

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #19 (2006-2007)

August 14, 2006

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: SCHOOL BOARD POLICY REVISIONS: SECTION 443.1
ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS (FIRST READING)

ASD Goal #3: Ensure public accountability through effective communication with students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of the Administration that the School Board adopt on First Reading the recommended policy changes for School Board Policy 443.1 Absenteeism and Tardiness.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The state's Student Data Reporting Manual, adopted by reference in Alaska regulation, indicates that students with more than ten consecutive absences without parent contact should be dropped from the District's rolls. Current Anchorage School District policy indicates that such a withdrawal will only occur if the absences are the first ten consecutive days of school. The recommended policy changes clears up this inconsistency while clearly setting the direction that schools are to make reasonable efforts to contact parent/guardians to return students to full-time attendance.

Additionally, the recommended policy language clarifies that high school students absent fifteen times or the equivalent, depending on school schedules, may be denied credit for the class and dropped from the class rolls. Current language indicates this as a certainty with case-by-case exceptions. With the substantial efforts in the high school division to provide alternate educational opportunities to students through online and other methods, the exception has become more the rule, making a language change to reflect current practice advisable.

The Policy committee unanimously approved the changes at its July 17, 2006 meeting with a technical change at an August 9, 2006 meeting.

Attachment

CC/RG

Prepared by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Approved by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

443.1 Absenteeism and Tardiness

Removal of Students from Membership Rolls

a. Any student with more than ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence without parent/guardian contact will be dropped from the District's rolls. The school will make and document reasonable efforts, including attempting to contact the parent/guardian, to return a student to full-time attendance prior to withdrawing the student for non-attendance unless otherwise required by state law. Students served by visiting teachers are not considered absent.

b. The principal of each unit shall be responsible for monitoring student attendance and taking actions to discourage and minimize excessive absenteeism. If a student is absent an excessive number of times, excused or unexcused, the principal shall take appropriate action to determine whether the student is habitually truant and/or needs alternative services.

Any high school student who is absent ten (10) times, or an equivalent time depending on the school schedule, in at least one class will be placed on attendance probation. A determination will be made as to the cause and whether the student needs alternative services. Any senior high school student who is absent fifteen (15) times or equivalent time depending on school scheduling or more may be denied credit for that class and may be dropped from class rolls. Exceptions may be granted by the Superintendent (or designee) based on special circumstances reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

c. Any student who is late for class shall be noted as tardy. Sanctions for tardiness may be taken at the discretion of the unit administrator.

d. The Superintendent or designee shall establish uniform procedures to implement this policy. Those procedures shall include:

(1) A method which assures that students and parents/guardians are informed of the District's attendance policy.

(2) Guidance concerning case by case review for special circumstances.

(3) A manner for notifying parents/guardians and students when a student's absenteeism approaches or exceeds acceptable limits and is considered habitually truant as defined in 443.3 (c).

(4) Procedures to ensure that students experiencing difficulty with attendance are counseled in an attempt to alleviate the problem and determine appropriate means for dealing with the student.

(5) The school staff in cooperation with the parent or guardian will develop a plan for improving school attendance. If the student and/or

parent/guardian is not willing to cooperate, or attendance does not improve to a satisfactory level, then the District will consider referring the student and/or guardian to the Anchorage Police Department/Alaska State Troopers as a habitually truant student in violation of the Anchorage Municipal Code (AMC 8.75.065).

(Section 443.2 - Revised January 27, 1997)

(Section 443.2 - June 22, 1998)

(Section 443.1 – Revised August 25, 2003)