

Expect the Best

Anchorage School District 2011 Report to the Community



Elementary school embraces change for success

From the outside, Williwaw Elementary School looks like a typical Title I school in Anchorage, Alaska. On the inside, it's much more diverse. More than 41 percent of students have limited English proficiency. The primary language among students is Hmong, the Anchorage School District's third most popular language, behind English and Spanish. Of the school's 183 students in grades 3-5 who took state assessments last school year, only 16 were white.

Williwaw is a Title I school due to its extremely high population of students from low-income families. Also a challenge is the school's transiency rate of 33 percent; that means one-third of the students are enrolled at the school for less than the whole school year.

The diversity at the school proved to be a challenge educationally, as the city of Anchorage also struggled with growing diversity and an influx of immigrants and refugees from war-torn countries.

From 2003 to 2009, Williwaw only made Adequate Yearly Progress, a federal education benchmark, once.

Finding a new approach

That's when the school restructured itself. To come up with a new educational model, the district and school's staff developed a plan that incorporated many ASD departments, best practices from the Council of the Great City Schools, current school improvement plans and previously-used strategies. The plan outlined a schoolwide approach that provided language acquisition materials, training for staff and focused on vocabulary



for all students.

The following year, Williwaw's new plan was implemented. Thirty minutes of dedicated English Language Learner time was built into the master schedule. Staff conducted universal screening and progress monitoring of students throughout the year. Core instruction was explicit and systematic. A Response to Instruction model was incorporated. An ELL coach, funded through federal

continued on page 20

Inside

- ▶ 2 Focusing on Education
- ▶ 3 Customer Service
- ▶ 4 School Board
- ▶ 6 Budget
- ▶ 8 Measuring Success
- ▶ 10 Honors & Awards
- ▶ 12 Response to Instruction
- ▶ 14 Overcoming cultural challenges
- ▶ 15 Demographics
- ▶ 16 Social & Emotional Learning
- ▶ 18 Career and Technical Education
- ▶ 19 School Bonds



Anchorage School District
Educating All Students for Success in Life

Focusing on Education

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision



As a public school educator, my end goal is to celebrate and congratulate all students as they earn their diplomas and walk across the stage at graduation.

At the Anchorage School District, I'm proud to say that is happening for more and more of our students. Our graduation rate continues to increase, as it has done for the past several years. This is accomplished through hard work and determination by our students and staff, along with additional programs and added focus on our efforts.

From the first day our students enter kindergarten, our hope is that they will receive a diploma. Giving them a good foundation to continue their learning each year is critical to success.

Achieving success can be difficult and we must find ways to keep our students engaged in a 21st century learning environment. I am disappointed that this year's test results for students in grades 3-10 are not as high as they should be. That is why I have directed my staff to conduct a K-8 math review over the next several months. We'll review our curriculum and ensure that standards are being taught. We will analyze areas where improvements can be made, not only in math but also in reading, writing and science. If we find students are struggling to achieve proficiency, we must intervene and assist them before they fall behind.

Core subjects are key but we must also have our children experience fine arts and music. Our students and staff are very talented in these areas and receive many awards. Many district's across the country have been forced to cut their arts programs due to budget cuts. In Anchorage, we are lucky that we can continue



The school board has been working hard the last six months on laying the groundwork to take the district to the next level. This effort includes, for first time, setting forth our core values and commitments: a vision of where we want to take the district.

Although visioning provides the foundation for sustainable change, it does not make change. For the first time, the board has set forth a road map of expectations through our performance measures and goals. These measures represent the following critical areas.

- Academic achievement (moving every child forward)
- Achievement gap based on poverty
- Graduation rates
- Annual dropout rates

the arts that help develop well-rounded students.

By developing the whole child, we are better preparing our young people for success, and the building block to success outside of school is a high school diploma.

ASD's current graduation rate of 72 percent is an improvement but we must do better. I firmly support Anchorage United for Youth's goal of reaching a 90 percent graduation rate by the year 2020. It's critically important that we work with the community and our families to accomplish this. Together, I really believe we can make it happen.

One of my favorite times of the year is in May when I get to shake the hand of each of our 3,300 graduates and wish them well in their future endeavors. This year will be my final opportunity as superintendent of this great district to congratulate them on their accomplishments.

After 38 years in Anchorage public schools, I will retire on June 30, 2011. I look forward to connecting with my family and spending time with my three children and five grandchildren.

I have had the pleasure of working with so many amazing people who truly believe in what they do and are committed to the success of our students. Please continue to support them and their passion for education.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to serve our schools and this community. It has been an honor.

Most sincerely,

Carol Comeau

Superintendent

- Attendance by grade
- Parent recommendation of their child's school to others
- Students and staff feeling safe
- Operational efficiency of support services

To learn more, visit www.asdk12.org/School_Board/goals.asp.

ASD is a solid district compared nationally, but we can be better. We can be a high-performing district, where every child reaches his or her potential, by working together. Quality education for every child is the toughest achievement for any community. I strongly believe in this board, this district and this community. We have laid the foundation—now we need to work together and put it into action.

Mubshar Hussain

Anchorage School Board President

Excelling in Customer Service

We know that our students do better when they learn in a welcoming environment. We also want our parents and community members to feel comfortable and welcome at our schools. That's why good customer service is critical to the day-to-day operation of the Anchorage School District.

We understand that a major component of high student achievement is parent and community involvement. We strive to be accessible. As a public school district, our doors are always open. What we do is transparent to the public and the community is welcome to contact us anytime.

Customer service is everyone's job at ASD, regardless of whether an individual interacts directly with the public. Without internal teamwork, promoted by internal customer

Earning the Gold Star Award

ASD's Gold Star Customer Service Award program kicked off in 2010–11 to encourage and reward schools and departments that consistently provide outstanding customer service and welcoming environments.

Award nominees were evaluated through a thorough application and “secret shopper” process. Two levels of awards were issued; Stars are those who provide excellent service, and Gold Stars—the highest level award—were given to those rated exemplary.

service, an organization struggles to provide external customer service, and without that, our schools and departments are not seen as warm, inviting places where people are welcomed and made to feel part of the school community.

ASD staff—front office workers, administrators and new employees—routinely receive customer service training to instill the importance of providing good service to its parents, students and peers.

The district developed a Customer Service Guide that outlines the keys to good customer service and provide staff with easy access tips to implement in both the day-to-day work routine and in difficult situations.



Staff at Clark Middle School in northeast Anchorage earned one of three inaugural Gold Star Customer Service Awards presented by the district. The judges' panel noted it was extremely impressed with how Clark staff anticipated the needs of customers—students, staff and parents—without being asked.



