



# KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Office of Superintendent

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## M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** March 30, 2010  
**TO:** Members, Board of Education  
**FROM:** Steve Atwater, Ph.D. *Steve Atwater*  
Superintendent of Schools  
**RE:** Worksession - Drug Testing Students Who Participate in Co-Curricular Activities

**Background:**

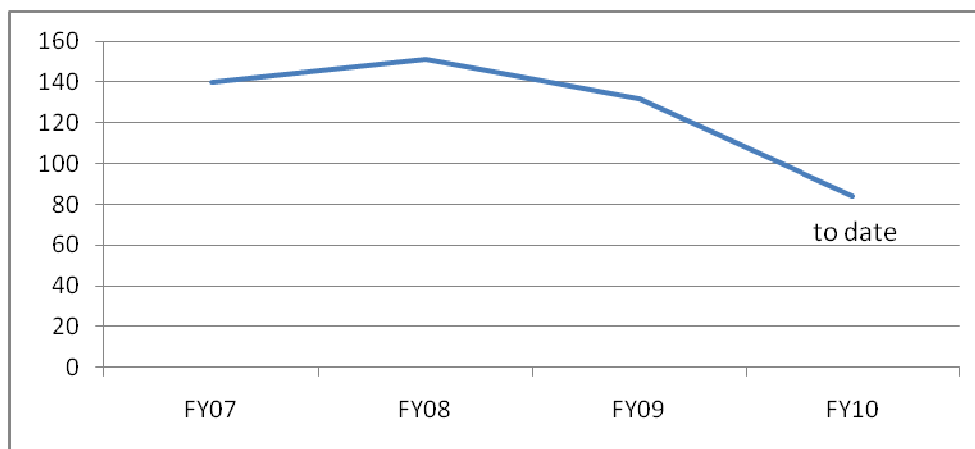
The following six points are presented as information to guide your discussion on drug testing students who participate in co-curricular activities.

- Legality:** In 1995 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that testing of student athletes is constitutional. (Veronia School District 47J v. Acton, 515 U.S.646 (1995). In 2002 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public middle and high schools can conduct random drug tests of students who take part in after school activities (Board of Education of Independent School District No.92 of Pottawatomie County vs. Earls 122 S.Ct. 2559 (2002). Since then, numerous school districts across the country have adopted policy that allows drug testing of students.
- Effectiveness:** I looked at several studies of student drug testing and found that most concluded that drug testing led to a reduction in drug use while a few concluded that testing was not effective because many of the drug using students were not tested.
- Pros and Cons:** There are numerous arguments that either support or oppose student drug testing. The following table summarizes the main points of the two sides

Pros	Cons
Discourages drug use by students- provides an "out" for students.	Privacy and civil rights issues
Provides some "teeth" to policy and drug education	Presumable innocence and unwarranted search
Several studies show that it reduces drug use by students	Addresses the symptom and not the cause
	Cost of testing- what gets cut?

4. **Cost:** Average costs of the test range from 15-30 dollars/test. The cost depends on how many tests for drugs are performed. A lab in Ohio for example, charges \$3/drug. We have approximately 2300 secondary students who participate in co-curricular activities each year. Testing 10% of these students at \$30/test= \$6900. Another consideration with cost is when a student challenges a finding- this resulting test is closer to \$100. Please note: these figures are “ballpark” they are based on what is charged in Juneau.
5. **Local Information:** I either met with or spoke to the police in Homer, Kenai, Seward and Soldotna. They all concur that student partying is on-going. There was not a sense (by them) however, that the level of drug use was rapidly changing. The following graph illustrates this at the school discipline level. The comment from Homer Police was perhaps most telling in that the indicators of drug use (number of ambulance referrals, drug related deaths, car wrecks, arrests) is not changing. This does not suggest that drug use is not real; it does suggest that the issue is not growing. Of note is that there is some evidence that students are not just drinking and smoking pot, but also using prescription drugs and more disturbingly, heroin.

Number of drug related discipline infractions (District-wide) 2007-present



6. **Other:** Three school districts in Alaska test their students (Ketchikan, Sitka and Juneau). Lower Kuskokwim also tests students but does this on a local level. That is, each school decides if they want to drug test their students. Some districts have a practice of voluntary drug testing. Juneau does this and entices students to do so by offering a reward/prize for these students. Also of note is that some districts test students who drive to school. Attached to this memo is a summary of drug testing information from some districts from around the country.

**Reason for this Worksession Item:** An action item on the April 5 Board agenda will ask you to consider forming a task force that would more thoroughly examine whether we want to adopt policy that would guide drug testing our students who participate in co-curricular activities. The worksession discussion on this topic is designed to help you with your vote on this action item.

### Survey of School District Testing for Drugs

District	Frequency of testing	Policy adopted	Students Tested	Cost	Other
Box Elder SD Brigham City, UT 84302 435.734.4800 Office Terry Jackson (Asst Supt)	Weekly – random selection 1% (10) per week	2009	HS x-curricular (sports, cheerleading, drill teams)		Self sustaining: Kids pay for testing thru athletic fee. Works fairly well, as deterrent. Health Dept recommended "observed sample" - they quickly backed off of this.
Shasta UHSD Shasta, CA 530-241-3261 Lane Carlson	Random Once/sports session 10% per session	2004-05	High School Athletes		Successful program
Fresno Off of Educ. Vince Wesson ( Safe & Healthy Kids) 559-265-3098	6000 enrolled 5 tests for each of 6 sites ~30-35 students per test Random selection	2005	-voluntary only HS	\$25-37	Emailed further info - attached
School District of Hobart IN 219-942-8885 Carol Obrien, Nurse	HS 2/mo, Middle 1/mo Random 30-40/time out of 1300 students	2008	Anyone in x curricular (HS & MS) -Drivers	\$30	Grant paid for 3 years. Students don't favor it Met with public-not well advertised
Wood County Educ Serv. Bowling Green , OH Barry Parsons (Coord. ATOD Drug Testing & Preven.) 419-308-4760	Beginning of Sport and two more times in season. 5% to 15% (varies/school)	2008-2009 (varies/schl)	6 school districts in grant (Otsego, Perrysburg, Elmwood, N Baltimore, Rossford, Northwood) -Athletes and students involved with competitive x-curricular & student volunteers.	Test up to 6 panel @ \$15/ea. Steriods test - \$80 (tests vary/school)	3 year grant with feds. Terrific to hold kids accountable Successful program. Sending surveys & info packet. Willing to help with further info.
Scottsbluff HS, NB 308-635-6223 Galen Nighswonger, Principal	10 students/week, random	2006	Students in sports, drill, Cheerleaders, FFA, DECA, Speech Team, Debate Team, Play participants. -If grade given, no drug test.	\$39.50/urine \$43.50/oral	See attached