

REPORT TO THE SWRS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Educating our future...



Superintendent's Office

David J. Piazza, Superintendent

Staffing

At this time, the District still has four positions that remain vacant. While recruiting efforts have been actively pursued, the positions have not been filled to date. Hopefully, we will be able to provide an update during the Board Meeting to indicate that full staffing has occurred. New candidates are continuing to come forward on the Alaska Teacher Placement website, and the District is confident that staff members will be found that are qualified, eager, and ready to live and teach within the region to provide quality educational services to the students.

**"Caurailngarpeknaci
pingnatugturluci.**

**Always trying, never
without."**

--Bristol Bay Yup'ik Values

Board of Education

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**BREAKING GROUND ON
KOLIGANEK'S NEW SCHOOL!**

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Superintendent Travel

Superintendent Piazza, participated in the Alaska Staff Development Network's (ASDN) 2013 Spring Leadership Retreat on "Emerging Trends and Issues in Teacher evaluation: Implications for Alaska" held at the Mat-Su School District Board Room on April 10th. The retreat was lead by Dr. Al Bertani, who has also served as the Senior Design Consultant of the ASDN Summer Leadership Institutes the past 4 years. Dr. Bertani, provided information regarding the trends that are occurring across the United States in regard to changes to educator evaluation systems as well as framing the



Manokotak Graduation

discussion in the Alaskan context. Dr. Susan McCauley, the Director of Teaching and Learning Support for the Alaska Department of Education (EED), together with Sondra Meredith, EED's Director of Teacher Certification, discussed the newly adopted changes to the Alaska Teacher Evaluation System. This included information regarding the need to use multiple information sources including observations using a nationally recognized framework, information from parents, students and other stakeholders, and student data measures (statewide assessment data, and other reliable data sets). While there is a gradual implementation plan, changes will need to be fully in place by the 2015-2016 school year. Additional emphasis on student data measures will be put in place during the 2016-2017 (35%) and 2017-2018 (50%) school years. Additional reporting requirements indicating the count (not identified by name) of certificated staff who are ranked "Unsatisfactory", "Basic", "Proficient", or "Exceeds" will need to be submitted annually to EED. The afternoon session of the retreat allowed participants a chance to take a more in-depth view of one of the nationally recognized teacher evaluation frameworks. These included Danielson's Framework, Marzano's iObservation, 5d+, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation MET Project. The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has adopted and has begun the implementation process for the Danielson Framework for teacher evaluations. Their presentation included discussions from Superintendent Dr. Steve Atwater on the reasons why they made the change and their selection of the Charlotte Danielson model. Their team also talked about the process they went through to build awareness and their development of a committee of teachers, principals, and district office administrator to lead the implementation process forward. Similar to the other nationally recognized evaluation systems, the Danielson Framework is comprised of 4 Domains, 22 Components, and 76 Elements. A rubric is used to help supervisors calibrate their ratings and to objectively score a teacher's performance level on each element. During the initial years, the Kenai team has focused on ensuring that students are engaged in

learning (Danielson's Element 3c). This has allowed the District to also focus staff development resources on helping the instructional staff to meet that goal as they can target any gaps indicated by deficiencies discovered during the evaluations of staff.

The Alaska Staff Development Network's Annual Meeting was held the next day in Anchorage. Southwest Region School District is a member and also part of Rural Alaska Principal Preparation and Support Project (RAPPS) grant facilitated by the ASDN.

Director Kelly Tonsmeire provided information on the 2012-2013 Needs Assessment Survey, as well as an overview of the various training opportunities that have been provided over the past year and a look at the trainings that will be available for next year. Dr. Al Bertani discussed professional networking's role in helping districts identify and meet challenges. Dr. Susan McCauley provided additional information regarding the changes at the State level for Assessment, Standards, and Teacher Evaluation. It was announced that the state of Alaska has selected to join the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), a state-led consortium developing assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Since Alaska's new standards in English/ language arts and mathematics are sufficiently similar to the Common Core, the SBAC assessments should provide valid and reliable results for Alaska to allow our students to be compared with students from across other districts and the country.