Download and view the ASD Customer Service Guide.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone. (free QR readers are available online)



Gold Star Customer Service Award

Gold Stars

- Clark Middle School
- Goldenview Middle School
- Nursing and Health Services Department

Stars

- Central Middle School
- Educational Technology Department
- Russian Jack Elementary School
- Tyson Elementary School





Mission

To educate all students for success in life

Vision

All students will graduate prepared for post-secondary educational and employment opportunities

Core Values & Beliefs

POTENTIAL: Every student deserves the opportunity to achieve his or her potential

To best serve all students, the board believes schools, families and the community should provide every student the opportunity to reach his or her potential. We believe students learn differently, and as such, each classroom and/or school must teach the curriculum in a way that meets the needs of each child. Our district must provide opportunities including a highly effective educator in each classroom, differentiated instruction and high-performing neighborhood and alternative schools. We believe we must close the achievement gap while moving all students forward.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS: The district will foster a culture of high expectations

To achieve high performance, the board believes the district must foster a culture of high expectations for everyone: students, parents, educators, staff and the board. High expectations require adopting an attitude that does not make excuses for a child's academic performance. High expectations also require high performance standards for each employee, including an expectation of collaboration.

ACCOUNTABILITY: The district will be open, transparent and accountable to the public

The board believes the district should be open, transparent, and accountable to the public, ensuring a high-quality

education while remaining fiscally responsible. Our budget, policies, guidelines, curriculum and district performance data will be easily accessible (unless protected by law) and understandable. Parents will always have access to what their child is learning and how they are progressing. The district will promote strong community partnerships and public involvement.

SAFETY: All schools and departments will be safe and supportive

The board believes all schools and departments will have safe and supportive environments by providing safe facilities, being intolerant of bullying and discrimination, and ensuring respect for all. This belief also includes promoting skills necessary to create positive relationships, and to handle confrontational and challenging situations constructively and ethically.

RESPONSIVENESS: Public education should be responsive to an ever-changing world

The board believes the district must be responsive to the changing educational requirements of students for meeting the challenges of an ever-changing world.

Every graduate should be ready for his or her next step in life and be a productive member of a democratic republic.

Working School Board

Operating Principles for Instruction

To implement our vision, the board sets forth the following operating principles, or the active actions, the district will take to move us towards high performance.

Managed instruction – The district will use a Managed Instruction System approach, which includes consistent content, grade-level expectations, and performance standards and curriculum across grade levels and schools. The main driver for this principle is the mobility of our district: almost one-third of students do not end the year in the school in which they start.

School innovation – The district will encourage creativity, innovation and reform including allowing schools to request flexibility so the school can best meet the needs of its students.

Principal priorities – Principals will implement board policies and vision, focusing on three priorities: (1) a safe and secure environment, (2) serving as the instructional leader and ensuring quality education, and (3) serving as the liaison with the neighborhood and school community.

Instructional differentiation – As a best practice, the district will ensure instruction and early interventions to meet the needs of each student, moving every child forward at least

one year's academic growth annually.

Educator accountability – Teachers, principals and all educators will be held accountable for complying with district policy and direction to meet the district's mission, vision, core beliefs, commitments and performance measures.

Effective communication – The district will establish effective communications with parents, students, educators and the community.

Research-based curriculum and best-practice instruction – The district's curricula will be research-based with the expectation of and accountability for best practice with instruction.

Technology integration – The district will integrate technology into all classrooms and curricula to provide each child the opportunity to fully engage in a twenty-first century learning environment.

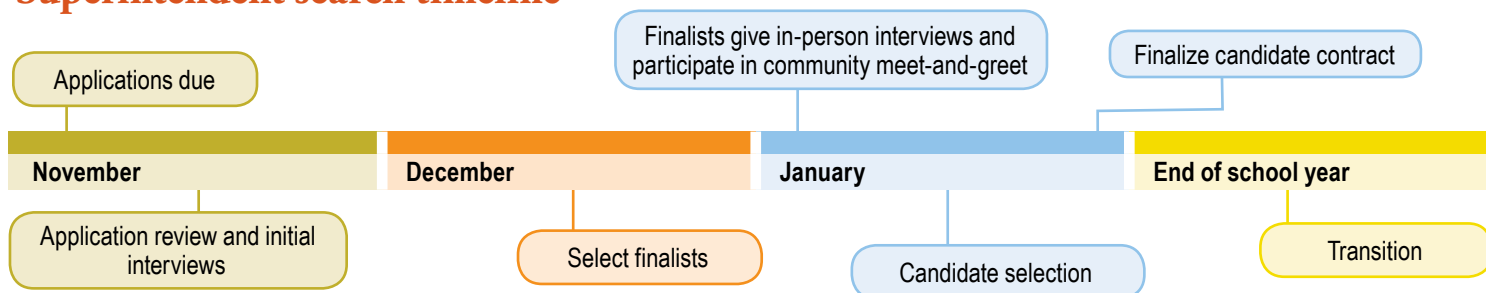
To implement our vision, the board will work with management each year to determine strategic initiatives, annual board projects, and performance measures.

Strategic Initiatives

The board and superintendent will work together to confirm and set strategic objectives, major tactics, and board liaison based on resources and priorities. Each year some objectives will be initiated, in process, discontinued or completed. Additionally, once a project has reached implementation, it will move from board governance to superintendent management.

1. Develop a district long-range fiscal plan
2. Develop a value-based budgeting system
3. Review of math curriculum
4. Career/Technical and Vocational Comprehensive Plan
5. Develop a comprehensive model for staff evaluation based on classroom effectiveness
6. Develop improvements in bond and capital improvement plans
7. Response to Instruction system
8. Management review
9. Review and prioritize Native education services
10. Enhanced effectiveness of board communications
11. Partnership and merging of services with MOA

Superintendent search timeline*



*Subject to change.

Board Commitments

Based on our core beliefs and values, the board is committed to the following:

- A collaborative and respectful governance relationship with the superintendent;
- A rigorous core curriculum of language arts, mathematics, science and social studies;
- A well-rounded educational program that integrates career and technical education, arts and athletics;
- Instruction and early interventions that meet the needs of each student and moves them forward at least one year's academic growth annually;
- Effective public school choice options;
- Parents and the community as informed partners; and
- Cost-effective and efficient operations.

Performance Measures

To ensure the district is on-track to meet the board's commitment to the community, based on its core beliefs and values, the board set goals and performance measures. Those three-year measures can be found online at www.asdk12.org/school_board/goals.asp.

Understanding the Budget

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision

The district's 2011-12 total budget is divided into four distinct funds that serve separate purposes. The General Fund covers the ongoing operations of the district's daily educational, support and administrative activities. The salaries and benefits for the majority of district employees are paid out of this fund. If funding to the district increases or decreases, the largest impact is on the General Fund.

How the General Fund money is spent

Schools 88.79%	School support 8.67%	Administration 2.54%
\$582,158,710	\$56,876,698	\$16,657,176
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary, middle and high schools Charter schools Special Education Instructional support, English Language Learner, Gifted Education, Native Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations and maintenance Student transportation Non-departmental services Facility rental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School board Superintendent General administration Communications Business services Human resources

In addition to the General Fund, the district's budget includes three other funds. Money from these other funds cannot be transferred to the General Fund.

Debt Service Fund \$87.7 million

This fund is used solely for payment on voter-approved school bonds.

Grants Fund \$68.1 million

This fund is used for grants and contracts that provide specific instructional programs; much of the funding for these grants comes from the federal government.

