July 23, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: City and County Superintendents Education
    High Schools Principals (Grades 9-12)

FROM: Joseph B. Morton
      State Superintendent of Education

RE: Student Exit Interview
    Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564

In an attempt to decrease the number of students who drop out of school and to increase the age of students that are required to attend public school, the 2009 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature passed and Governor Riley signed the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564. This law amends several sections of the Code of Alabama, 1975, regarding mandatory school attendance and also adds Section 16-28-3.1.

Section 16-28-3 was amended to require every child between the ages of 7 and 17 years to attend a public school, private school, church school, or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year. The exception for church school students remains the same and should be addressed at the district and/or school level per Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 16-28-1.

Section 16-28-3.1 references the withdrawal from public school prior to graduation of a student if both of the following circumstances exist:

1. Written consent is granted by the child’s parent or legal guardian.
2. An exit interview is conducted with the student and the student’s parent or legal guardian.

The student who withdraws from school prior to receiving a diploma shall be provided information regarding the detrimental impacts and negative effects of early withdrawal from school. Additionally, information including available training, enrollment in a Postsecondary Adult Basic Education Program, and employment programs shall be provided where available. Other possible options and available community resources or programs should also be provided.

Enclosed is a revised Student Exit Interview form and a suggested process that has demonstrated a positive impact on hundreds of Alabama students. This document may be customized for your local education agency and found in its entirety on our Web site at www.alsde.edu by clicking on Prevention and Support Services. Should a student fail to return to school without completing the official withdrawal process, attempts to contact the student and his/her parent or guardian should be documented on the Student Exit Interview form.
Should you have questions regarding the Student Exit Interview form or other aspects of the Senate Bill 334, Alabama Act 2009-564, please telephone Mr. Jim Toney or Dr. Kay Atchison Warfield at 334-242-8165 or e-mail at jtoney@alsde.edu or kaw@alsde.edu.

JBM/KAW/BHL

Enclosures

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