

**1/28/11
UPDATE:
GRADUATION
WORKING
GROUP,
DEED**

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WORKING GROUP, DEED</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDC27</COMM></TARGET>

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Graduation Working Group

Overview, Purpose and Evolution of Group

- Education Summit held November, 2009. Alaska Education Plan established as a result of input from people throughout Alaska and Summit attendees.
- Working groups, including Graduation Working Group were formed to continue the work begun at the Summit.
- Group began work on the goal of World Class Students in January, 2010, with a focus on improving graduation rates, strategies for engaging students.
- Group's initial focus was on high school. With realization that many students are lost at the transition points between elementary and middle, middle and high school focus shifted to include elementary and middle school. Group recognizes importance of the very earliest years to children's later success in school.
- Conversations moved from focus on high school graduation to retention in school and back to graduation.

Membership includes a broad group of stakeholders from throughout the state

- High school students
- Governor's Council on Disabilities
- High School Principals
- District Superintendents
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC)
- Anchorage's Promise
- Communities in Schools
- University of Alaska Statewide
- State Agencies: Department of Education & Early Development; Department of Health and Social Services; Department of Corrections;
- Members of House Education Committee
- State Board of Education & Early Development

Working Group Goals:

- To improve the connectedness and/or flexibility of our schools to meet the needs of all students.
- Increase community partnerships and build relationships, which eliminate barriers to learning.
- Increase involvement among culturally unique families and communities in Alaska schools.
- Evaluate current pre-service and certification course work requirements on Multi-cultural and Alaska Studies to assist staff in meeting the unique culturally responsive needs of our changing student populations.

Accomplishments

- At each meeting group members shared the positive steps being taken throughout the state to increase graduation rates.

- Began examination/analysis of policies and procedures that disenfranchise students.
- Suggestions from group regarding Alaska studies and multicultural requirements for teacher certification were presented to the Teacher Quality Working Group and incorporated into the work that group is doing to re-examine course requirements to make them meet the needs of Alaska's changing student populations.
- Middle School Partnership Program established through work of EED Partnership Liaison and RuralCap is linked with group.
- Created and distributed Raising a Graduate poster
- Work being completed on Every Student a Graduate link on EED website:
 - provide resources for students, families, teachers and others interested in increasing student success and increasing graduation rates
 - provide ideas for resolving issues that disenfranchise students and lead to dropping out of school
 - provide information regarding early warning signs for students at risk of dropping out

Next Steps

- Mr. McCormick and Ms. Curran will present the work done by the group to Commissioner Hanley to get direction regarding next steps for the work.

Graduation Rates and Dropout Rates Definitions and Data

The Graduation Rate is a measure of the percentage of students that graduate within four years.

A **graduate** is defined as a student who has received a regular diploma from a state- or district-approved education program, as evidenced by receipt of a secondary school diploma from school authorities.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Graduation Rate</u>	<u>Graduate Count</u>
2005	61.4%	6,905
2006	61.6%	7,361
2007	63.0%	7,666
2008	62.6%	7,855
2009	67.5%	8,008
2010	67.7%	8,245

The Dropout Rate is computed by dividing the number of dropouts in the current school year by the number of students enrolled in grades 7-12 on October 1 of the current school year. School year is defined as the 12-month period beginning with July 1 and ending June 30.

A **Dropout** is defined as a student who was enrolled in the district at some time during the school year and whose enrollment terminated. This does not include an individual who:

- graduated from high school or completed a state or district approved education program, as evidenced by receipt of formal recognition from school authorities;
- transferred to another public school, private school or state or district approved education program;
- is temporarily absent due to suspension;
- is absent due to illness or medical condition;
- died.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Dropout Rate</u>	<u>Dropout Count (Grades 7-12)</u>
2005	6.0%	3,791
2006	5.8%	3,642
2007	5.5%	3,434
2008	5.2%	3,232
2009	5.2%	3,146
2010	5.15%	2,990

Dropout Prevention Information

Institute of Education Sciences (IES) identified six recommendations for reducing dropout rates*. The recommendations are divided into three categories: diagnostic processes for identifying student-level and school-wide dropout problems; targeted interventions for a subset of middle and high school students who are identified as at risk of dropping out; and school-wide reforms designed to enhance engagement for all students and prevent dropout more generally.

Recommendation	Type of Intervention	What state and districts are implementing
Utilize data systems that support a realistic diagnosis of the number of students who drop out and that help identify individual students at high risk of dropping out.	Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairbanks has developed Dropout Indicators
Assign adult advocates to students at risk of dropping out.	Targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anchorage Graduation Coaches Fairbanks Advisories for interventions
Provide academic support and enrichment to improve academic performance.	Targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI)
Implement programs to improve students' classroom behavior and social skills.	Targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI) Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
Personalize the learning environment and instructional process.	School-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools within schools Early stages of development of statewide virtual learning network
Provide rigorous and relevant instruction to better engage students in learning and provide the skills needed to graduate and to serve them after they leave school.	School-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EED contracted with Content Coaches to be available to schools and districts EED beginning stages of review of content standards and GLEs EED building tools to integrate cultural standards into instruction

* *IES Practice Guide Dropout Prevention* September, 2008. Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education, Evaluation and Regional Assistance, US Department of Education.

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education has produced a publication: *Chart Your Course*, which is a newspaper for middle school students to encourage them to plan ahead so they can attend college.

<http://alaskadvantage.state.ak.us/page/236#BookHand>



Raising a Graduate It's Everybody's Business

Everyone is a role model—be a good one.

Read with children.

Show you care. Smile at youths and say hi.

Help youths develop a vision for their future.

Get involved in your schools.

Catch youths being good and recognize them.

Help youths explore their pathways to graduation.

Provide positive challenges for youths.

Involve youths in decision-making.

Create opportunities for youths to volunteer.

Provide a safe and supportive home.

Graduation Opens the Doors to Future Opportunities

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development