Food Service Fund \$19.2 million

This fund is used to budget and account for operations of the Student Nutrition program. This fund is self-sustaining and is not supported through taxes.

Dividing the General Fund dollar

Salaries/benefits – 88 cents

Salaries make up 51.78 percent of every dollar spent and employee health and other benefits account for 36.67 percent of each dollar.

Purchased services – 8 cents

Includes utilities, rental land, copiers, legal fees, contracted services and more.

Supplies and materials – 2 cents

Includes teaching and library supplies, vehicle fuel and equipment, and more.

Capital outlay and other – 2 cents

Capital outlay includes new, replacement and self-insured equipment. It accounts for less than one cent of each dollar. Other expenditures include property, liability and other types of insurance.

Administration costs

ASD spends less on general administration costs than other school districts across the nation.

ASD 2.54%

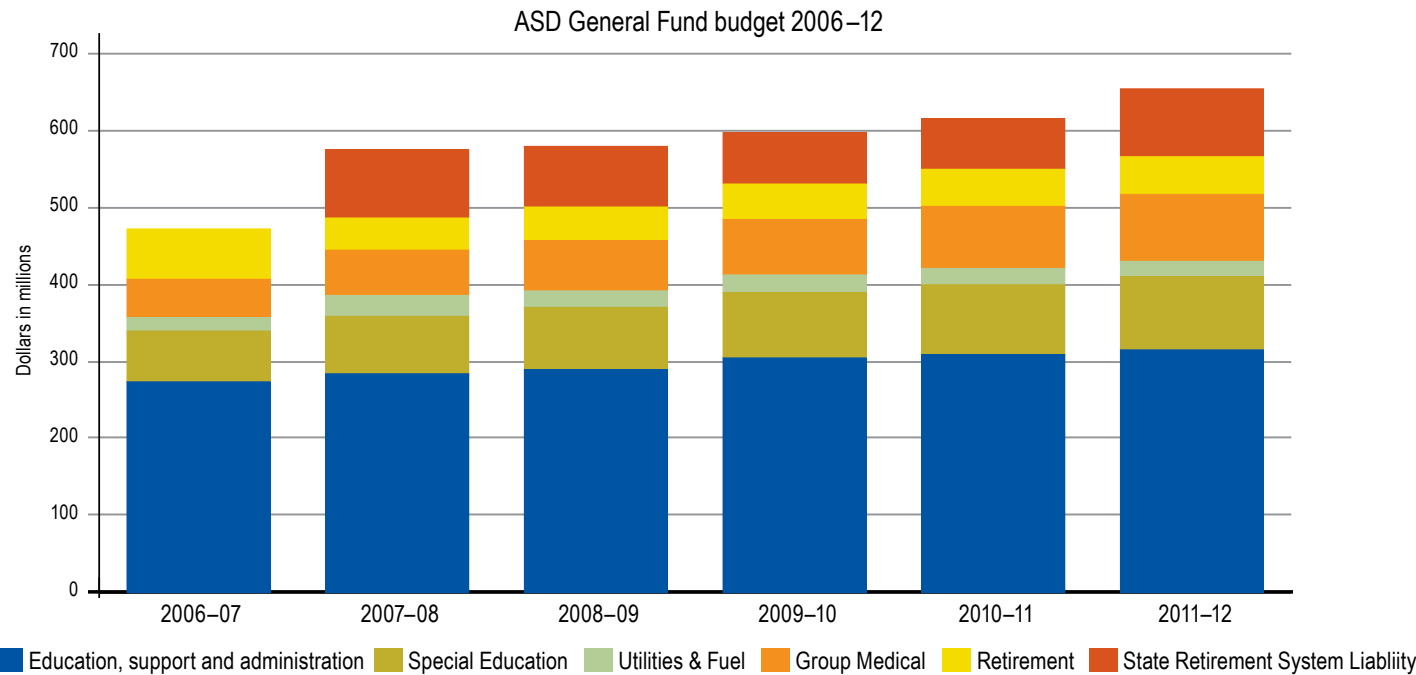
Portland public schools 4%

Seattle public schools 5.98%

Average urban school district 8%

Source: Portland Public Schools and Seattle Public Schools

Understanding the Budget



Why the ASD budget is growing

The Anchorage Assembly has final approval on the district's overall budget; however the detailed operating expenses are under the district's control. Within the General Fund, there are some costs that are not within the district's control. ASD has oversight on whether to commit to expenses but it cannot always control increases to those expenses. For example, the district chooses to provide bus transportation to students who live more than one mile from their neighborhood school. However, the district doesn't choose the cost of the fuel needed to operate the school buses. So when fuel costs increase, the district's budget for that service must also increase. Cost increases can add up quickly when you take into account the fact that school buses drive more than 3 million miles each year transporting ASD students to and from school.

■ **Education, support and administration** – This covers the daily, ongoing operations of the district, including employee salaries.

■ **Special education** – This accounts for expenses necessary to meet federal special education requirements.

■ **Utilities and fuel** – Electricity, heat, fuel, garbage disposal, etc. are included in this category. Increases in rates are determined by the utilities. The district is working to lower the amount of this fund through energy-efficient practices.

■ **Group medical** – This accounts for medical premiums for employees budgeted in the General Fund. Medical rates are negotiated in all employee contracts. This includes contributions for AEA members' medical costs although members do not use ASD's medical plan. In 2010 the district transitioned to a self-insured medical plan, which is generating cost savings for the district.

■ **Retirement** – This covers retirement contributions for current employees. ASD contributes 12.56 percent of each TRS employee's salary and 22 percent of each PRS employee's salary. This is approximately one-third of the state-required contribution set by the ARM board. This does not include rates employees pay into their own retirement accounts.

■ **State Retirement System Liability** – This accounts for money the state gives the district to cover the unfunded liability in the state retirement system. This accounts for approximately two-thirds of state-required retirement contributions. This is considered pass-through money because once the district receives the funds from the state, it has to turn around and give that money right back to the state for employee retirement contributions.



