

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #107 (2009-2010)

November 9, 2009

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: GRADUATION COACHES 1ST QUARTER DATA
PRESENTATION

ASD Goal: All students will graduate from high school, college and career ready.

PERTINENT FACTS:

High School Graduation Support Coordinators, commonly referred to as Graduation Coaches, have been working with Anchorage School District high school students in each of the eight comprehensive high schools and in Polaris, SAVE and Benson Secondary. The coaches were hired during the first semester of 2008-2009 and worked closely with school staff, community agencies and parents to complete their responsibilities of keeping students in school and moving forward academically to stay on-track for graduation and earn their high school diploma.

Each graduation coach was assigned a case management load of between 60-90 students who were identified as potentially high-risk youth with a variety of academic challenges. In all of the high schools, a total of about 800 students were identified and assigned to a coach during the school year. Criteria used to select students who would benefit from having a graduation coach included a history of excessive school absences, discipline incidents, credit deficiency, economic disadvantage, teen pregnancy, and a variety of other items that might hamper a student from attending school on a regular basis and moving toward high school graduation.

Students of all levels were coached. Of the 800 students served in the 2008-2009 school year, about 35 percent were ninth graders, 25 percent were tenth graders, 20 percent were eleventh graders and 20 percent were twelfth graders.

As graduation coaches worked with students, major consideration was given to the development of a positive adult connection with students by the coach and to involve the parent/guardian in the student's success in school. Coaches worked

to get students involved in school activities, clubs and sports as well as after school tutoring classes.

The first year of operation was deemed a success without knowing exactly how many students were saved from dropping out or how many earned a diploma because of the Graduation Coach. As a next step in improving the effectiveness of the graduation coaches, new procedures and reporting schedules have been put into place this school year to track student progress on a quarterly basis in several areas known to be tied to student drop out prevention.

CC/EG/MH

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