

REPORT TO THE SWRS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Educating our future...



**"Irniaten-Ilu
kenkellerpeggun
qigcikliki.**

**Through love,
respect your
children."**

--Bristol Bay Yup'ik Values

Board of Education

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Staffing

During the past month we have been busy here at district office with staffing plans for next school year. Contracts went out to certificated staff as the second step in the contract process a few weeks ago and the results have been very encouraging. We have an excellent rate of return among certificated staff for next year compared to previous years across the district. Most contracts have been returned signed at this time.

We are currently working to fill known openings and have already filled a number of positions with quality candidates thanks to the hard work of a team here at the office and site principals. Principals are participating in the hiring process to ensure that candidates are a good fit for the school and community. We are also preparing for the spring job fairs to fill remaining openings.

Legislative

As has often been the case in recent years, there is uncertainty about the state of the budget and what the legislature intends in terms of education funding for the coming year. This year is a bit different. A supplemental budget proposed by the Governor seeks to remove significant funding already approved and budgeted from the current school year's budget. This is unprecedented. That action was followed this last week by a proposed budget from the Governor's office that seeks to make sweeping cuts to education state-wide. Cuts of near 25% to the education budget overall.

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This would do unprecedented damage to our programs and schools if enacted, but we need to remember that these are merely proposed budgets. In order to have an effect, they must first be passed by both houses of our legislature and then signed into law. It does not appear from the first hearings held in the Senate that the legislature is prepared to make these kinds of cuts to critical programs across all departments of state government, or to education in particular. Some good news last week came in the form of the organization of the House, under a bipartisan coalition, headed by Bryce Edgmon, as Speaker of the House. We believe that this coalition will provide a balanced, and moderate approach as it did this past legislative season.

It is too early to tell how things will finally shake out in Juneau this spring, but we know that our representatives will work hard to protect programs and services, like education, that are vital for our region and state. We will work to ensure that the legislature understands the meaning and impact of the proposed cuts to our students. At this point, we are moving ahead with a status quo approach to budgeting, trusting that our legislature will take a measured approach and will fund education at an adequate level.



Mock up of artwork for the new Koliganek School.





Special Education

LeEsia O'Sullivan

Special Education Staff

On January 17th, the special education teachers met on distance delivery to collaborate by reviewing and discussing specific topics within the district. These topics included paperwork procedures, things that have been completed well, and things the team feels needs to be focused on to ensure our students are getting the best possible services. The special education teachers and staff try to meet once per month outside of the contracted day to ensure that they are working as a team towards focused goals.

This month, the special education teachers have an opportunity to attend the Alaska State Special Education Conference. During this conference, they will be able to collaborate with other special education teachers throughout the state. They will also have an opportunity to attend a variety of sessions related to special education and best practices. This will allow them to bring knowledge back to the team and classrooms to support their schools and students.

SWRSD Pre-Kindergarten Program

Audra Finkenbinder, Donna Gurley, and LeEsia O'Sullivan had an opportunity to attend the Anchorage Association for Education of Young Children Conference. During this conference, they were able to attend sessions designated to the pre-elementary grantees. Some of the topics included information regarding state funded pre-elementary programs, pre-elementary strategic planning, using developmental screening on early care and learning settings, and the coverage of the AKCLIMBS handbook. This conference has given these individuals vital information to take back to the district to support all of the pre-k teachers and programs.

At this time, all sites, with the exception of Clark's Point, has a pre-elementary program up and running. Although the programs are just getting started, it is apparent that the students and communities are enjoying the new educational opportunities. The goal of the pre-elementary programs is to ensure that our students are gaining the skills and knowledge necessary for them to be successful in kindergarten and throughout their educational experience within the Southwest Region School District.

The pre-elementary program has also participated in an in-service training provided by Supanika, a state pre-elementary specialist. The training has guided the pre-K staff through the AK CLIMBS handbook and My Teaching Strategies. All of the pre-elementary teachers and staff are currently working on getting their Interrater Reliability (IRR) certification. This certification will support the teachers in collecting data through observations. This data is used to determine growth within the pre-elementary program and its students.