Recruiting efforts during the month of April kept Superintendent Piazza on the road for two weeks. He was able to work with other District staff at the Anchorage ATP Job Fair April 12th - 13th. He then flew and worked at the Minnesota Education Job Fair and the Minneapolis ATP Job Fair with help from Kim Piazza and additional phone support from the District Office staff providing reference checks.



Koliganek Graduation



Migrant Education Family Night



Instruction & Information Systems

Steve Noonkesser, Director

Curriculum & Inservice Planning

As the year draws to a close, our attention begins to shift from end of the year activities to preparations for a successful startup in the fall. We busy planning our fall inservices and presently those plans include a visit by Dr. Susan McCauley from EED with a team of EED personnel to speak with our staff on the changes coming in the areas of State Standards (in language arts and mathematics), Assessment (the SBAC assessment) and teacher evaluation. We are planning working groups to include all stakeholders as we move toward new assessment and evaluation methods. The Danielson Frameworks will also be a focus at inservice as we prepare to re-design our evaluation system. We are looking forward to a year of collaboration as we address new challenges.

Year's End

We are looking forward to the last two weeks of May as planning time to insure a smooth start next year. We have staff members from language arts, social studies, science and Yup'ik Studies coming in for the week to prepare inservice materials and finalize plans. It has been a busy year, but a good one and we are looking forward to fall.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM



Shannon Clouse
Media Specialist



Deb Endicott
Inst. Support
Specialist



Corey Evans
Computer-Aided
Instruction Specialist



Les Parks
Technology Coordinator



State & Federal Programs

Jon Clouse, Director

No Child Left Behind (AK STEPP)

The improvement planning at the district level has focused on monitoring the tasks that have been put in place to reach the goals within the plan. During the last two meeting, there were a number of tasks that were marked as complete including a establishment of procedures for communication directly with parents regarding high school students progress in school towards meeting graduation requirements and to parents or 8th grade students regarding the transition to high school. There have been tasks completed in relation to the continued development of the Yup'ik Studies program including the establishment of professional development for staff teaching Yup'ik Studies curriculum. Included in the packet is the last updated of the district AK STEPP plan.

No Child Left Behind Application

I was able to attend the NCLB technical assistance workshop with Lee Ann Andrew, which is one of the most worthwhile workshops I attend each year. This workshop provides the opportunity to work on the NCLB application in the presence of all of the different EED department managers so you can ask questions and get immediate responses. One of the focuses this year was the bridge to an online application and grants management program. The result was that Lee Ann and I were able to get quite a bit of the application completed during the workshop.

Title I Schoolwide Plan

The Title I Schoolwide Plans are to be presented to the school board for review per BP 6174.1(a). These plans are developed at the school level with parents/ community members, teaching staff, and the site administrator. The plans also act as the school improvement plans i.e. STEPP plans for each school. These plans along with parent and local tribal organization's input from the public meetings help shape instructional programs in our schools and district.



Student Information & Support Specialist: Kyle Schneider

PowerSchool

Scheduling for next year has been the big push over the last month. "Chief" Ivan Blunka school has submitted their schedule for next year and it has been entered into PowerSchool. The Togiak school used PowerScheduler this year, PowerScheduler is a feature of PowerSchool that allows counselors and principals to enter the classes students need/want to take and then it builds the school schedule to accommodate those requests. The Koliganek and Manokotak 'Nunaniq' Schools are working on completing their schedules.

Over the past month Kyle has been working with a group of teachers to discuss ways to make PowerSchool more useful for elementary teachers. This group has requested a simplified elementary report card with more room for written comments and that elementary teachers have access to the

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same GradeBook features that high school teachers currently use. The report card changes will take effect after the end of the semester and discussions are still occurring to determine what the gradebooks will look like.

