



OPTIONS FOR TOMORROW

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

March, 2007

Volume 4

Issue 3

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.

In this issue ...

Ten Ways Parents Can Support Students During Test Taking

Diploma Vs Non-diploma Track

Dealing With Test Anxiety

Vocational Coordinators

Career Information Center

Career Resources

Dates to Remember

Surrogate Parents Needed

Alaska Family Directory

Special Education Community Forum

Ten Ways Parents Can Support Students During Test Taking

- 1) Make sure your student is eating healthy foods all year long. Eat a good breakfast high in protein .
- 2) Make sure your student gets enough sleep especially during high stakes testing days. Make sure that your child is well rested on school days and especially the day of a test.
- 3) Make sure your student is studying each night rather than cramming the night before a test.
- 4) During the scheduled study time, ask your child what material he or she thinks might be on the test. Go over questions at the end of each section or the end of the chapter. Look at words that are in bold, refer to class notes. Pay special attention to diagrams, charts, and maps.
- 5) Provide a private, personal area for studying with good lighting and comfortable seating.
- 6) Help your student if they initiate the request because they are "stuck". Work together to develop routines, checklists, strategies and systems. Break tasks into smaller, more workable sub-units and show how the parts work as a whole.
- 7) Give your student a reasonable time limit on daily studying. They should not be doing homework/studying in all hours of the night. Know how long you can expect your child to concentrate at one time.
- 8) Reduce the amount of time for TV watching on school nights.
- 9) Make sure your child attends school regularly. Remember, tests do reflect children's overall achievement. The more effort and energy a child puts into learning, the more likely he/she will do well on tests.
- 10) Work together to discuss study choices and habits as a family -- involve the student in making decisions about the best way to study.

High School Graduation Qualifying Exam: April 3, 4, 5, 2007
SAT Test: March 10, May 5, June 2
ACT Test: April 14, June 9, 2007

Diploma VS Non-diploma Track

Diploma: High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE):

Taking the HSGQE for the First Time?

For sophomores, this spring will be the first exposure to the HSGQE.

Suggestions for them include:

1. Take the practice HSGQE which can be found on the State of Alaska, Department of Education website to become familiar with the look of the test
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/hsgqe.html>.
2. Learn and practice good test taking skills. You can find some examples on the ASD website at
<http://www.asdk12.org/depts/sped/study.asp>.
3. Remember, the HSGQE is a test to measure your knowledge after having completed 12 years of school. As a sophomore, if you pass any or all portions of the test, that could be considered exceptional. If you don't pass, it would be considered normal. Sophomores may not have yet been exposed to some of the information requested on the test.

Some good advice comes from Josh Kahler, a senior who has passed all portions of the exam this year after having failed the exam previously. He says, "No matter what you get for scores, never give up. Stay in school. Use a calculator if it's part of your accommodations. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Use all of your accommodations." Good advice from a student who has had to concentrate on passing the test after having not been successful before. Regardless of your test results, remember, there will be another opportunity to take and pass the HSGQE. Preparation, advocating for what you need and a positive attitude will go a long way to ensure success the next time.

Non-diploma: Alternate Assessment:

Participation in special education alternate assessments

It is expected that a small (less than 2%) number of students will participate in alternate assessments. These will be students whose disabilities are so significant that they are not involved in a standard course of study leading to a high school diploma. When a student's IEP calls for Alternate Assessment, the reasons must be documented on the IEP.

In deciding that a student should participate in alternate assessments, an IEP team must ensure that the following criterion are met:

- ∞ The student's cognitive ability and adaptive skill levels prevent completing the standard academic curricula, even with modifications and accommodations.
- ∞ The student requires extensive direct instruction in multiple settings to apply and transfer skills.
- ∞ The student is involved in a functional, basic-skills education program.
- ∞ The student's inability to complete the standard academic curricula is not the result of extended absences; visual, auditory, or physical disabilities; emotional-behavioral disabilities; specific learning disabilities; or social, cultural, or economic differences.

The Alternate Assessment is given only through the 10th grade.



Dealing with Test Anxiety?

