

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #143 (2000-2001)

December 11, 2000

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: FIRST QUARTER PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE REPORT

PERTINENT FACTS:

The School Board and the Administration have long supported and encouraged opportunities for parents and teachers to meet to discuss student progress at various times during the school year. In many cases, students have been encouraged to be active participants in these conferences.

The elementary schools have had release time opportunities twice per school year to allow 15 to 20 minute individual parent/teacher or parent/student/teacher conferences at the end of the first and third quarter for many years. The middle schools and high schools began the practice of providing opportunities at the end of the first and third quarters for parents to pick-up their student's report cards and to confer briefly with the student's teacher(s) a few years ago.

These efforts have generally been well-supported by parents and teachers over the years as can be seen in the information provided by each division. In cases where there has been a decrease in participation, the appropriate Instructional Division supervisor will be working with principals and their staffs and PTA or parent group to increase participation during the third quarter of the school year. The District will also attempt to increase employer awareness of the importance of these opportunities so that parents can be released from work to attend these conferences. It is also important for parents to realize that they are always welcome to request a parent/teacher conference to discuss their child's progress at any time of the school year.

Elementary

Twice each year, the elementary schools in Anchorage conduct parent/teacher conferences for the purpose of reporting student progress to parents. These conferences are held at the end of the first and third quarters of each school year.

Conference results for the first quarter for elementary parents and teachers are shown in Attachment A. The following information is a comparison of the last five years' participation rate in these conferences.

	<u>1996-1997</u>	<u>1997-1998</u>	<u>1998-1999</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>
Fall Enrollment	27,404	27,257	27,063	26,577	26,179
District Average	96%	96%	96%	96%	95%

Currently, the teacher schedules individual conferences for the parents of each student in the class. The current ASD/AEA negotiated agreement has a provision to allow telephone conferences in lieu of personal conferences if the principal gives prior approval. This is the 16th year for recording this information.

**Middle School**

Following are the percentages for middle schools' report card pick-up for the first quarter of the 2000-2001 school year:

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>CARDS PICKED UP</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
Central	770	454	59%
Clark	802	379	46%
Goldenview	880	555	63%
Gruening	602	411	69%
Hanshew	878	571	65%
Mears	1,022	657	64%
Mirror Lake	639	402	63%
Polaris	456	456	100%
Romig	840	551	66%
Wendler	945	386	41%

Following are the middle schools' report card pick-up percentages for first quarter this year as compared to the first quarter for the last three years.

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>FALL 2000</b>	<b>FALL 1999</b>	<b>FALL 1998</b>
Central	59	66	55
Clark	46	36	50
Goldenview	63	67	62
Gruening	69	65	64
Hanshew	65	60	60
Mears	64	66	62
Mirror Lake	63	64	57
Polaris	100	100	92
Romig	66	55	53
Wendler	41	60	63

Pick-up percentages for middle schools ranged from 41percent to 69 percent with numbers ranging from 379 to 657. On the date of middle school report card pick-up, it rained and the radio stations broadcast warning of icy conditions. Despite the weather, report card pick-up rates remained relatively the same at most of the middle schools with six of the nine middle schools showing rates above 60 percent. Wendler experienced a drop in participation but that might have been caused by the road conditions at the Northern Lights/Lake Otis intersection. Central and Goldenview had slight decreases, and there was an increase in participation at Hanshew.

Of particular interest, is the increase in parent participation at Romig Middle School from 55 percent to 66 percent. Two of Romig's teams piloted the use of student-led parent/teacher conferences to distribute report cards. Parents and students were given individual appointments at the school. Each student followed a script that assisted him/her to explain the contents of their individual portfolio. Four or five conferences took place at once with the teacher present to answer any questions. If a student's parents could not attend, a counselor or administrator sat in for the parent. In order to accommodate everyone, the team had to schedule times for the conferences in addition to the time set aside for normal report card distribution. The evaluation by parents, students, and teachers, to date, have been very positive. The participation was exceptional; one team had 87 percent participation and the other 83 percent.

Polaris distributes report cards through individual appointments. They had 100 percent participation this year.

### **High School**

High school report card pick-up was held on November 8, 2000, in all area high schools. This effort is intended to facilitate parent/teacher/student communication.

Report cards are made available and teachers are on duty to meet with parents in an afternoon or an evening session. Due to high school teachers being assigned 125-200 individual students, appointments cannot be made in the style of the elementary conferences. Each school's teachers are available in a contiguous area, such as the library or the cafeteria, and parents and staff meet as time permits. Appointments for more extensive dialogue can be made at that time.

Cynthia McCray, Secondary Supervisor (Acting), and Jim Taylor, Executive Director for High Schools (Acting), visited every school site on conference day and were favorably impressed with the cordial, collaborative atmosphere. Parents were observed actively engaged in discussion with nearly every teacher. From random conversations with parents and reports from administrators, counselors, and teachers, the vast majority of those in attendance deem the conferences valuable and informative. Appropriately, many high school students accompany their parents during these visits.

Encouraging parental attendance continues to be both a school and division concern. All sites publicize this opportunity through parent newsletter announcements which start several months in advance, invitations issued at fall open houses, items on school web sites, notations on the activity calendar, and numerous reminders at monthly parent meetings. The High School Parent Advisory group is also asked annually for ideas to increase attendance. Since the present percentages mean that 800 to 1,400 parents are visiting most of the high schools, this event serves as a tremendous outreach for parent group membership drives, booster sales, etc.

High school parent conferences were held the day after the general elections and it is felt this had some impact on the attendance this year. Bartlett High School's attendance remained steady at 43 percent, but most of the high schools were down in attendance, with the decrease ranging from 3-13 percent for the large high schools. The notable exception, however, was West High, whose attendance has commonly been the lowest. This year, it increased by 10 percent. Dr. Bowie and his staff have exerted a concentrated effort over the years to increase their parent attendance.

For the first quarter this school year, report card pick-up for senior high students averaged 47 percent across the District. A chart comparing percentage pick-up rates between First Quarter 1998, First Quarter 1999, and First Quarter 2000 is included below.

Report Card Pick-up Report  
November 1998, 1999, 2000

<u>School</u>	<u>Percent 1st Qtr. 1998</u>	<u>Percent 1st Qtr. 1999</u>	<u>Percent 1st Qtr. 2000</u>
Bartlett	40	43	43
Chugiak	65	66	54
Dimond	50	55	42
East	49	50	46
Service	55	61	58
West	39	28	38

**Charter Schools**

<u>School</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Conferences Completed</u>	<u>Fall 2000 Percentage</u>
Aquarian	235	231	98%
Village	110	108	98%
Walden Pond	176	52	30%
Family Partnership	762	N/A	

(Parents and teachers meet on an "as needed basis" due to the individualized nature of their program.)

CC/PM/JT/GO/PM/mks

Attachment

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