

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #36 (2002-2003)

August 26, 2002

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT AWARD: SMALLER LEARNING  
COMMUNITIES IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board authorize the Superintendent to accept a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Smaller Learning Communities Grant Program, in the amount of \$2,467,066. Funds will enable Anchorage's six comprehensive high schools to create or enhance smaller learning communities.

PERTINENT FACTS:

In FY 2000-20001, the Anchorage School District won a Smaller Learning Communities planning grant from the U.S. Department of Education. A two-year planning effort on the part of the District's six comprehensive high schools, working with instructional support departments, culminated in an implementation grant application in spring 2002. The three-year award will support the schools as they re-design their instructional programs coincidental with school remodels into more personal and integrated learning environments. This systemic initiative is in line with both local and national research in favor of smaller and more focused learning communities within the large institution. The federal objectives are to prevent students in large high schools from "falling through the cracks;" to foster academic achievement for all students; to engage parents and the community in ensuring that students succeed; and to prepare youth for life after high school.

The District's implementation grant goal and objectives address:

- Establishing and sustaining smaller learning communities that can ensure academic success for all students;
- Obtaining higher numbers and proportions of students who score at proficiency levels on the Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Exam;
- Lower rates of course failures and drop-out;

- Increased enrollment and a broader range of students in Advanced Placement courses;
- Improved school learning environments, reflected in changes in suspension and expulsion rates, disciplinary actions, and use of conflict resolution strategies;
- Advisory and mentor systems in the schools;
- Restructuring of curriculum, instruction, and counseling;
- Greater involvement by community partners in student learning and preparation for the future;

These programs are designed to build on and capitalize on initiatives that already are underway in our high schools. Grant funds will lever these, will fuel additional research-based efforts, and will help the school communities keep all students in school and learning to their fullest potential.

The budget consists primarily of personnel costs for project and site coordination; stipends for professional development and program design by teams in the high schools; contracted services for national and local experts and for external project evaluation; equipment and software for technology-based learning; stipends for parent involvement; and teaching and training supplies and materials. Release time at between \$18,000 and \$38,000 per year is for teachers in all six schools to take part in lesson modeling and peer coaching, to attend conferences, and access professional development during the school day. The grant program does not require a local match. Major in-kind commitments include the time of school administrators and central administrative staff, volunteer time and contributions of community partners, and equipment and materials that are part of the schools' programs.

Budget Summary:

	<u>Year One</u> <u>FY 2003</u>	<u>Year Two</u> <u>FY 2004</u>	<u>Year Three</u> <u>FY 2005</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Personnel	\$417,437	\$415,943	\$412,520	\$1,245,900
Fringe Benefits	\$87,931	\$89,169	\$88,250	\$265,350
Travel	\$40,683	\$40,683	\$40,683	\$122,049
Equipment	\$3,261			\$3,261
Supplies	\$16,973	\$18,923	\$19,169	\$55,065
Contractual	\$117,514	\$110,032	\$114,073	\$341,619
Activity/Field Trips	\$3,840	\$3,840	\$3,840	\$11,520
Direct Costs	\$686,639	\$678,590	\$678,535	\$2,044,764
Indirect Costs	\$35,345	\$34,880	\$34,877	\$105,102
Training Stipends	\$100,829	\$109,657	\$106,714	\$317,200
TOTAL	\$823,813	\$823,127	\$820,126	\$2,467,066

CC/JC/MH/ BT

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