

## MECAC Questions, Ideas and Concerns from 4/17/2013

Subject	Question/idea/concern	Response
<b>Budget</b>	Budget deficit: As Chad reported, the budget forecast is gloomy and annual budget cuts are necessary for the next few years, I would like to make sure that the cuts do not affect non-white students disproportionately. I would like to see the Committee discuss this issue and how we can better advocate for kids and make sure that cuts affect everyone equally	Added to the Parking Lot for future discussion  <u>UPDATE:</u> A budget presentation was added as an annual agenda topic for October, beginning with October 2013.
<b>Student Achievement</b>	<b>Have a credit recommendation for middle school similar to high school so students get serious about completing classes.</b>	Middle school students (grades 6, 7 and 8), are not required to accumulate credits toward graduation.
	<b>Require a 2.0 GPA at the middle school in order for students to play sports in middle school.</b>	Middle School sports requirements are set by the Middle School Instructional Division. More information can be found at <a href="https://www.asdk12.org/activities/ms/participation/">https://www.asdk12.org/activities/ms/participation/</a> or contact Jerry Koetje@ <a href="mailto:koetje_jerry@asdk12.org">koetje_jerry@asdk12.org</a> for more information.
	As we look at student achievement and closing the achievement gap, a dialog about the importance of culture (culturally relevant strategies, etc.)	Added to the Parking Lot for future discussion  <u>UPDATE:</u> A Student Achievement and Attendance presentation was given at April MECAC meeting. (See also February mtg questions regarding culturally relevant strategies specifically related to Response to Instruction and Common Core State Standards.)
	Is there “drill down” data on the “whys” of the attendance rate?	Added to the Parking Lot for future discussion  <u>UPDATE:</u> Attendance was addressed in April MECAC presentation on Student Achievement and Attendance.
	Why is our school board discussing School Choice instead of dealing with curriculum grades 1-12; busing costs; people losing jobs; why were diplomas reprinted?	School Choice is both a legal requirement and an educational equity issue: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School Choice is a legal requirement under NCLB <a href="http://www.asdk12.org/esea/nclbschoolchoice/">http://www.asdk12.org/esea/nclbschoolchoice/</a> .</li> <li>2. It is also important that the School Board continue to review all educational opportunities and discuss how to make these opportunities accessible to all students. Transportation (bussing) is a huge part of this discussion.</li> <li>3. For information on graduation and diplomas contact Derek Hagler @ <a href="mailto:hagler_derek@asdk12.org">hagler_derek@asdk12.org</a>.</li> </ol>

What impact has the HSGQE had on our graduation rate since it was implemented?

We cannot measure a direct impact of the HSGQE on graduation rate.

What percentage of non-grads (Certificate of Achievement) are of color, ELL? What percentage are non-color

Graduation data is available for each high school at the following link.

[http://www.asdk12.org/depts/assess\\_eval/POP/1112/POP\\_High\\_1112.pdf](http://www.asdk12.org/depts/assess_eval/POP/1112/POP_High_1112.pdf)

Are students falling behind by being in RTI and not attending regular classes? When they join the regular class are they already behind and having to catch up? How is this being addressed?

RTI follows a simple plan of continuous instruction, screening, intervention and monitoring.

1. **Core instruction:** All students receive high-quality reading and math instruction. The lessons are aligned to Grade Level Expectations and state standards.
2. **Universal screening:** When fully implemented all students' reading and math skills will be assessed three times each year. Universal screening helps educators identify the learning needs of all students and guide core instruction. The district is using two types of assessments for universal screening, AIMSweb and COREK12. Each assessment tool targets critical skills and specific grade levels.

**AIMSweb** - Grades K-4. Assessment is individually administered and takes about five minutes per child.

**COREK12** - Grades 5-10. Entire class is assessed at the same time on computers. Screening takes about 45 minutes, or the equivalent of one class period.

3. **Intervention:** Instructional interventions are used in addition to core instruction. The interventions are based on the needs of the students, as determined by the universal screening.
4. **Progress monitoring:** Brief measures, lasting one to five minutes, of basic reading and math skills. The monitoring measures the effects of interventions for at-risk students. Progress monitoring may occur up to four times per month, based on student need. AIMSweb is the tool used for intervention progress monitoring of all students in grades K-12.

Can we break out the graduation rate by race and ethnicity?

The Anchorage School District produces several reports to assess school performance, goals, student issues and community input. By law each school is required to have a School Report Card which shows the graduation data by race/ethnicity. To access this information by high school go to the following link on the District's website:

<http://www.asdk12.org/aboutschools/high/> .

How many students aged 16 and up leave school to help support family?  
How is attendance impacted by students who work to support family?

While schools may know of some students who fall into these categories, ASD is not always told of reasons for a student leaving school or absences due to work to support family.

On the Superintendent's PowerPoint page 4 "Is 90% achievable by 2020?" the graphs show steep declines in reading and math between 06-07 and approximately 08-09. What are the theories, if any, to explain these declines?