Measuring Success

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision

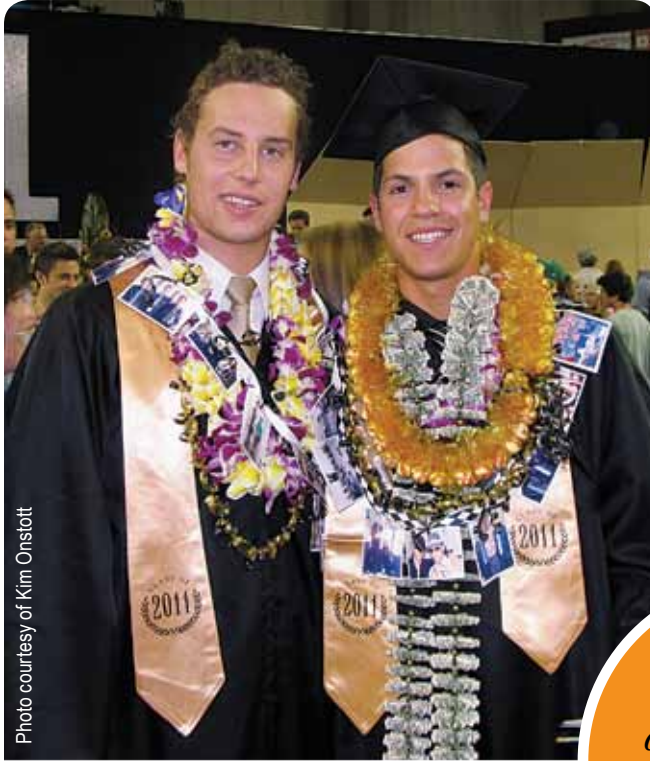
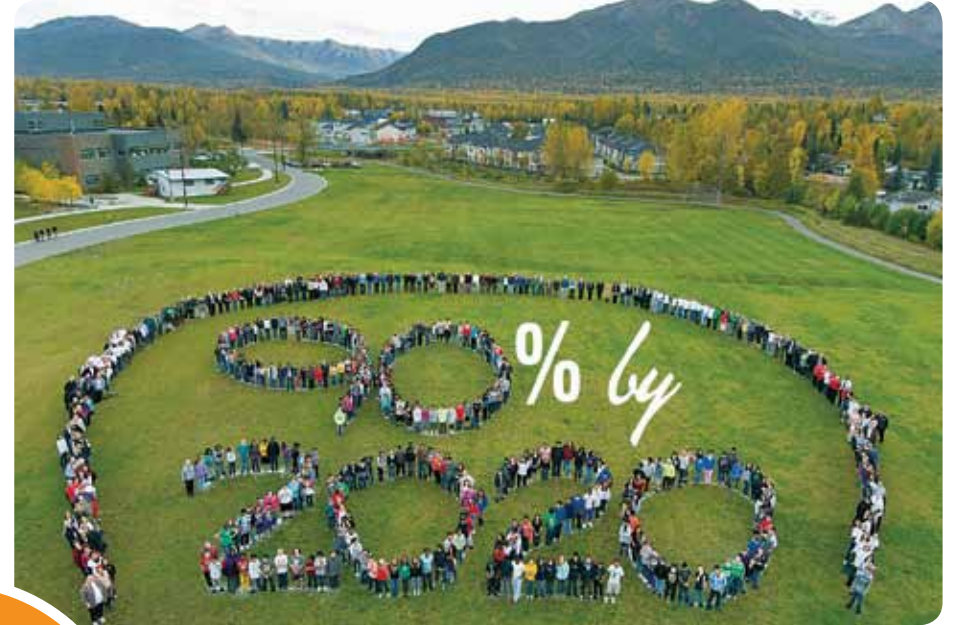


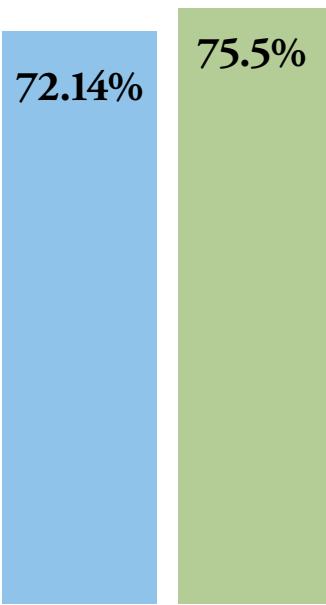
Photo courtesy of Kim Onstott

2011 graduates Jake Onstott and Trevor Gutierrez.

ASD's class of 2011 earned \$40 million in scholarships



Begich Middle School students and staff are surrounded by community members to commit to the goal of increasing the district's graduation rate to 90 percent by the year 2020. The bold goal, led by Anchorage United for Youth - a growing collaboration of nonprofit, public and private partners, will require aligned efforts and resources to accomplish.



■ 4-year graduation rate
■ 5-year graduation rate

4.27%

2010-11 annual dropout rate

Graduation rate

Beginning this year, the state changed how it calculates the high school graduation rate. This establishes a uniform and accurate measure of the graduation rate that is comparable across states. The four-year calculation shows the number of students who enter ninth-grade and graduate in four years or less. The five-year calculation shows the number of students who enter ninth-grade and graduate in five years or less. If the new state calculation was applied to last year's graduating class, the four-year graduation rate would have been 71.04 percent. This shows significant growth in the number of students graduating from ASD. The five-year rate shows that ASD's efforts to hang on to kids who haven't graduated on the traditional track and work with them to earn their diplomas is worthwhile.

Dropout rate

The dropout rate is a one-year calculation of students in grades 7-12 who are enrolled and leave the district before the end of the school year. If a student transfers out of state or enrolls in private school and the district or the state are not notified, that student is classified as a dropout. Students pursuing a GED or who are home-schooled are also considered dropouts during that year.

Reasons for dropping out:

- Dropped out* 65.43%
- G.E.D. 16.81%
- Administrative drop 6.49%
- Did not return after summer 5.64%
- Expelled 2.98%
- Non-ASD homeschool program 2.34%
- Military 0.32%

*This category includes employment, family problems, pregnancy, alcohol or drug dependency, failing grades, illness, transfer and not confirmed.

Measuring Success



69% – Residents who are satisfied with the performance of neighborhood schools



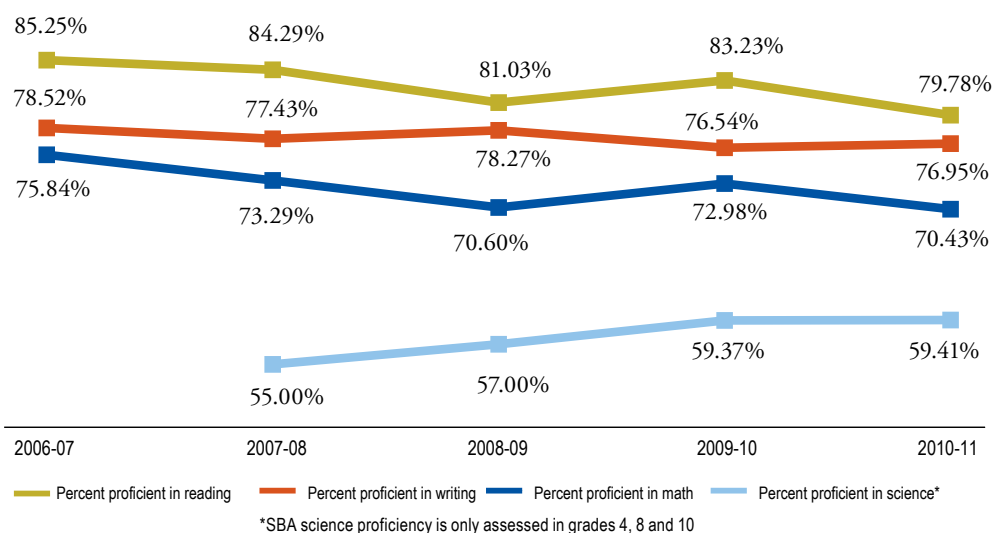
75% – Residents who say the superintendent is doing a good job

ASD student proficiency

The Standards Based Assessments (SBA) are one of the primary measurements of academic progress in grades 3-10, providing educators and parents with a consistent gauge of students' progress across grade levels. The chart shows the percentage of students who are at or above the expected skill level in each of four subjects.