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Yup'ik Studies

Esther Ilutsik, Director of Yup'ik Studies



Alaгнаqіq (Aleknagik) Students visit the Sam Fox Museum – February 17, 2019

The Alaгнаqіq school students enrolled in YCC 102: Tupignariuq: A Time for Seashore Grass Weaving received a mini BBNC Education Grant to gather seashore grass in Platinum but had to cancel because of weather. So the money was realigned to visit the Sam Fox Museum in Dillingham and also to interview a grass basket maker in Dillingham, at least two grass basket makers from Manokotak to visit their class in Aleknagik and to have a Weaver come during e-week to teach them the techniques of twinning and/or weaving grass baskets and balls.

The instructor Cuungaq (Melody Noden) with students Issrayak (Lloyd Active), Naucetaaq (Marki-Lynn Tinker), Angilan (Autumn Coolidge) and Maqac'aq (Tasha Gilila) drove down to Dillingham on January 17, 2019. Many of the students had not been to the museum before and were fascinated with the contents that represented items made and used by our ancestors. The grass baskets, mats and even grass balls were presented in a glass case with numbers and would identify the name of the maker. It was very hard for them to choose one that they had a special attachment to – the were all so beautiful and well made. Cuungaq with her knowledge base of grass basket making would point out how difficult it was to make some of the designs. After the museum we went to interview a grass basket maker at the Senior Citizen Center. Piisaq Alice Stephen formerly of Manokotak was interviewed with each of the students asking questions. Alice was impressed with their interest and gave them much positive encouragement as they move forward to creating and making their own grass baskets. Quयana Sam Fox Museum and Elder Piisaq Alice Stephens.

Alaгнаqіq Students write about experiences

Maqac'aq Tasha Gilila writes, at museum we saw grass baskets, grass balls, grass mats, grass decorations, ivory items, wooden masks, and other amazing things made by people long ago. The baskets looked so cool. There was a big basket that probably took a long time to make. There were baskets made by Margaret and Willie Wassillie from Togiak that had ivory carvings on the top. There were butterflies on one of the grass mats. There was a grass bird and it was my favorite item there. My favorite basket was the biggest basket, it was made by Mary Bavilla.

Naucetaaq Marki-Lynn Tinker writes, my favorite basket was made by LouLare Wassillie. It was my favorite because I liked her design and I really liked the ivory bear on the top of the basket lid. Issrayak (Lloyd Active) writes, my favorite grass basket was made by Margaret Wassillie from Togiak and her husband Willie Wassillie. The basket had a walrus made of ivory on the top of it. She makes nice grass baskets. The baskets have nice designs. The Sam Fox Museum has some nice baskets. I liked all the baskets on display.

Angilan (Autumn Coolidge) writes, we went down to the Sam Fox Museum to go look at all the different grass baskets there. There was about 55 Grass baskets made and shown in the glass cases. My favorite was number 9, made by Mary Bavilla from Togiak. I picked it because I liked the design. It was pretty. I saw more items, other than grass baskets in the museum. There was hunting gear, masks, animals skulls, ivory crafts, dolls, boots and

things made out of fish skin. It was cool to see all that stuff that our Bristol Bay people made and used long time ago when there were no stores around. It was cool to see how our people did stuff back then.

Yugtun App – January 11, 2019

Traveled out to Manokotak to met with sub-committee on January the 11th and met with Tan'iq Larry Bartman, Angutekayak Louise Gloko and Cungass'aq Grace Gamechuk of Manokotak. Songs and chants were selected for the language app. We also talked about subjects for videos that might be available. Manokotak will be the designated site where the Language App group will meet to record. The male and female voices of New Stuyahok and Togiak will participate.

Tuyuryaq (Togiak) Site Visit – January 31. 2019

Tuyuryaq Subsistence Class taught by Atik'aq (Sam Gosuk) Includes a student in Ingricuar (Twin Hills) Aiggailnguq (Daniel Pleasant). He “beams in using the polycom and observes and interacts with participants. They had caught a otter last semester so they were in the process of “fleshing” it for drying. They had also made a big pot of otter soup.

