

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #183 (2003-2004)

January 12, 2004

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: 2003-2004 ETHNICITY REPORT

PERTINENT FACTS:

Attached are a series of tables and graphs, focusing on the ethnic composition of the Anchorage School District. Data in this report represent membership numbers as of October 22, 2003.

In 1976, 13 percent of Anchorage School District students classified themselves as belonging to an ethnic minority group. Today 43 percent of the students in the District are ethnically diverse school children. Of the ethnic minority population, the Alaska Native/American Indian (13%) category is the largest, followed by the Asian/Pacific Islander (11%), African American/Black (8%), and Hispanic (6%) groups. Since the 1994-95 school year, the fastest growing ethnic population, percentage-wise, has been Asian/Pacific Islander, followed by Hispanic. The Asian/Pacific Islander ethnic group grew by 70 percent and the Hispanic ethnic group grew by 61 percent.

Since last school year, the ethnic minority student population has increased by 2.2% and the White student population has decreased by 2.4%. These changes are shown in the Historical Student Membership Composition graph (chart 2). Looking at student numbers, the White student group decreased by 689 students this year, while the ethnic minority group increased by 474 students.

The largest numerical gain in an ethnic minority category this year, over last year, was "Other," which increased by 422 students. It should be noted that student ethnicity is self-identified. Students are given a list of ethnic categories, and they (or their parents/guardians) choose the category they feel is most appropriate. The "Other" category was established for those students identifying with more than one ethnic category, or for those students who are not comfortable choosing any of the given categories.

Chart 3 shows student ethnicity or race by Program Type. At 52%, Special Services has the largest population of ethnic minorities, followed by Elementary Education at 45%. Ethnic minorities make up 42% of students in the Middle School program. The High School program has the smallest ethnic minority population at 38%, followed by Other Secondary at 40%. The ethnic minority populations at the secondary levels are expected to increase as elementary students move into these levels.

The steady increase in ethnic minority membership appears to be a long-term trend. While White populations rise and fall with the economic climate, the ethnic minority populations continue to grow steadily. The ethnic minority population has increased by 6,863 students since 1994-95. Since the 1999-2000 school year, the gain in ethnic minority students has averaged nearly two percent per year. If this trend continues, the ethnic minority student population is expected to exceed fifty percent of the total student population by the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

Attachments

CC/GV/RA/ODS/rh

Prepared by: Ophelia Dargan-Steed, Demographics Manager
Ray Amsden, Director of Facilities

Approved by: George Vakalis, Assistant Superintendent of Support
Services