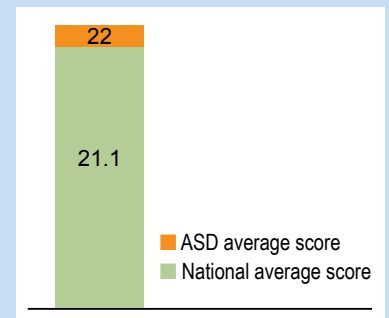
ASD students as a whole continue to score higher than their peers across the state.

Standards Based Assessments



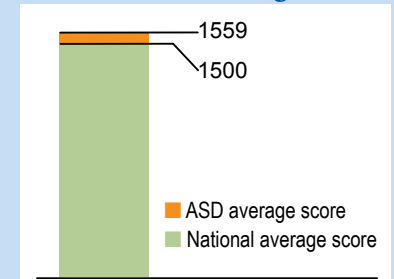
College entrance exams

Composite ACT average score



ACT's college readiness benchmarks show that ASD's students exceed benchmarks in reading, English and math. These benchmarks indicate a student's 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in first year college courses.

Combined SAT average score



This year, The College Board set a college readiness benchmark, calculating that a combined score of 1550 or above indicated a high likelihood of attaining at least a B-minus average in the freshman year of college.

More than half of ASD's 2011 graduates took either the ACT or SAT college entrance exam.

Earning Honors & Awards

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision

Students

- Rogers Park Elementary School student Andrew Hull took first place in the **Alaska Geographic Bee**. He finished in the top 10 in the national competition.
- South High School students Austin Heyroth and Kenneth Hubbell earned Premier Distinction, the highest rank in the **National Forensic League**. They are the first Alaskans to earn this distinction.
- West High School students won the **Western Region of We The People: The Citizen and the Constitution state civics education competition**. West students have won the state competition for 10 consecutive years and have earned seven national awards. Romig Middle School students earned first place in the state competition for middle schools.
- Service High School student Aaron Wheatall was named a **2011 Presidential Scholar**.
- South High School student Jesse Lehman was named the Alaska state winner of the **Siemens Awards for Advanced Placement**.
- 11 students were named **National Merit Scholarship** winners for 2011, 22 ASD students are in the semifinals for the 2012 award. East High School student Temitayo Ajayi was named a **National Achievement Scholarship** winner.



Chugach Optional Elementary School was named a 2011 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education.



Schools

- Chester Valley Elementary School was designated as a **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design school** and earns Silver Certification.
- Turnagain Elementary School received the **Governor's North Star Award for International Excellence**.



Dimond High School JROTC students inspired House Bill 98, later signed into law by the Governor, which established consistent standards for the proper display, folding and retirement of the state flag.

Teachers

- Sand Lake Elementary School Teacher Hisakazu “Kaz” Iwasaki was named **Best Mannered Teacher** by the National League of Junior Cotillions, Anchorage Chapter.
- Educational Technology Teacher Jan Thompson was honored with the **Lifetime Achievement Award** by the Alaska Society for Technology in Education.
- McLaughlin School Teacher Alfonso Licata and Begich Middle School Teacher Scott McKim are **finalists for the 2012 Alaska Teacher of the Year award**.
- Alpenglow Elementary School Teacher Dorothea Culbert and Orion Elementary School Teacher Mary Janis earned **Presidential Awards for Math and Science Teaching**. Romig Middle School Math Teacher Mark Elfstrom, Begich Middle School Science Teacher Johanna Hubbard and Goldenview Middle School Science Teacher Dave Avery are **finalists for the 2012 PAEMST award**.



Sand Lake Elementary School Teacher MaryLee Tung was named a top five finalist for the 2011 National History Teacher of the Year Award.

Earning Honors & Awards

Principals

- ASD Principal Mike Hanley was appointed **commissioner of the state Department of Education and Early Development**.
- Central Middle School of Science Principal Lisa Prince was named the **2011 Alaska Middle School Principal of the Year** by the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals. Chugiak High School Assistant Principal Colette Marshall was named the **Region IV Assistant Principal of the Year** by AASSP. Homestead Elementary School Principal Barbara Nagengast was named the **2011 Alaska Distinguished Principal** by the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals.

Staff

- Chester Valley Elementary School Librarian Alta Collins was named **School Librarian of the Year** by the Alaska Association of School Librarians. The association also honored Scenic Park Elementary School Teacher Lynn McNamara with the **Linda K. Barrett Service Award**.

Superintendent

- Superintendent Carol Comeau was presented the **Guiding Star Award** by the Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services program within Catholic Social Services.
- Superintendent Carol Comeau was presented with the **2011 Junior Achievement of Alaska Educator of the Year Award** at the Alaska Business Hall of Fame.

1985 Bartlett High School graduate Brian Schmidt was one of three winners of the **Nobel Prize in Physics**.



Polaris K-12 School Principal Denise Greene-Wilkinson was named president-elect of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.



The colonels and the superintendent sign the JBER-ASD agreement.

Three years ago, ASD partnered one U.S. Army Alaska unit with three elementary schools. In just the fourth quarter of that year, soldiers volunteered more than 1,700 hours in schools. Two years later, that program has grown to include 12 Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson units with 17 elementary, middle and high schools. The goal of the program is to improve citizenship and the educational experience of students through exposure to positive role models, active parental involvement, tutoring of academic studies, unit sponsorship and mentorship.

Support from the soldiers and airmen include sharing the skills they have learned as a part of their military training, math and reading support, JROTC support, and mentorship. The partnerships also make it more feasible for individual soldiers and airmen to support their child's school through volunteerism.



ASD school bus drivers Robert Crowell, Mitch Brown and Marina Crowell took top honors at the Alaska State School Bus Road-e-o. Sheila van Weel, a driver for Forsythe – an ASD contractor, also placed among the top drivers. Pictured left to right are Brown, Crowell and van Weel.

The Denali Award

The district's highest achievement in staff excellence was presented to:

- Assistant Principal Suzanne Brown of Gruening Middle
- Youth Development Coordinator Jessica Limbird of Airport Heights Elementary
- Elementary Support Teacher Linnet Moser of Airport Heights Elementary
- Teacher Laura Nevada of Bayshore Elementary
- Russian Jack Elementary leadership team
- Counselor Jaime Boyd of Dimond High
- Assistant Principal Lin Hinderman of Service High
- Maintenance Department Supervisor Chris Borst
- North Zone 1 Maintenance team

Implementing Response to Instruction

Success

Accountability

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Inspiration

Vision



Response to Instruction (RTI) provides a system for all students to receive instruction based on their needs, whether it's those needing intervention, students who are right on track or those who are ready for enriched instruction.

How it works

RTI follows a simple plan of continuous instruction, screening, intervention and monitoring.

1. Core instruction – All students receive high-quality instruction. The lessons are aligned to the district's Grade Level Expectations and state standards.

2. Universal screening – Students' reading skills will be assessed three times each year. Universal screening helps educators identify the learning needs of all students and guide core instruction.