Added to the Parking Lot for future discussion

UPDATE: A Student Achievement and Attendance presentation given in April 2013 addressed these questions.

How are assessments being given to students in resource (RTI) classes normally communicated to the parents?

If the term 'resource' is in reference to special needs students, Alaska regulations (34 CFR § 300.309 adopted by 4 AAC 52.120) allow districts to determine their own processes; however, any process that involves a student's response to intervention cannot impede or delay timely evaluation for the purposes of special education. Districts must at all times comply with the following:

"(c) The public agency must promptly request parental consent to evaluate the child to determine if the child needs special education and related services, and must adhere to the timeframes described in §§. **300.301** [initial evaluations] and **300.303** [reevaluations], unless extended by **mutual written agreement** of the child's parents and a group of qualified professionals, as described in § **300.306(a)(1)**--  
(1) If, prior to a referral, a child has not made adequate progress after an appropriate period of time when provided instruction, as described in paragraphs (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section; and  
(2) Whenever a child is referred for an evaluation."

[https://www.asdk12.org/media/anchorage/globalmedia/documents/specialed/handbook/AK\\_SPED\\_Handbook.pdf](https://www.asdk12.org/media/anchorage/globalmedia/documents/specialed/handbook/AK_SPED_Handbook.pdf)

### Community Relations and Parent Involvement

Advertise MECAC and its goals in every community newsletter (Korean, Polynesian, etc.). Get the word out - invite the public to participate/ connect/speak.

The Superintendent agrees. Forwarded to Communications Department.

Increased and more effective District/parent communication

The Superintendent agrees. Forwarded to Communication Department.

There is a lack of access to interpreters for non-English speaking families within the ASD. Some actions for the refugee families should be taken by the ASD in order to improve the situation.

The District has a Language Access Plan that provides parents access to their student's education. To request interpreter services (world language and sign language) parents should contact the principal or call the ELL Department directly.

The District uses only trained adult interpreters.

Update: Presentation given on ASD's Language Access Plan on May 30, 2013.

### Curriculum Adoption and Implementation

Create an opportunity for a foreign language high school credit from community group schools (example: Saturday Korean School)

For more information and guidance on how students can earn high school credit in world language contact Brandon Locke at [Locke\\_Brandon@asdk12.org](mailto:Locke_Brandon@asdk12.org).

ASD (should) create a "grow our own" CTE program to produce our future teachers

The District has successfully partnered with local and state agencies in the past to design and fund several 'grow our own' teacher programs and will continue to look for opportunities in the future. The District will continue to work with the Alaska State Department of Education and with UAA and APU to develop multiple paths to teaching including possibilities with CTE.

What are schools doing for students who are victims of bullying?

The Anchorage School District has specific policies against bullying, and has strong sanctions in place for students and staff who violate the policy. All district employees receive annual training on preventing harassment and bullying, and a variety of programs are used to help teach students the right ways to resolve personal conflicts. Every school has a "school action plan" on how to reduce harassment, discrimination and violence and maintain a safe learning environment for all students

Added to Parking Lot for future discussion

UPDATE: An ASD Anti-Bullying Strategies presentation given on August 29, 2013. At the group's request, public presentations on the same topic were also scheduled for January 22 and March 26, 2014.

### Cultural Competence

Offer more professional development to staff on biases.

The District has spent years developing a diversity training model based on the strategies and procedures of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI). This program has a trained cadre of leaders and works in conjunction with the SEL and Culturally Responsive Education programs to provide professional development that is reflective, skills-based, and focused on building environments where people want to belong.

For more information on NCBI contact Margo Bellamy @ [bellamy\\_margo@asdk12.org](mailto:bellamy_margo@asdk12.org)

	Consider hands-on training in using community organizations to stage how a classroom would feel if the teacher was the minority (white privilege)	See above response.
<b>Equity</b>	When will the school district allow Halal (meat products) food on the school menu?	For more information the District's menu and menu request process contact Student Nutrition Director Alden Thern at <a href="mailto:Thern_Alden@asdk12.org">Thern_Alden@asdk12.org</a> .
	Train high school students in interpreter practice and employ them to give students job opportunities and to provide schools with more resources.	Due to the confidential nature of most education issues, the Anchorage School District only uses trained adult world language and sign language interpreters. For career information on interpreter services contact the EEO Office or the Language Interpreter Center.
	When giving charts and graphs, all groups need to be recognized. Special Ed as a group should be recognized in this community as a minority and should be included in all statistics.	The organization of power point and other presentations depends on the intent of the presenter and the purpose of the presentation. So, while there is data available for all student subgroups, every presentation may not include the data for all subgroups.
	Add to the list of MECAC participants their affiliation/representation.	This information will be collected from the at-large members at the May 2013 meeting.
	Add a member of the Sudanese community to MECAC.	MECAC membership is based on an application process that is open to all stakeholders. As MECAC positions become available, the MECAC facilitator will continue to distribute the information and opportunity to apply to individuals and the organization which they represent.