardies from 31 to 61; and 27 additional suspensions for failing to identify or giving a false identity from 12 to 39. Very encouraging is the total year decrease in suspensions for drug/alcohol violations of 40.6 percent from 106 to 63. The increase in the total number of suspensions can be partly attributed to the additional safety/security home school coordinators who were placed in each middle school this year. In addition, all staff has responded with a heightened sensitivity to violence, violence-related activities, and harassment.

### **Middle School Repeaters**

#### **Year-to-Year Comparison**

	<u><b>1996/97</b></u>	<u><b>1997/98</b></u>	<u><b>1998/99</b></u>
4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	88	110	95
Total Year	499	499	550

Of interest, is the number of individuals suspended during the 1998-99 school year as compared with the 1997-98 Year. The number of students who had more than one suspension during the 1998-99 school year was 95 for the fourth quarter and 550 for the year. Taking into account the number of repeaters, 1,360 individuals were suspended during the 1998-99 school year. This represents a decrease of 568 students or 29.5 percent from 1,928 individuals suspended in 1997-98.

During the 1999-2000 school year, middle schools will be exploring programs in violence and harassment prevention. By fully utilizing the middle school team configuration, the effectiveness of intervention programs in areas such as reduction of bullying, school climate, and student anxiety can be assessed. Major school-wide RCCP initiatives supported through the national RCCP office at both Wendler and Clark Middle Schools are already being planned as part of this initiative.

## **Middle School Expulsions**

### **1998-99 Quarterly Comparison**

There were 12 expulsions from middle schools during the fourth quarter of 1998-99. A total of 29 expulsions from middle schools took place during the school year.

Quarter	<u>1<sup>st</sup></u>	<u>2<sup>nd</sup></u>	<u>3<sup>rd</sup></u>	<u>4<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>Total</u>
Number	5	6	6	12	29

The categories for which students were expelled during the fourth quarter are shown below:

## **Middle School Expulsions**

### **1996/97, 1997/98, 1998/99 Yearly Comparison**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Drug/ Alcohol</u>	<u>Fighting/ Assault</u>	<u>Weapons/ Firearms</u>	<u>Other</u>
1996-97	22	8	6	4	4
1997-98	18	4	5	7	2
1998-99	29	7	6	9	7

Additionally one (1) non-student of middle school age, who had a firearm on a high school campus at the end of the 1997-98 school year, was expelled as a precaution at the beginning of 1998-99. This incident is not reflected on the numbers on the chart.

Two recommendations for expulsions are pending. One has been appealed to the Board. No gun incidents occurred in middle schools during the 1998-99 school year.

There was one (1) expulsion at Polaris (K-12) School during the 1998-99 school year. The expulsion was for a second drug/alcohol violation, by a junior, and occurred during fourth quarter.

### **High Schools**

During the 1998-99 school year, the total number of fourth quarter suspensions for grades 9 through 12 is 609. This compares to 693 suspensions for third quarter this year, and represents a drop of 12.1 percent for the quarter.

#### **Quarterly Summary**

##### **1998-99 School Year**

Qtr.	Total	Drugs/ Alcohol	Fighting Assault	Weapons	Firearms	Other
1	560	91	137	9	2	321
2	564	61	132	15	0	356
3	693	64	128	13	0	491
4	609	72	98	15	4	420

Compared to last year, the total number of suspensions for high schools fourth quarter of 1998-99 are down 6.7 percent from 653 to 609. There was no change in the number of weapons violations, which remains at 15. There was an increase in firearm violations from 1 to 4 during the fourth quarter of the 1998-99 school year.

#### **Fourth Quarter Comparison**

##### **1996-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99 School Years**

Year	Total	Drugs/ Alcohol	Fighting Assault	Weapons	Firearms	Other
1996-97	569	73	97	4	2	393
1997-98	653	76	85	15	1	476
1998-99	609	72	98	15	4	420

## 1998-99 School Year Comparison

The total number of suspensions for the year is 2,388 compared to 2,890 for the 1997-98 school year. Only major area of increase for suspensions was truancy (21 to 115). Areas that showed a significant decrease were: drugs/alcohol (361 to 287), weapons (75 to 50), dangerous actions/materials (119 to 84), willful disobedience (267 to 179), and false witness/lying (166 to 39). Fighting/assault decreased (473 to 470). Firearm incidents at the high school level were stable with six last year and six this year (two are pending appeal to the Board in August).

### **Year Comparison**

#### **1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 School Years**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Drugs/ Alcohol</u>	<u>Fighting Assault</u>	<u>Weapons</u>	<u>Firearms</u>	<u>Other</u>
1996-97	2,520	326	512	50	6	1,626
1997-98	2,890	418	473	75	6	1,918
1998-99	2,388	287	470	50	6	1,575

The number of students who had more than one suspension during the year was 114 for fourth quarter and 575 for the year as a whole. This compares with 81 for fourth quarter and 576 repeaters for the entire 1997-98 school year.

BC/CC/AJ/GO/PM

Attachments

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