The district is using two types of assessments for universal screening: AIMSweb and COREK12. Each assessment tool targets critical skills and specific grade levels.

- AIMSweb – Grades K–4. Assessment is individually administered and takes about five minutes per child.
- COREK12 – Grades 5–10. Entire class is assessed at the same time on computers. Screening takes about 45 minutes, or the equivalent of one class period.

For the current school year, RTI universal screening will occur for reading. Beginning in 2013-14 math screenings will be incorporated into the RTI system.

3. Intervention – Instructional interventions are used in addition to core instruction. The interventions are based on the needs of the students, as determined by the universal screening and other classroom-based data.

4. Progress monitoring – Beginning next school year (2012-13), the district will incorporate progress monitoring into the RTI system. Progress monitoring is a brief measure, lasting one to five minutes, of basic reading skills. It measures the effects of interventions for at-risk students. Progress monitoring may occur up to four times per month, based on student need.



What this means to parents and students

Parents will receive information regarding their student's performance on the universal screening measure. The screening is designed to show parents how well their student is performing in the area of reading and the likelihood of the child needing additional assistance or enrichment.

Students will be able to see their reading strengths and areas needing focus. As students understand their performance data, they will be more successful in setting goals and actively participating in the process of learning and achieving academic success.

What will the results show about my child?

For students in grades K-4, results will show how your child is performing in reading compared with peers across the school, district, state and country. For students in grades 5-10, results will show how your child is performing in reading against state standards and in comparison with peers in their school and across the district.

For students in grades 3-10, the results are also used as an indicator of success on the state's Standard's Based Assessment.

The results also will provide specific information about the particular areas within reading that your child may need assistance or extra practice.

What will be done with the results?

The screening results will be shared with parents in a variety of ways, including at parent teacher conferences or individual meetings as necessary.

Teachers will analyze individual student results and determine what instructional focus will best meet the needs of each student. The teacher may provide students opportunities for additional repetition and practice within the classroom and form groups of students with simi-

Implementing Response to Instruction

lar instructional needs. The teacher may provide additional support for how parents can assist their child in school. In some cases, the student may be recommended for supplemental interventions in reading to strengthen or provide additional opportunities for instruction.

At the school level, teams will analyze grade-level results to determine the effectiveness of the instructional program and make any necessary adjustments based on data. At the district level, the instructional leadership will analyze districtwide results to determine what changes may need to be made in professional development, curriculum or interventions.

More information

Log on to www.asdk12.org/RTI to learn more or talk to your school principal about the differences and benefits RTI will make in your school.



Common RTI terms

Core Instruction—All students receive high-quality reading and math instruction. The lessons are aligned to Grade Level Expectations and state standards.

Universal Screening—All students' reading and math skills will be assessed three times each year. Universal screening helps educators identify the learning needs of all students and guide core instruction. The district will use two types of assessments for universal screening, AIMSweb and COREK12. Each assessment tool targets critical skills and specific grade levels.

AIMSweb—Grades K-4. Assessment is individually administered and takes about five minutes per child.

COREK12—Grades 5-10. Entire class is assessed at the same time on computers. Screening takes about 45 minutes, or the equivalent of one class period.

Intervention—Instruction interventions are used in addition to core instruction. Interventions are based on the needs of the students, as determined by the universal screening.

Progress Monitoring—Brief measures, lasting one to five minutes, of basic reading and math skills. The monitoring measures the effects of interventions for at-risk students. Progress monitoring may occur up to four times per month, based on student need. AIMSweb is the tool used for intervention progress monitoring of all students in grades K-12. Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the district will incorporate progress monitoring into the RTI system.

RTI Timeline

RTI began this year with reading screenings in all elementary schools; Clark and Mirror Lake middle schools; and Bartlett and Dimond high schools. By the 2014-15 school year, all schools will have RTI screening and monitoring for both reading and math. The universal screening and progress monitoring portions of RTI are being phased in to ASD schools to ensure there is adequate staff support for the program.

Three universal screenings for reading will take place this school year: fall, winter and spring. The fall screening occurred near the start of the school year, the remaining screenings will occur as follows:

Grades K-8

Nov. 28 – Dec. 15, 2011
Apr. 16 – May 4, 2012

Grades 9-10

Jan. 17 – Feb 4, 2012
Apr. 23 – May 11, 2012

Overcoming cultural challenges

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision



From little English to law school

Natalia Mejia was just seven years old when her family moved from the Dominican Republic to Puerto Rico in search of a better life. Five years later, her father decided that their neighborhood was not a suitable environment for children and chose to head to the last frontier - Alaska.

Life in Alaska

Moving to Alaska was one of the biggest challenges in Natalia's young life. "It was like going from day to night," she said. "I didn't speak the language, I had no friends or relatives besides my immediate family." To this day, she still can remember coming home from school crying and begging her father to send her back home. At the time, Natalia said she preferred to live poor and ignorant for the rest of her life, than deal with how out-of-place and lonely she felt in her new American home. "Thankfully," she said, "my father did not listen to my plea. I decided to submerge myself in my school work, as a way to escape my surroundings, and in the end, it paid off."

Newcomers' Center

Natalia's first experience with American schools was attending the Anchorage School District's Newcomers' Center. She said it was a place where she was not only learning the language, but getting the guidance and skills needed to help her stay motivated and continue her journey.

Two years after arriving in Alaska, Natalia began taking mainstream classes and later graduated from East High School at age 16, in the top 10 percent of her class. Natalia chose to attend the University of Alaska Anchorage where she graduated three years later with a Bachelor's degree in Justice and minors in Sociology and Spanish. Now, at 22-years-old, Natalia is in her final semester of classes before earning a Master's degree in Public Administration. While not in class, Natalia works full-time as a juvenile justice officer for the state of Alaska. She said, "I love my job because it gives me an opportunity to help young females become productive members of society and the best persons they can be." Natalia is applying to law school.

The American dream

Natalia said her story teaches other young, Hispanic females that, "we do not have to become another statistic. We do not have to drop out of high school and be pregnant by age 16. We do not have to end up being servants of others for a living. We do not have to rely on public assistance. On the contrary, we can reach our dreams, become successful and live our American dream. We might not be able to control our origins or the cards that God gave us, but we can control where we end up and what we can achieve, since, after all, that is the best compensation for an immigrant's struggle."



Superintendent Carol Comeau routinely attends local ceremonies where dozens of people are naturalized as U.S. citizens. As she greets them, she stresses the importance of continuing their education and encourages them to get involved in their neighborhood schools.

