



OPTIONS FOR TOMORROW

*Transition Planning for the Future
Produced by the Anchorage School District STeP Center and
the Secondary Special Education Department*

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Options for Tomorrow is a publication for secondary special education transition planning for the future. It is distributed quarterly (September, January, March and May) To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter, call 742-3868 or email: loutrel_barbara@asdk12.org.

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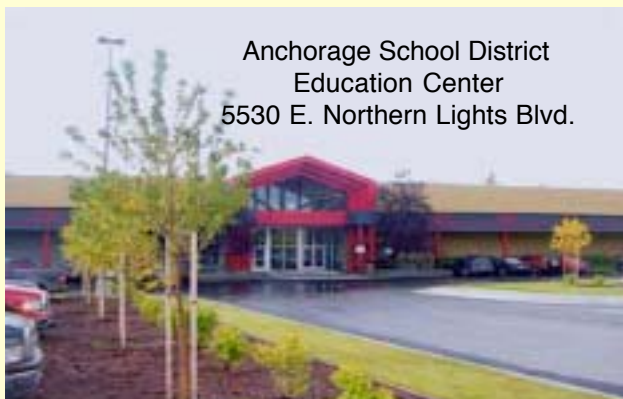
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What's in a Name?

Have you ever wondered what the Anchorage School District's STeP Center is? STeP stands for "Student Teacher Parent" and it serves as a special education resource to ASD students, teachers, and parents.

The STeP Center has a library of books and media on a variety of disability topics that can be checked out. It also has two full time special educators to assist with questions, provide resources, and help with understanding the ASD Special Education Department. In addition to the library, the STeP Center hosts a wonderful website at: <http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/> that includes an extensive disability topic section as well as links to the four newsletters that are published throughout the school year. Current issues as well as back issues of the publications are available for downloading and printing.

The STeP Center is located in the ASD Education Center at the corner of Northern Lights Blvd. and Boniface Parkway. It is open Monday through Thursday from 8:30 until 6pm (until 4:30pm on Friday). As it is staffed by one person after 4pm, call ahead if you are coming after that time.



Anchorage School District
Education Center
5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.

High School Graduation Qualifying Exam

HSGQE: Fall Retake: 11th & 12th Graders Only

October 3, 4, 5, 2006

HSGQE: Spring: 10th, 11th & 12th Graders

April 3, 4, 5, 2007

* The exam is given over three days, with each day focusing on a subject area: Reading, Writing, Math

* For students on an IEP: If parents and students want to pursue accommodations and modifications for Spring testing, you must see the Special Education Dept. Chair at your school.

Helpful Hints for Test Taking



* **Read the directions carefully**

*This may be obvious, but it will help you avoid careless errors
If there is time, quickly look through the test for an overview
Note key terms, jot down brief notes*

* **Answer questions in a strategic order:**

1. *First do easy questions to build confidence, score points, and mentally orient yourself to vocabulary, concepts, and your studies (it may help you make associations with more difficult questions)*

2. *Then do difficult questions or those with the most point value*

With objective tests, first eliminate those answers you know to be wrong, or are likely to be wrong, don't seem to fit, or where two options are so similar as to be both incorrect

With essay questions or writing samples, broadly outline your answer and sequence the order of your points

* **Review:**

Resist the urge to leave as soon as you have completed all the items

Review your test to make sure that you have answered all questions, not mis-marked the answer sheet, or made some other simple mistake

Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, punctuation, decimal points, etc.

Change answers to questions if you originally misread them or if you have encountered information elsewhere in the test that indicates that your first choice is incorrect

For more information on test preparation go to: www.studygs.net

Nine Star Supports Young Adults....

High School Completion Program

Nine Star Enterprises is excited to announce the third year of our High School Completion Program. Our students are enrolled in Delta Cyber School, through the Delta-Greeley School District. Nine Star provides computers, tutorial support, and student activities to all students enrolled in our program. We assist our students in completing the credits required for graduation from Delta Cyber School, while building the necessary skills to pass the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam.