Atk'aq's YOR Year I was finishing up the previous month's lesson ...correcting tests and ending with a computer game. I was impressed with the correct pronunciation and recall of items reviewed.

Ukayiq (Martha Fox) is utilizing the K-2nd curriculum developed. The students were totally engaged. She had the students introduce themselves in Yup'ik. It showed a sense of pride in who they are. She had a great ball game where students would yell out the Yup'ik name of the student they were throwing it to. All the students took turns. She shared with me cloth dolls the students had made while teaching the unit on the creation of berries and how they had created art work to remember certain colors.

Kirpiar (Fanny Parker) was working with 7th/8th graders in YOR Year 1. Students were doing review as they were completing the end of the month lessons.

Cetuyaraq (New Stuyahok) Site Visit – February 5, 2019

Tat'iq (Tatianna Andrew) and Arnayagaq (Pauline Askoak) were busy planning lessons when I arrived. Then Tat'iq begin working with students who were enrolled in the Yup'ik Only Rule class. I was impressed with how well they remembered and spoke Yup'ik (small phrases). Throughout the class there were signs that they were going through the YOR year three. With models of power boats throughout the classroom. The Elders were present and helped with students with their crafts and practicing Yup'ik words.

Went down to Arnayagaq's (Pauline Askoak) classroom where she shared what her Kindergarten students were doing in Yup'ik. They are learning about the Northern Lights. Talked with some of the grandparents during lunch time and they were impressed with the Yup'ik her granddaughter would come home with. Good Job!

Ayaaginarr Sophie Walcott, Cook was selected by the Language App Committee to be one of the voices for the language app. So we had time to review the 700 words and phrases. Was pleased to go over it with her as we found two minor mistakes that were corrected.

Quyana Cetuyaraq Yup'ik Studies teachers!

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Instruction

Audra Finkenbinder, Director of Instruction

This time of year is a busy time for all staff members and students; educational conferences are being attended, basketball season is in full swing, E-week preparation is in motion, Spelling Bees are being held, and state assessments are around the corner (to list a few)!

I recently had the opportunity to attend and participate in the Anchorage Association for the Education of Young Children (AAEYC) Conference. AAEYC works to promote high-quality learning for children ages birth through eight years. Hundreds of educators gathered for professional development opportunities, to make new connections, and gain ideas and strategies to add to district programs. With Pre-School programs being established at all Southwest Region school sites, this conference was a ‘must attend’! All school sites are currently holding school wide Spelling Bees in preparation for the upcoming district wide spelling bee. The top three students from each site will compete in the district wide Spelling Bee on Wednesday, February 20th. The district wide winner will then compete in the Alaska State Spelling Bee taking place at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts' Discovery Theater in downtown Anchorage on Tuesday, March 19th, 2019.

The third Exploration Week is quickly approaching and will be held March 18th – 22nd. Students and staff look forward to E-Week with new topics being presented and new skills being acquired. Some of the upcoming classes include:

- Beaded Headdresses
- Ceramics
- Cross Country Skiing
- Culinary Arts: International Foods
- Lego Stop-Motion Animation
- Robotics
- Wilderness Survival
- Woodworking

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM



Charles Becker
Curriculum Specialist



Randy Finkenbinder
Curriculum Specialist



Information Systems

Les Parks, Director of Technology

Alaska PEAKS District Office Server Upgrades

Sites have been verifying the test readiness of their student iPads and laptops. Several sites are either finished or well under way. There have been only a few scattered, easily resolved issues, so actual testing will likely go quite smoothly

BAG Grant, E-Rate and CIPA Activities

All sites have completed their planning guides for the third, and a few have reported their lessons have now been delivered to students. As in previous years, the quarter 3 lessons will be the last for the 2018-2019 school year.

Category 1 and Category 2 Forms 471 have been entered into the USAC EPC Portal and are ready to be submitted and certified. These requests are for 10 Mbps connections as per the current guidance from the state. If BAG Grant legislation is introduced supporting 25 Mbps connections during the remaining 47 days of the filing window, we can still discard the current application and refile at the higher bandwidth amounts.