Migrant Education

This year, Migrant Education was able to supply board games that contained a literacy component to eligible children. Students received copies of Blurt!, Boggle, What's GNU?, and Rory's Story Cubes depending on their age. Kyle assisted Jon Clouse, in mailing these games to students.

As the year winds down, end of year paperwork is being prepared. Once the school year is over the state's Migrant Education Office requires us to submit a Mass Withdrawal report that details what services we provided to eligible children along with the Course History report that lays out which courses high school students took and what grades they received in them.

Graduation

At the April board meeting high school diplomas and certificates were signed. Once the signed diplomas returned to the district office, they were packaged in their holders and sent to schools along with congratulatory letters from Representative Edgemon and Senator Stevens. Kindergarten and eighth grade promotion certificates were also printed and sent to each school. Principals and counselors also sent in their recommendations for the Elder's Scholarship and certificates have been sent to each high school so they can be presented at graduation.

Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS)

Once the semester is over, Alaska Performance Scholarship recipients will be finalized. At this time, we have three students who have met the

minimum testing and GPA requirements for the Career and Technical Education award. Once final grades are submitted by teachers, curriculum requirements can be checked.

No Child Left Behind (AK STEPP)

As part of the district STEPP plan, the parents of eighth graders are sent a letter which discusses the transition from eighth grade to high school. This letter includes information about credit requirements, tips to help succeed in high school, resources, and what to start thinking about for after high school graduation.

These letters were sent to all eighth graders enrolled as of April 17th.

Counseling & Assessment Specialist: Steve Ito

All EED mandated testing protocols have been completed without incident.



Electronic scores are forthcoming from Data Recognition Corporation for the grade 3-9 SBA. The grade 10 HSGQE/SBA and grade12 HSGQE retakes scores have been received

electronically and disbursed to the sites. Without the continued support from the site managers and the professional/ethical conduct of both classified and certified staff these annual testing protocols would be difficult to accomplish. I am looking forward to the 2013-14 school year.



Business Office

Lee Ann Andrew, Director

Alaska Public Entity Insurance offers a credit program for safety training done throughout the year. We submitted proof of training that will get us a 3.7% discount on our policy.

Three proposals for audit work came in and were reviewed. Altman, Rogers, & Co. had the best overall bid and was awarded the contract for this year renewable for up to five years. The preliminary audit will be performed the week of May 28th. They will be here the week of September 16th for the final audit. One of the bidders stated "For the size of your district, you have a lot of assets and fund balance. Nice job. Most districts this size are really struggling."

To reiterate what was stated at the last board meeting, the district will be receiving one time state funding of \$194,555 for student safety and security enhancement. The district plans to utilize this funding for cameras, exterior lighting, and re-keying the exterior doors for as many sites as possible.

Heating fuel prices through Delta Western per gallon are:

Aleknagik - \$4.11

Ekwok - \$3.86

Koliganek - \$4.06

Manokotak - \$4.11

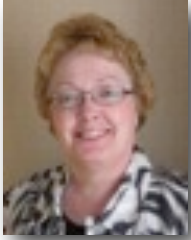
New Stuyahok -\$3.96

Togiak - \$3.86

Twin Hills - \$4.11



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Special Education

Robin Gray, Director

The month of May is busy with end of the year reports, action plans, kindergarten assessment data, new staff recruiting, and ensuring that all paperwork and files are in compliance before schools close for the summer.

We want to thank everyone in Manokotak that helped Lisa Ilutsik with the kindergarten vision and hearing screening.

The special education department district office staff will continue purging inactive files that meet federal guidelines. This means that special education students five years or more gone from the district are notified that their files will be destroyed. These past students have 45 days to request copies of their files, and then the old files are shredded.

Robin Gray will be welcoming and working with the special education staff during the summer. There will be 5 new special education teachers. Three of these teachers will be doing regular education and special education in Twin Hills, Koliganek, and Aleknagik. Togiak and New Stuyahok will be welcoming two new full time special education teachers for next year.