All Classes and Services are Absolutely FREE

Call 743-6074 to Enroll Now



MATH for the TRADES

Boost Your Math Skills
to Prepare for Alaska Apprenticeship Programs

Classes Are **FREE** and Open to All

Classes Begin: **Oct. 4**
 Wednesday Nights: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
 or
 Saturdays: 10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

Taught by Highly Qualified Teachers

To Register Call
 Kathleen at
743-6074

Offered by:
 Nine Star Education and
 Employment Services

IDEA: The new IDEA regulations are out!
 go to :<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/SPED/IDEA.html>
 for more information.

Assistive Technology Swap Shop
 Join the 1st and ONLY assistive technology re-
 utilization e-store in Alaska!
www.atla.biz/swapshop



IT'S FREE!!

Boardmaker, a computer program with a graphics database of over 3,000 Picture Communication Symbols, allows you to print selected symbols for use with communication. If you would like to have access to using this computer program, call Barb Loutrel at the STeP Center (742-3868).

What's New!

New Alternate Assessment
 Given up to the 10th grade.
 Go to:
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/SPED/IDEA.html>
 for more information.

The ASD School Calendar
 This year when the students break for the December Holidays, it also marks the end of the first school semester. If your child is in high school, finals will be happening the week before the holiday break. It is very important that you plan ahead for this so your child does not miss important requirements for completing their credits.

Helping Students Prepare: At age 14 and up and/or when transition planning will be discussed, the student must be invited to his/her IEP meeting. While not all students are required to attend, it is desirable for the student to be part of the IEP team.

Self-advocacy is a learned skill for all students and a challenging for many. Participating in the IEP process, at any age, gives the student a meaningful opportunity to begin to develop self-advocacy skills and the confidence to use them.

Student Self-Advocacy & Transition Planning

Active participation in their own IEP process helps students:

- * learn and share more about their strengths and skills and be able to tell others.
- * learn and share more about their exceptionality, including how to talk about and explain its nature.
- * learn and share what accommodations are and what types of accommodations might help them succeed in the classroom.
- * learn and demonstrate how to speak for themselves.
- * develop some of the skills necessary for self-determination and independent decision-making.
- * understand the goals and objectives that form the basis of their education.
- * become more involved in their own education.

Special Education Community Forum

Free

(Formerly called the Parent-Teacher Institutes)

Sponsored by The ASD STeP Center in collaboration with Stone Soup Group

"Supporting the Special Needs Child in School and at Home"

Come join us over a cup of coffee for our first Saturday disability information workshop this year. Learn about different disability topics, join discussions, and have the opportunity to earn credit for certification programs, salary advancement or training requirements.



Saturday, October 28, 2006

Wendler Middle School

8:30am to 1:00pm



Keynote: "Advocacy & Collaboration: Opening More Doors for Your Child"

Breakout sessions will include topics on Autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Using Pictures to Enhance Your Child's Understanding, ADHD, Bullying. Free childcare provided by calling 742-3872, 24-hours in advance.

Important Dates to Remember



Fall-Winter SAT tests: Oct. 14, Nov. 4, Dec. 2, 2006; Jan. 27, 2007

Go to this website for more information about fees and deadlines for applying:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/splash>

Fall ACT tests: Oct. 28, Dec. 6, 2006, Feb. 10, 2007

Go to their website for more information about fees and deadlines for applying:
<http://www.actstudent.org/regist/nextdates.html>

PSAT is given once a year (9th, 10th, 11th grade only): Oct. 21, 2006

(If you have a conflict & cannot take it on the 21st you can pre-arrange to take it at KCC on Oct. 18th.)

Students with Disabilities & Testing

The College Board is committed to serving students with disabilities by providing services and reasonable accommodations appropriate to the student's disability and the purpose of the exam. This must be arranged through the ASD Special Education Dept. Chair at your child's school far in advance of the test date as it has to be approved by the College Board.

Fall Teacher Conferences: The week of November 6th (Check with your school to see which days the conferences will be held.)