Additional Activities

Northern Air Cargo has donated us free freight services for up to three pallets and 2,000 pounds Dillingham to Anchorage. We will be palletizing e-wastes next week for shipment to Total Reclaim in Anchorage, who will properly dispose of our e-waste for a nominal fee of twenty-five cents per pound.



Corey Evans
Technology
Specialist

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State & Federal Programs

Jon Clouse, Director of State & Federal Programs

Title I-C Migrant Education

In mid-January, Kyle completed the Migrant Education Course History report and submitted it to EED. The report is required by the U.S. Department of Education and contains information about the classes that Migrant Education students took and whether or not they passed those classes. Included in the board packet are the most recent Migrant Education Family Night reports.

Impact Aid

Kyle worked with secretaries and principals to gather Impact Aid data for the October 28, 2017 count date for this year's Impact Aid submission. The paperwork has been signed by principals, officials in each village, the state tax assessor, and BBNA Land Realty. The final application has been submitted to the U.S. Department of Education with the help of Superintendent Noonkesser and CFO Trangmoe.

Career & Technical Education: BBRCTE

Session III Applications are due this month for session III occurring March 17th to the 22nd. We have some great course opportunities, A culinary arts course that can support students that hope to work in the food industry. The instructor is from Hawaii and comes to us with some awesome professional skills. We are offering an Introduction to Health Careers. This course will support students application on the next Allied Health class that will be held in Anchorage for session IV and include a job shadow at Providence Hospital. Lastly, we have a continuation course, Basic Marine Training, available to students that have taken the AVTEC Nautical Skills anytime in previous years.

Title IA

Title IA is a grant designated to support educational programs through a variety of activities including professional development, instructional aides, supplementary programs, and other activities. All of our schools are Title I "schoolwide" which means that all students can be supported with these funds. Each school as a Title I allocation that can be used to develop and implement after school programs (tutoring

STATE & FEDERAL PROGRAMS TEAM



Steve Ito
District Lead
Counselor & Test
Coordinator



Kyle Schneider
Student Support
Specialist



Dianna Schollmeier
Title Services
Specialist

or other activities) and parent involvement activities. The parent involvement activities are outlined in the Parent Involvement Plan for each school. Most schools have an after school tutoring program already established and there are a variety of parent involvement activities occurring at the schools. Some schools have implemented enrichment programs through STEM clubs that occur after school using their Title IA allocations.

New District Website

Over the past several weeks Kyle has been working with Blackboard Inc. to migrate our self-hosted website to their Community Web Manager product. Our existing website was quite dated and built on a platform that was many versions out of date. A committee at district-office met in the fall to review options, and the decision was made to use Blackboard's product, which is in use by 17 other Alaskan school districts. The new website should be live by the time this board report is published, but work remains ongoing.

Parent Communication

In mid-January, the letters for parents whose children had not received credit in one or more classes were sent home. These letters explain how students earn credits for classes and the requirements for graduating from high school.

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Aleknagik School

Miranda Bacha, Principal/Teacher

Aleknagik School entered the Sumdog Southwest and Aleutian Islands math contest. Eighty-five students entered the contest. The contest lasted one week and Aleknagik School won the competition. Eight of the top ten students in the competition were students from Aleknagik School. Their scores were based on the number of questions answered correctly. Five of the students completed over one thousand questions during the week! We are very proud!

Pre-school students are getting used to the school routine and they have been busy playing, working on fine and gross motor skills, and learning about liquids and solids in their science class.

Ryan Hickel has started a cross-country ski club and they are practicing after school two days per week. The elementary and middle school students are really enjoying being outdoors and learning this new skill.

Eight students are taking a high school credit guitar class. Students are learning how to hold and tune their guitars, use guitar picks, and how to read music.

The Aleknagik Boys Basketball team made the Anchorage newspaper! They hit the court this season for the first time in 32 years. They won all 3 games at their first home game and the community was there to show their support. They also earned the sportsmanship award at Thunder on the Tundra tournament in Togiak and at the Dillingham tournament.