Yup'ik Studies

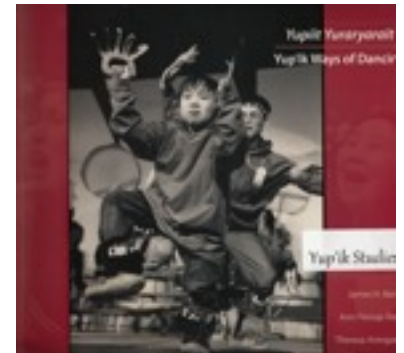
Esther Ilutsik, Director

The Southwest Region High School Yup'ik Studies

The Yup'ik Studies High School Committee met on the 1st of May 2013 here in Dillingham. The committee members consisted of all those teachers who are currently teaching Yup'ik Studies at the high school level. They include: Anu Wysocki of Koliganek; Justin Gumlickpuk of New Stuyahok, with cooperating teacher from the Bristol Bay Campus/UAF Margie Hastings of New Stuyahok; Larry Bartman of Manokotak; and Fanny Parker of Togiak. The following classes were pilot-tested in New Stuyahok this year (Quyana cakneq – Justin, Margie and Tat) and were refined to the following classes for review and approval by the SWRS board and include the following:

YCC 100 Traditional and Modern Yup'ik Dancing – 1 credit (2 semester course)

The students will be introduced to the traditional and modern Yup'ik dancing, songs, regalia and paraphernalia of their community, the region and vast Yup'ik area. The students will learn the songs and dances of their own community and make traditional dancing regalia and paraphernalia to present a public performance at the end of the class.



YCC 150 Traditional Yup'ik Tools, Clothing & Materials – ½ credit (1 semester)

The students learn traditional Yup'ik tools, clothing and materials used within their respective area by interviewing the local elders. They will learn the historical and traditional names of the tools, clothing and materials. They will select either a traditional tool or clothing or other materials to replicate. The students will participate in a one-week course that will tool use safety.



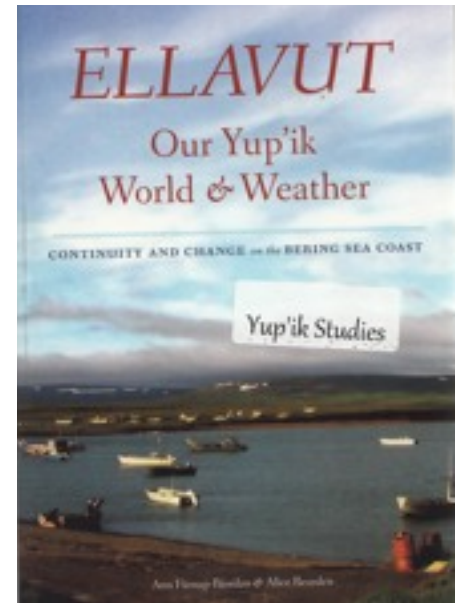
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YCC 200 Traditional Yup'ik Place Names – ½ credit (1 semester)

The students learn traditional Yup'ik place names within their respective area by interviewing the local elders and visiting the traditional Yup'ik sites. They will learn the historical and traditional names and uses of the land and resources.

YCC 301 Yup'ik Studies Subsistence I – 1 credit (2 semester course)

The Yup'ik studies subsistence class will introduce the students to the local seasonal subsistence cycle of their communities. The students will participate in a two-week course that will cover boat safety (Fall), snow machine safety (Winter), 4-Wheel safety (Fall & Spring), tool use safety and gun safety. The students will read and research topics related to the subsistence environment. The course will emphasize the science and math of subsistence and how it integrates the traditional Yup'ik wisdom and modern technology. The students will be engaged in the traditional outdoor activities in gathering, hunting and trapping followed with processing for use and storage. Traditional Yup'ik Survival skills will be integrated into all aspects of the subsistence environment.