ASD and Catholic Social Services helping refugees

A video highlighting just a few of the ways that the Anchorage School District and Catholic Social Services work together to support and provide for refugees.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone to view the refugee video. (free QR readers are available online)



Discovering who we are



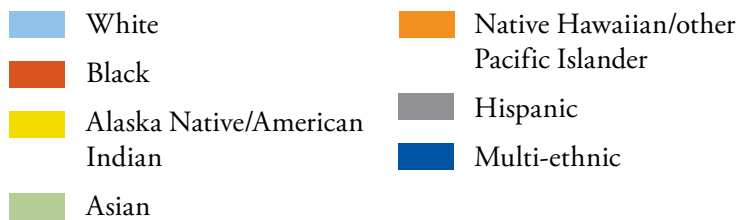
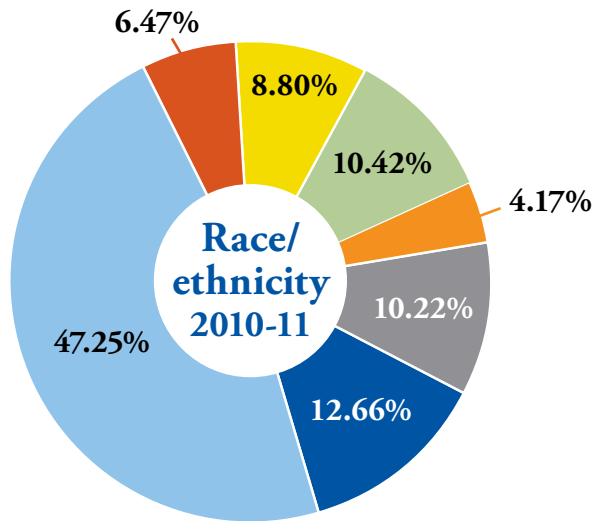
26.71% of ASD students do not complete the year at the same school in which they started.



44.26% of students are economically disadvantaged. This means they qualify for free/reduced price meals based on family income levels set by the federal government.

48,828 – students enrolled for the 2011-12 school year.

2,439 – ASD students identified as homeless at some point during the 2010-11 school year.



Percentages may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

Language

Most ASD families, 87.52 percent, speak English at home. The remaining 12.48 percent speak 92 languages. In 2010-11, there were 6,139 students eligible for English Language Learner services. The most frequent languages spoken by those students were:

Spanish: 1,438 students (2.92% of all ASD students)

Hmong: 1,164 students (2.37%)

Samoan: 977 (1.99%)

Tagalog: 731 (1.49%)

Yupik: 304 (0.62%)

Other languages: 1,519 (3.09%)



“Anchorage is a national leader in providing quality education to promote the social, emotional, and academic learning of all students. CASEL and the field of social and emotional learning have learned a lot from the outstanding educators of the Anchorage School District.”

—Roger P. Weissberg, PhD
President and CEO
Collaborative for Academic,
Social and Emotional
Learning (CASEL)



Students learn to become well-rounded individuals

Hollywood producer George Lucas told Forbes Magazine that he believes ASD is doing a good job of improving/reforming K-12 education. He cited ASD's Social and Emotional Learning as one of three examples of schools across the nation doing things right. The article was published on Sept. 21 and can be read in its entirety through this link: <http://onforb.es/qCHarg>.

We live in a diverse and complex world. Children who are intentionally taught how to work together, build relationships and handle their emotions are more successful than their peers who haven't developed the same skills.

Social and emotional skills keep students moving forward and becoming productive members of society. Those are facts supported by research.

Our children must be able to feel emotionally and physically safe at school. When they can put their personal life distractions aside and focus on what they're learning, they'll excel.

It's essential that parents and school staff work together to develop the whole child. This includes teaching them core academic skills such as reading, writing, math and science, as well as social and emotional skills.

The Anchorage School District began working to

intentionally help students build developmental assets and skills in the mid-1990s. Over the years, we've seen that our most successful young people are the ones who have strong social and emotional skills, or developmental assets.

Despite budget constraints, we strive to maintain a comprehensive educational program that includes academics, art, music and co-curricular activities. Our students have many opportunities to get involved and find their passion. They need to be able to relate to something we have to offer so they can build connections and relationships within our schools. That is what will keep them on the right track.

We can't lose sight of our future, which will be led by well-rounded individuals who have the skill set to succeed in today's world.

Teaching Social & Emotional Learning

What is Social and Emotional Learning?

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors.

It is the process through which students enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaving in order to achieve important life tasks.

Career readiness

ASD's mission is to prepare all students for success in life. This includes arming students with the skills neces-

sary to compete in today's workforce. Each of the social and emotional learning standards have a direct correlation with the Youth Employability Skills (YES!) identified by CEOs, personnel directors and other employer representatives and assembled by Alaska's Youth: Ready for Work.

Want to learn more?

To learn more about how SEL supports what employers want, download the brochure Strategy for Student Success: How Social and Emotional Learning Helps Kids Achieve from the district website at www.asdk12.org/depts/SEL.

Social and Emotional Learning goals

	Self	Social
Awareness	I am... knowledge	I care... caring
Management	I can... capable	I will... responsible

Self-Awareness: Knowing what we are feeling in the moment; having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a wellgrounded sense of self-confidence.

Self-Management: Handling our emotions so they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand; being conscientious and delaying gratification to pursue goals; persevering in the face of setbacks and frustrations.

Social Awareness: Understanding what others are feeling; being able to take their perspective; appreciating and interacting positively with diverse groups.

Social Management: Handling emotions in relationships effectively; establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation, resistance to inappropriate social pressure, negotiating solutions to conflict, and seeking help when needed.

What parents can do to help their child develop strong SEL skills:

- Focus on your child's strengths before addressing areas of improvement.
- Ask how your child feels, to show you care.
- Be willing to apologize if someone is hurt physically or emotionally.
- Ask questions that help your child solve problems on his or her own.
- Read books and stories with your child that address difficult issues.
- Give your child a chance to set goals, and cheer on progress.
- Choose a few responsibilities that your child can do successfully at home, and encourage your child to help.

SEL success in ASD

See students and staff talk about the success of SEL education at the Anchorage School District. This video includes excerpts from national leaders, including Tim Shriver, CEO of the worldwide Special Olympics organization, talking about efforts taking place right here in Anchorage. Learn more about SEL and view the video at www.asdk12.org/depts/SEL.

Scan the QR code with your smart phone to view the SEL in ASD Flash video. (free QR readers are available online)



Expanding Career & Technology Education

Success

Accountability

Dedication

Inspiration

Vision



With just five years of experience under its belt, the Begich Student News Team is already a steadfast school tradition. The team, made up of 10 students in grades 6-8, handles an impressive amount of school and community communication on behalf of the Snow Leopards. The team creates a daily news broadcast filled with school announcements that is shown on all classroom Smart Boards and podcast on the internet. The team also updates the school website and the electronic “reader board” television in the commons area.

The team plays an important role in facilitating communication between Begich Middle School staff, students and community. Being completely student produced makes the news more interesting and relevant to Begich students, and presenting Begich happenings in the form of a daily news broadcast makes the information more engaging and interesting for students in Begich classrooms.

Log on to <http://begichmiddle.asdk12.org> and click on the “Begich Student News” link in the left menu to see the Begich Student News Team in action, .

Several other ASD middle schools also have video news teams.

Career, technology and vocational education programs continue to grow

At the direction of the Anchorage School Board, the district is expanding its career, technology and vocational education programs to provide additional opportunities for students. In April 2011, voters approved \$17 million in bonds to fund construction projects at several middle and high schools. Through the debt reimbursement program, the state has agreed to cover 70 percent of the construction costs. Work on many of the bond projects is underway. All are on-time and within the estimated budget at this time.