Clarks Point School

Shannon Harvilla, Principal/Teacher

This has been an eventful few weeks here at Clarks Point School. We received a visit from Togiak National Wildlife Refuge. They presented to the students a slideshow about baby migratory birds, and got the kids excited to enter the Calendar Contest. The students of Clarks Point School have begun working on their submission and are excited for the contest.

Clarks Point School was also honored by a visit from the Nitaput Child Advocacy Center, through the Behavioral Health center at BBAHC. The students learned important personal safety lessons.

In March, the students of Clarks Point School will be participating in Pennies for Patients, a fundraiser for the Lymphoma and Leukemia Society. This service learning project will help the kids learn compassion and selflessness.



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Koliganek School

Deb Forkner, Principal

“Did I win? Did I lose? Those are the wrong questions. The correct question is: Did I make my best effort?” If so, he says, “You may be outscored but you will never lose.” Carol S. Dweck

This quote from Carol Dweck has been the focus of our school this month as we continue to work with our students and staff to have a growth mindset. Putting forth our best effort is what really matters and makes us winners.

Principal Forkner and Teacher Karen Kapatak were able to attend the annual Response to Intervention (RTI) Conference in Anchorage January 25-27. Both attended sessions on increasing students number sense by playing with numbers and student engagement strategies. Ms. Kapatak also attended the pre-conference specifically to learn about using data to identify struggling learners and ways to help them be successful. February 15, Principal Forkner will attend a training on using MAP testing data and how it links to state PEAK testing.

Teachers are planning the March Exploration Week: courses will include international cooking, science fair, kitchen stool making, embroidery, sewing and ceramics. We are thankful to be able to have Aileen Walsh spend the week in Koliganek teaching ceramics and helping create a community mural for the school.

We are heading into testing season with WIDA testing for our ELL students occurring and 4th graders taking the NAEP on Feb. 21.

Other events happening this month: The annual Koliganek Carnival, Pre-school Family night, Child Find, Anti-bullying presentations, 100 days of school celebration, Spelling bee and home basketball games.



'Chief' Ivan Blunka School

Robin Jones, Principal

This year has flown by, and it is hard to believe that we already celebrated our 100th day of school! We have so many exciting student activities planned for this semester, including sending a large group of students to Close Up at the state capitol, hosting the high school Best of Southwest basketball tournament, and offering a wide variety of exploration week courses. In the secondary, we will be offering the following courses for session three of exploration week: Basketball Statistics, Ice Fishing, Ceramics, Wilderness Survival, Introduction to Spanish, Candle Making, Oil Painting, Introductory Knitting, Hand Sewing Basics, Journalism, and Wood Hauling and Milling. In the elementary, we will be offering: Cooking, Stikbot Stopmotion, American Sign Language (ASL), Yup'ik Dancing, Weaving, Flubber Making, and Sun Catchers. The students and staff are very excited to participate in these highly engaging course offerings!

In our Professional Learning Communities (PLC), our focus for the month of February is surviving the month itself. To combat this very busy month, our entire staff participates in the 30 Day Happy Teacher Challenge, where staff members bring a bit of positivity to their days by completing daily challenges. Here are some example activities:

- Day 1) Pull a student aside to tell them how much they have improved or how proud you are of them.
- Day 5) Take a short walk during your lunch, prep period, or after school. During the walk, think about the things in your life that make you the happiest.
- Day 27) Do something nice for a colleague. Bring them a coffee, put a little treat in their mailbox, or do something else thoughtful. Appreciation goes a long way.

We recognize that February tends to feel longer and more difficult than usual, so we hope our commitment to positivity will make a difference.

So far our positive office referral program has been very successful where students can be recognized for behaviors they exhibit in and out of school, such as respect, attitude, responsibility, hard work, honesty, and self-control. In sports news, we recently hosted a middle school basketball tournament, where we had teams from Koliganek, Togiak,



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and Ekwook competing for the showdown crown. Our high school teams have also been competing across the state, and we look forward to celebrating their continued success throughout the basketball season.