Feeling prepared is the the first step to feeling comfortable. Check out some of these websites for additional information on overcoming test anxiety:

Dealing with Test Anxiety -- Study Guides and Strategies
from the University of St. Thomas, <http://www.studygs.net/tstprp8.htm>

How to Keep Calm During Tests -- University of Texas Learning Center, <http://www.utexas.edu/student/utlc/lrnres/handouts/1305.html>

Vocational Coordinators

ASD Vocational Advisors for 2006-07:

Bartlett- Scott MacDonell (742-1842)
Benson- Janet Long (742-2070)
Chugiak- Dave Bariletti (742-3058)
Continuation - Ron Prewitt (742-1249)
Dimond- Rita Miller (742-7130)
East- Greg Hartlieb (742-2203)
Eagle River- Bob Ellers (742-2704)
KCC- Ellen Nash (742-8993)

Save I- Cliff Reimers (742-1250)
Service-Gaylee Erickson (742-8120)
South-Bob Kirm (742-6345)
West-Marge Christoffers (742-2530)
Whaley- Ron Brown (742-2439)
Whaley Outreach- John Freeman (742-2388)
Work Readiness- Tom Schmidt (742-8995)



Career Resources:

Nine Star Enterprises:
Developing Alaska's Workforce
Youth Services
Andi Nations-743-6074 Ext 300

Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:
Anchorage Job Center Muldoon 269-0001
(Ask about other locations)

Service Solutions:
Providing Links Between Non-Traditional Labor Pools & Employers
Phone: 269-0061, 269-0062

Alaska Job Corp:
Residential education & vocational training program: 562-6200

ARC of Anchorage: *Providing Links Between Non-Traditional Labor Pools & Employers with Ongoing Support*
Danny Parrish: 277-6677

Dates to Remember

Anchorage Municipal Voting: April 3

Job Fair: April 20, 2007
Mt. View Boys & Girls Club
269-4777

National Volunteer Week: April 15-21
www.pontsoflight.org

Statewide Alaska Points of Light Youth Leadership: June, 2007
For students 9-12, a 5-day residential youth leadership training. Call Beau Bassett for more information: 561-6630

ASD Career Information Center

The Anchorage School District and the Alaska Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) opened One Stop Shop in October this year. One Stop Shop is a student counseling and career information center dedicated to addressing the growing career and workforce needs of the state. One Stop Shop is located in the King Career Center West parking lot. Two DOLWD career guides, Judy Papineau & Karen Strash, work directly with students and provide current information on jobs and career opportunities as part of the High Growth Job Training Initiative. The guides also work with teachers and students as a part of the new Anchorage Construction Academy, where they have nearly doubled the enrollment of students into the program this year.

For more information contact: Rick Rios, Curriculum Coordinator, King Career Center
Phone: 742-8942
email: rios_rick@asdk12.org

Surrogate Parents Needed!



Many students in the Anchorage School District are in circumstances which require that they have a surrogate parent who may represent them in matters relating to their Special Education programs.

The surrogate parent acts in place of a parent and meets the following qualifications:

- 1. Has no personal or professional interests that could conflict with the interests of the child.*
- 2. Is not employed by the state education department or any public agency that is involved in the education or care of the child.*

If you are interested in being a surrogate parent, please call 742-4048 or 742-4281 for more information.

The Alaska Family Directory



This website is funded by a grant from the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and maintained by the Anchorage School District. This section includes calendars of educational opportunities for parents and educators that are specific to a region of Alaska. Included in each regional section is a listing of community organizations that provide assistance to families of special needs children in that specific area. Regional information is organized according to the following areas:

- o Far North
- o Interior
- o Southcentral
- o Southeast
- o Southwest

To view the calendar of events for a specific region of Alaska, go to the main website:
<http://www.asdk12.org/AFD/>

Then click on the map of Alaska for the region you want. When it goes to that region, click on "Calendar of Events". Use the arrow buttons to scroll through the months.

Special Education Community Forum

Special Education Community Forums are a disability outreach and informational series of workshops for everyone; parents, teachers, students, caregivers, etc.

***April 14, 2007
Wendler Middle School
8:30 AM to 1:00 PM***

**Helping Ease the Way for Changes in the
Lives of Children With Special Needs**

Topics include: Using Technology to Accommodate the Special Needs of Students, ADD/ADHD, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, Community Transition Services, Early Literacy Skills, A Child's Perspective in Adoption

For more information contact the STeP Center at 742-3872 or click on the SECF icon on our website:

<http://www.asdk12.org/depts/step/>

***Free childcare by calling 742-3872 24 hours in advance.
This Special Education Community Forum Is a FREE event.***