Yup'ik Studies Subsistence I and Yup'ik Studies Subsistence II will prepare the students to live a subsistence lifestyle if they so choose.

YCC 401 Yup'ik Studies Subsistence II – 1 credit (2 semester course)

The Yup'ik studies subsistence II class will strengthen the students' prior knowledge on the local seasonal subsistence cycle of their communities. The students will participate in a two-week course that will cover boat safety (Fall), snow machine safety (Winter), 4-Wheel safety (Fall & Spring), tool use safety and gun safety.

The students will read and research topics related to the subsistence environment. The course will emphasize the science and math of subsistence and how it integrates the traditional Yup'ik wisdom and modern technology. The students will be engaged in the traditional outdoor activities in gathering, hunting and trapping followed with processing for use and storage. The students will provide leadership in the correct “undressing” of animals caught and if edible the correct way to butcher the animal in line with traditional Yup'ik

methods. Traditional Yup'ik Survival skills will be integrated into all aspects of the subsistence environment.

Yup'ik Studies Subsistence I and Yup'ik Studies Subsistence II will prepare the students to live a subsistence lifestyle if they so choose.

Native Heritage Center (ANHC) Language Summit

The summit convenes with the lighting of a seal oil lamp and prayer. This followed with an inspirational speech by Jeff Kinneveauk, President/CEO of ASRC Energy. He has a bachelor's degree in physics with an emphasis in engineering from Northwest Nazarene University. He currently serves on the board of ASRC Civil Construction, Inck The American Red Cross of Alaska, and Alaska Native Heritage Center. He was born in Point Hope, Alaska and is a member of the Kinneveauk whaling crew. He is a husband to Julie and a proud father of Jaidyn and Jake. He emphasized the importance of identity and how language plays a vital role in securing and understanding of our cultural heritage.

The following are sessions as highlighted:

ANHC Language Survey Results, Ember Thomas, Marcella McIntyre, & Rochelle Adams, to date they had received 1,000 survey's back with 50 % coming from the Anchorage area. The current survey was closed on the 3rd of May 2013 and the results of the survey can be found at the ANHC website. ANHC had received a revitalization grant to conduct survey and research on to the status of the indigenous language and to host a meeting addressing the issues of language revitalization. They will use this information to apply for further funding that will strengthen the indigenous languages.

ANHC Language Advisory Committee, Jesse Boger, David Boxley, Moses Dirk, Edna MacLean, Roy Mitchell, Susan Paskvan, Kathy Sikorski, Lucy Sparks. Many of the members spoke to the importance of language revitalization and how they themselves involved themselves in this important task.

Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Language Council- State of Alaska, Yaayuk Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle and Annette Evans-Smith

They provided that current status of the council and that they are currently taking testimony of the concerns and issues in teaching the local indigenous language.

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Language Models Highlighted

Inupiaq Language Nest Program sponsored by Ilisagvik College where a grant was obtained to service this program. They also require all Ilisagvik college instructors (whether they are Inupiaq or non-Inupiaq) associated with the program to take Inupiaq using the Rosetta Stone that Edna MacLean played an important role in. This grant trains those who are involved in early childhood education to teach Inupiaq to young children. Those participating receive an AA Degree in Inupiaq and Early Childhood Education.

Ayaprun Elitnaurvik a Yup'ik Immersion School (LKSD) that began in 1995 as part of the Lower Kuskokwim School District, in 1999 they applied for Charter School Status. And in 2002 was the first year that 6 graders graduated from the school.

Other language programs were highlighted. They included "Where are your keys?" shared by Evan Gardner. This is where you play a game and learn a language. You can work with community members and students together – all ages. It uses a lot of sign language and takes non-speakers to conversational status.

Food For Thought

"Language Revitalization is a Fight for Identity"

"Healing needs to happen before language can be taught"

"Kids are hungry to learn indigenous language."

"What technologies are kids using now and how can we adapt language instruction to fit within that framework?"