School	Project	Status
West High School	Enhancements to Construction Academy	Complete
Bartlett High School	Expand Health Career Academy	Completion expected in 2012
	Expand Construction Academy	Completion expected in 2012
Begich Middle School	Improve Applied Engineering program	Completion expected in 2012
Central Middle School of Science	Expand Applied Engineering program to include construction trades	Completion expected in 2012
	Expand Medical Laboratory program	Completion expected in 2012
Dimond High School	Expand Applied Engineering Technology program	Completion expected in 2012
Eagle River High School	Expand Applied Engineering program	Completion expected in 2012
	Expand Construction Academy	Completion expected in 2012
East High School	Expand Construction Academy	Completion expected in 2012
	Add Applied Technology Engineering program	Completion expected in 2012
Hanshaw Middle School	Improve Applied Engineering program	Completion expected in 2012
King Career Center	Master planning phase	Completion expected in 2012
	Improve Construction Academy	Completion expected in 2013
Chugiak High School	Expand Construction Academy	Project scheduled for 2012-13
	Expand Applied Engineering program	Project scheduled for 2012-13
Mears Middle School	Expand Applied Engineering program	Project scheduled for 2012-13
Wendler Middle School	Expand Applied Engineering program	Project scheduled for 2012-13
	Initiate Construction Academy	Project scheduled for 2012-13

Explaining School Bonds

ASD owns and operates 93 facilities. To keep those buildings maintained and to maximize their life-spans, we spend more than \$23 million a year on routine repairs and preventative maintenance. That's not bond money, that's out of our general operating budget.

Even with regular maintenance, a school building that is 30, 40 or 50 years old will need some major repairs or renewal over time. Major building life extension projects around the district have historically been funded by school bonds and state grants.

How does the district determine projects for bond proposals?

The district develops a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan. This serves as a guide for future bond requests. Projects are selected for the CIP based on each facility's condition, enrollment projections, program requirements and community input.

This information is analyzed and evaluated by the Facilities Department, district administration, superintendent, municipal Planning and Zoning Commission and is submitted to the Anchorage Assembly.

The Capital Improvement Advisory Committee, a community-based citizens group, helps the superintendent and school board with bond propositions and the CIP. Members review facility needs and recommend bond propositions to the superintendent. The superintendent reviews the information and forwards a bond request proposal to the Anchorage School Board for approval. The assembly has authority to change proposed bond issue projects before approving them to be placed on the ballot.

The future of Service High School

Originally built in 1971 as a junior and senior high school (named Service-Hanshew), Service didn't become a 9–12 high school until 13 years later when Hanshew moved into its own middle school facility. Since Service was built for two separate programs, the building's layout is functionally inefficient and lacks flexible configuration.

In 2000, the district created a master plan to renovate and extend the building's functionality through phases of construction. In 2002 and 2004, voters approved bond funding to complete two phases of construction. In 2006, voters rejected a proposal to fund another phase of construction. To date, less than half of the facility's 320,000 square feet has been renovated.

In 2008, Service's master plan was revised to reduce construction costs by conserving more of the existing

building. In 2009 and 2011, voters rejected bond proposals that would have completed the renovation process. Remaining areas for upgrade equal the size of three elementary schools. The existing scope of work includes renovations to career, music and education classrooms, cafeteria, special education area, library, offices and the physical education area. Upon completion of construction, operations and maintenance costs are expected to decline due to implementation of sustainable building practices and energy conservation measures, including improved insulation and digitally-controlled boilers and fans.

In 2011, the district received a \$21.3 million grant from the state for the project. The grant is only accessible if the district contributes \$9 million in matching funds by 2013. Service remains at the top of the district's list for capital needs.



Why does ASD bond for projects?

ASD bonds for projects so that the most funds possible in the district's annual budgets may be spent in the classroom.

Also, the state has committed to project reimbursements of 60-70 percent. This means taxpayers only have to pay 30-40 cents on the dollar for projects that are funded through the bonding process. Projects funded through other means do not qualify for debt reimbursement.

Easing the property tax burden

The state debt reimbursement program provides significant relief to property taxpayers by covering 60-70 percent of construction costs on approved projects. The district is routinely reimbursed for the construction costs of bond projects, leaving taxpayers to pay 30-40 cents on the dollar for school construction, renovation and safety improvement projects.

Funding of the state reimbursement plan is subject to annual appropriation and has been fully supported by legislators for the past 18 years. The legislature has funded 100 percent of the state's debt obligation since 1992.



Change of attitude

We know that if we want our students to succeed, we must provide them safe and caring school environments. That's why every ASD school implements various programs, strategies and practices each day that foster a positive and caring school culture.

Two programs, Change of Heart and Be the Change, are proving to be very popular among high school students. Dimond, East, Service and Eagle River high schools have developed cadres of student trainers to implement these two programs in their buildings.

The overall goals of these programs are to promote a more supportive school community while building more caring relationships between everyone in the school community. A special emphasis is placed on the "power of one" and the "power of many" to impact the school culture.

Examples of topics covered in Change of Heart and Be the Change trainings are stereotyping, prejudice, personal courage, impact of media on decision-making, positive role models and healthy relationships.

At the end of each training session, students commit to use their personal power to identify at least one action that they will take to make their school a better place for all.

More than 2,000 ASD high school students attend Change of Heart and Be the Change workshops each year. These peer-to-peer trainings are supported by the Alaska Department of Behavioral Health, and ASD's Social and Emotional Learning Department and High School Education.

Williwaw *continued from page 1*

stimulus money, spent two years at the school. But most importantly, all staff was on board, supported the plan and worked collaboratively.

The payoff

When test results came in, everyone crossed their fingers and held their breath, hoping their refocused efforts would show some gains in student proficiency. What they found was beyond what they hoped for; not only were stagnant test scores improving for their limited English proficient students, Williwaw ELL students were now outperforming the district

averages in both math and language arts. Test scores jumped nearly 15 percentage points. Now, all students are benefiting from the focus on language development.

Williwaw's Principal Bonnie Goen credits educators' willingness to evolve for the successes among her students, "It was an involved process where the staff embraced that the instruction presented was not working for all students." A change was made, and although not always easy, Goen said the outcomes proved successful and her staff and students look forward to what comes next.

Learn more: visit www.asdk12.org

- detailed school board goals
- podcasts
- complete Profile of Performance with districtwide and individual school data
- school board memos and agendas
- district news and announcements
- budget details and developments

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Anchorage School Board is committed to an environment of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, economic status, union affiliation, disability and other human differences. No person shall be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, any academic or extracurricular program or educational opportunity or service offered by the district. The district will comply with the applicable statutes, regulations and executive orders adopted by the federal, state and municipal agencies. Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the district's Equal Employment Opportunity Director, who also serves as the Title IX Coordinator, ASD Education Center, 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99504-3135, (907) 742-4132 or to any of the following external agencies: Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, Anchorage Equal Rights Commission, director of the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education or the Department of Health and Human Services.

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