I chose three words to help navigate 2019. Those words are: reflection, balance, and commitment. I hope to use these themes in the coming year to lead Chief Ivan Blunka School through uncharted political waters while continuing to build relationships, put our students first, and provide all with the best possible educational experience.

Chief Ivan Blunka School

Students of the Month

Elementary: Michael Neketa – 2nd Grade

Middle School: Aidan Petla – 6th Grade

High School: Damian Gust – 12th Grade

Employees of the Month

Isaac Twombly & Benjamin Griesse

Yup'ik Value Demonstrator of the Month

Lucas Barr



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

Dustin Wright, Principal

The Activity Season Season was very lively Here in Manokotak. We are hosting our first Boy's Basketball Games of the season and the community has been very supportive, A big thank you to Togiak and Aleknagik for sending their Boy's.

The senior trip reservations have been made and we are very excited for them. They did an awesome job and a big thank you needs to go The O'Sullivan's for all their help. SKIKU will be in KMO week of 2/17, they are an organization that teaches students to cross country ski. We look forward to their visit with our students

Mid Term Report will be mailed out 2/13 going over the reports their has been quite an improvement made by several students, which has been very nice to see the smiles generated by several students.

Pre K class has started in Manokotak and going strong we have 5 students enrolled in the program at this time.

Over all this has been a good Month in Manokotak and we as a staff look forward to the rest of the year.



Togiak School

Michael Lee, Principal

The first two months of the second semester has been very busy. Basketball season is underway and the ice has started to melt around the village. We hosted the First Annual Thunder on the Tundra basketball tournament in January and it was great success. Many parents and community members brought items for the hospitality room and the gym was packed each night. We had 11 teams total in the tournament and it was an exciting series of games. A huge thanks to all of the staff, community members, and parents that volunteered to support the tournament. We look forward to hosting it again next year.

We currently have 2 students traveling with several board members to the AASB legislative fly-in in Juneau. The students prepared for the trip by researching current issues in education and had very good discussions with the administration prior to their travel. I am sure that they will represent us well and advocate for support of public education. We also have 2 students that have started the CNA program and the college classes are currently underway. We will be hosting the ACT exams again in the next few weeks as we try to get the seniors prepared for college after they graduate. We have a schedule college FAFSA night on March 7th where UAF will assist our seniors with their FAFSA.

Togiak School will be starting a pre-school class in the afternoon before the end of February. We currently have 1 teacher that is receiving some training in Anchorage on how to better work with early childhood education. We are excited to be expanding and look forward to working having the younger students in the school. This will help to ensure that students are prepared for kindergarten. We are also continuing to grow our afterschool options with band, academic tutoring, and fab lab in addition to our sports practices and open gym.

It has been a very busy month and it will not slow down any time soon. We are preparing for progress reports and it will be the end of the third quarter before we know it. We would like to thank the district office personnel and the school board for their support. Please come by and visit the school if you are ever in Togiak.

Student of the month for January were Variya Sutton for K-2, Lyric Bartman for 3-5, Lloyd Kritz 6-8, Piccola Ferguson for 9-12.





Twin Hills School

Naomi Winters, Principal/Teacher

Twin Hills is having a wonderful third quarter! We are still growing, and are now up to 31 students PreK-12. We were able to hire a Preschool Instructor to help with our 7 preschool students. These students love coming to school Tuesday through Friday to work on early learning skills.

In January, we started a fitness club for students in 4th grade on up. Students stay after school on Tuesday and Wednesday to work on conditioning exercises, such as running stairs, planks, and box jumps.



Twin Hills is also excited to have one of our high school students playing basketball with Togiak. There were not enough interested students at Twin Hills for us to form our own team, so we had ASAA approve our player to join Togiak's team. He is very excited to be able to play basketball and Togiak has made him feel like he is part of the team.

Our PBIS system is going great: in January, there were almost 800 Wolf Paws passed out in 14 days of school! Students are working hard to show our Run with the Pack expectations and enjoy getting caught doing well. We also had our first Wolves of the Month for January. Isaiah Gamechuk was chosen in Elementary for his great improvement in reading, and Tommy Pleasant was chosen for Secondary for consistently meeting expectations.

