

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #87 (2004-2005)

October 11, 2004

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: AASB OUTSTANDING SCHOOL BOARD AWARD

RECOMMENDATION:

It is requested that the School Board submit a nomination package for the Alaska Association of School Boards (AASB) Outstanding School Board Award for 2004-2005. It is also requested that the School Board adopt the 2004-2005 AASB Board Standards.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The AASB Outstanding School Board Award is designed to reflect a Board's involvement in Board Standards. In order to be eligible, a school board must be a member in good standing of AASB and have formally adopted Board Standards.

1. **Community Engagement:** This is a significant part of our culture. Our budget process is a community engagement process where focus groups look into the detail of our budget to find savings or identify creative ways to gain efficiencies. Our Six-Year Instructional Plan development process was a community engagement process. This year, along with other education groups, we held legislative candidate forums to highlight educational needs and hear the views of candidates for state elective office. School Board members are visible in the community. We attend family nights, potlucks, school picnics, celebrations and other outings. Communication with students, staff, community and families is a priority.
2. **Level of AASD/UAF Boardmanship Academy Attained:** Anchorage School Board members Tim Steele and Jake Metcalfe have received the Master Boardmanship Award. John Steiner, Mary Marks, Jeff Friedman,

Crystal Kennedy and Macon Roberts should qualify for the AASB Basic Boardsmanship Award this year.

3. **Demonstrated evidence of leadership as measured against AASB School Board Standards:** The Anchorage School Board is a leader for state educational issues. Our Board has been a long time supporter of the “Board Standards” and as a part of this package has taken action to reaffirm our belief in these standards. Former Board members Peggy Robinson, Kathi Gillespie, Debbie Ossiander and others should be thanked for their leadership in establishing a “Board Standards” culture that lives today on the Anchorage School Board.

**Vision:** Our Board has held two Board retreats this year. We met to discuss our procedures, vision and to “brain storm” ideas that might move toward achieving our goals. Our Board has a shared vision that we review, discuss and update each year.

**Structure:** In the spring 2003, we started the development of a Six-Year Instructional Plan with a series of community meetings. Every stakeholder was asked to provide input and many made positive contributions. This plan is considered a navigational tool to direct all District activities toward achievement of the Board’s stated goals. Our Six-Year Instructional Plan is to be reviewed annually and updated as needed to accomplish our goals. The plan gives our vision structure. The Anchorage School District’s Six-Year Instructional Plan will be presented at the Council of Great City School’s annual conference in Las Vegas in October 2004.

**Accountability:** One of our three “ongoing overall goals” is public accountability. Accountability is paramount in all aspects of Board business. If we want creditability, we need to have demonstrable success. We have developed a series of measurable goals to quantify our progress. Our success in reaching our goals is reported annually in the Profile of Performance. This document receives wide spread press coverage and distribution. The Profile of Performance results are used by the Board and the ASD Administration to make programmatic adjustments.

All of our major activities include public participation. Activities include: budget preparation, capital projects planning, boundary adjustments, naming of schools, controversial issues concerns, minority concerns, military concerns, and student concerns. There are representatives from the students, and military and minority community that serve in an advisory capacity to the School Board.

**Advocacy:** We are a significant participant in Alaska ICE training and advocacy for kids. In addition to school and support activity site visits, each Board member is responsible for participating in community activities. Specific responsibilities include: Chamber of Commerce Education Committee, Federation of Community Councils, Minority Education Concerns Committee, School Business Partnership, and PTA Central Council. These assignments rotate each year.

We also make it a point to participate in Community activities; i.e., Community Schools Salmon Run, Wild About Anchorage Trivia Contest, Safe Walk to School Day activities, Dr. Seuss Read-In, student theater, music performances, and the Bear Paw Festival.

At Board meetings, we recognize staff and student achievements and have musical performances and presentations from student groups.

**Conduct-Ethics:** The Anchorage School Board is always aware of its ethical responsibilities. The Board is very careful to conduct all business and take all votes in public. Each year every Board member reviews and signs the school board “code of ethics.” All public forums, activities or events where three or more members will be present are properly noticed. Conflicts of interest or possible conflicts are disclosed. Meetings are conducted in a fair and respectful manner. All of our regular meetings and most of our work sessions are televised and broadcast over our public service television channel.

4. **Participation in State and Natural Activities:** The Anchorage School Board members are active in: Alaska Association of School Boards (AASB), National School Board Association (NSBA), Council of Great City Schools, and the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE).

Tim Steele and Mary Marks are on the AASB Board of Directors and have participated on the political influence, budget, community engagement and student achievement committees. Tim Steele and other Board members also participate each year on the legislative resolutions Committee. AASB legislative “fly-ins” are attended by at least three or four Anchorage Board members.

Jake Metcalfe is involved at the national level and attends NSBA and Council of Great City Schools meetings. This summer, along with Superintendent Comeau, all ASD Board members attended a social function with the executive board of the Council of Great City Schools.

Mary Marks is active in CUBE and NSBA. Mary Marks participated in a panel discussion in San Antonio Texas in October 2004 as a member of the CUBE Communications Task Force. She presented the Anchorage School District's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program successes, our School Business Partnership efforts and discussed community engagement issues. Ms. Marks also is involved in NSBA as the secretary/treasurer of the Alaska Native School Board Caucus and is an Extended Learning Opportunity Program advisory participant.

5. **Evidence of Growth in Student Achievement:** Our goals and our Six-Year Instructional Plan are signs of our intent to make progress. The Profile of Performance report shows where progress was achieved and where extra effort is needed to improve. Significant progress was made last year, toward most goals, but some adjustment is necessary to continue positive improvement. Data from this year's Profile of Performance will be utilized to guide our program emphasis for next year.

Anchorage has an outstanding staff, administration and school board. After a complete turnover on the Board, it has been stable since April 2003; we are seeing steady movement in the right direction. The Board is working incredibly well with the administration and with each other.

Attachment

TS/CC/mks

Prepared/Approved by: Tim Steele, President, Anchorage School Board