

**ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
PROFILE OF PERFORMANCE
1999-00**

FACT SHEET

School Goals

- All schools pursued goals focused on improving student achievement.
- All schools reported positive activities directed toward attainment of school goals.
- All schools reported some success in implementing activities directed toward improving achievement and instruction. (See also the Superintendent's End-of-Year Report for 1999-2000 and the Anchorage School Report Cards for 1999-2000 for information on specific program activities undertaken to improve student achievement in Anchorage).

Student Demographic Characteristics

- Almost 49,300 students attended school in Anchorage last year, up almost 1,500 from five years ago.
- The non-Caucasian proportion of the District's student population reached 35 percent, up 5 percent from five years ago.
- The Alaska Natives group is now close to 12 percent of the student population, including 5,950 elementary and secondary students.
- Most students, about 80 percent, stay in the same school for the entire school year. Year-to-year continuity in the same school is lower at 59 percent.
- The number of students from families with income low enough to qualify for free or reduced price lunch in elementary grades reached 8,786. Thirty-one percent (31) of Anchorage elementary students are now eligible for free and reduced price lunch.
- Programs providing for special need students enrolled more than 9,000 students.

- Programs providing for bilingual, migrant, low income, and Native students served more than 14,000 students.

Student Achievement of Norm Referenced Tests

- Norm referenced basic skills test scores continue to exceed the national average. More than 94 percent of Anchorage students in grades 3 through 10 were tested.
- Overall California Achievement Test scores are equal to those for the prior year with an average Total Battery score at the 64th percentile¹.
 - Total Reading scores range from the 57th to 64th percentile.
 - Total Language scores range from the 54th to the 67th percentile.
 - Total Mathematics scores range from the 62nd to the 69th percentile.
 - Total Battery scores range from the 61st to the 66th percentile.
- Anchorage has many more high achieving students than low achieving students in reading, language arts and math at every grade tested.
- Scores for minority students continue to remain well below the District average.
- Test scores for students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunches are lower than the scores of more affluent students.
- Test scores for students who are transient are consistently lower than scores for students who do not move during the school year.
- Scores for students who have some tenure in the District are higher than for students who are in their first or second year in Anchorage.
- Students in schools heavily impacted with poverty and transience have lower scores and lower levels of continuing student growth than schools in more affluent areas with less transience.
- Overall student scores on the California Achievement Tests and other indicators show that Anchorage students continue to perform well above the national average and that most students are meeting ASD Performance Standards. However, students did not meet all of the performance goals set out by the Anchorage School Board.

¹ CAT testing in 1999-2000 included grades 3 through 10. The overall scores for years prior to 1999-2000 included grades 3 – 11.

- There was a 10 percent increase to 69 percent of grade 3 students being classified as Independent Readers by their teachers. CAT reading scores suggest that there are still over 1,000 third grade students who have not yet developed the ability to be an independent reader. The Board goal is for all students to be independent readers by the end of grade 3.
- Continuing students did demonstrate increasing performance in Reading, Language Arts, and Writing but there is not a consistent pattern of increase on every area and at every grade. The Board goals call for increased performance for all students.
- Students maintained their overall score of 51st percentile in spelling, one point over the national average of the 50th percentile. The Board goals call for increased performance in spelling. New Anchorage Spelling Tests were developed and pilot tested.

Student Achievement on Anchorage Assessments

- The initial assessment indicates that teachers would classify 69 percent of district third grade students as independent readers. This is up from 59 percent one year ago. Objective test scores on the IRA are up one and two points on two measures and the same as last year on a third measure.
- Results on the grade 6 Pre-Algebra Placement examination are higher with 23 percent of the students recommended for pre-algebra at grade 7 in 2000-2001. School-to-school differences in the percent recommended range from 2 percent to 63 percent at standard program schools.
- All students in grades 5, 7, and 9 were included in the Anchorage Direct Writing Assessment. Performance is generally good and year-to-year comparisons are imprecise because of annual changes in writing prompts but the number of students meeting district standards was down slightly. Writing Conventions is the weakest area of performance at all three grades.

Student Achievement on College Entrance Exams

- ACT/SAT scores continue to be strong in 1999-2000. The majority of graduating seniors, over 60 percent, take the ACT or SAT.
- ACT and SAT college entrance exam performance is above the national and State of Alaska average in both verbal and mathematics skills.

- College entrance exam scores are notably higher for those students who have completed a core curriculum of at least four years of English and three or more year of each of mathematics, natural science, and social studies.

Student Achievement of High School Grades and Credits

- The average secondary student grade in Anchorage is a “B-“ with 59 percent of the marks earned either “A” or “B.”
- Twenty-two and a half credits are currently required for graduation. High school students on the average earned 5.21 credits in 1999-2000 over a four year period. The Graduation Support Service and Summer School were continued during the 1999-2000 school year to increase student options in earning and making up credit toward graduation.
- Approximately one grade in twelve earned by high school students is an “F”. Mathematics and Science courses are the most difficult courses for students. Twenty-six percent of math and twenty-four percent of the science grades are “Ds” and “Fs”.

Students Attendance and Drop Out Rates

- About 94 percent of all students are in school on the average day. While average attendance varies from school-to-school and grade-to-grade, overall attendance rates are good in Anchorage.
- High School students are absent about five times for each course. There is a strong negative correlation between absences and grades.
- Staff for 1999-2000 report a dropout rate of 2.6 percent. This is a notable decrease over the prior year. American Native students remain about twice as likely to drop out as other students.
- Examination of the four year enrollment pattern for the class of 2000 shows that 12.5 percent may have dropped out over the four years and another 11.5 percent left school between school years without re-enrolling in Anchorage.

Parent, Student, and Staff Attitudes are Positive

- School Report Card Surveys of parents and students were standardized in 1996-97 to provide cross-district information on issues important to all elementary, middle level and secondary schools. Survey results are used in the School Report Card process.

- There are substantial differences in returns between schools. Secondary return rates were generally much lower.
- Parents give the District and their local school high marks when compared with the most recent national Phi Delta Kappa Gallup Poll. Marks are up over last year.
- Anchorage parents give both the schools that their children attend and the teachers of their children grades of “A-.”
- Parent and student attitude was generally positive toward school programs and the emphasis given to academics. There was improvement in parent perceptions of issues related to safety and curriculum.
- Staff are generally satisfied with their jobs and the support they get from supervisors and co-workers in working with parents and students.