

REPORT TO THE SWRS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Educating our future...



Superintendent's Office

David J. Piazza, Superintendent

ASAA Legislative Fly-In

Superintendent Piazza participated in the Alaska Association of School Administrator's (AASA) Legislative Fly-In at the beginning of March. He was able to hand deliver the two Southwest Region School Board resolutions adopted at the February Board Meeting regarding increases for the BSA and financial support of Early Childhood Educational programs. Dave was able to meet with Representative Bryce Edgmon and Senator Lyman Hoffman. Dave was also able to meet with Senator Gary Stevens who will represent the Southwest Region communities based on the redistricting plan



Board of Education

Kay Andrews, President
Marie Paul, Vice-President
Ferdinand Sharp, Sec./Treas.
Wassillie Wonhola, Member
Wassillie Gust, Member
Helen Gregorio, Member
Steven Gosuk, Jr., Member

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created from demographic changes determined during the 2010 census.

Additional legislative visits included discussions with Denise

Liccioli (Legislative Aide for Senator Olson), Milesanna White (Legislative Health Caucus Coordinator for Representative Cissna), and Mary Jane Shows (Legislative Aide for Representative Seaton). Superintendent Piazza will be attending the AASB Spring Boardsmanship Academy and Legislative Fly-

In with SWRS School Board Members on March 24th-27th.

The end of the 90-day legislative session is quickly approaching on April 15th. District office staff have continued to monitor the

Staff continue to monitor legislation regarding educational funding. Letters of support for increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) were sent to the House and Senate Education and Finance Committees' members.

prospective legislation regarding educational funding. Letters of support for increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) were sent to

the House and Senate Education and Finance Committees' members.

Superintendent Piazza made a presentation to the House Education Committee on Monday, March 12th regarding the District's accomplishments and challenges. The 10-minute PowerPoint slide show was shown in the House Education

Committee chamber while Dave

presented telephonically from the Legislative Information Office (LIO) in Dillingham. The archived presentation may be found on Gavel Alaska at <http://gavalalaska.org>.

Superintendent Travel

Superintendent Piazza was able to attend the final two days of the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference. This post-conference workshop "What every Administrator and Service Provider Needs to Know about Special Education Law" was presented by Art Cernosia. Mr. Cernosia presented a historical perspective of special education law, as well as, a number of case-law scenarios to demonstrate common areas of concern and best practices to meet the legal requirements and rights of special education students.

Directly following the special education workshop, Dave was able to attend the Alaska Society for Technology in Education's (ASTE) conference. The hands-on workshops and conference sessions demonstrated the theme of "Create ~ Collaborate ~ Innovate". During the Leadership Summit, Dr. Lynn Schrum, professor and Director of Teacher Education at George Mason University set the stage for the day discussing a Leadership Framework. Dr. Michael Golden, the CEO of Net Generation Learning at Educurious Partners and prior Deputy Secretary, of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, presented examples of effective technology programs across the country. David Byer who manages education policy and strategic relations for Apple provided advocacy techniques to help district's work with the legislature and granting organizations to obtain funding and support for projects. The Leadership Summit also included a presentation by Dr. Grayson from the American Productivity & Quality Center on utilizing techniques to review the process and performance of your organization to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Additional sessions included hands-on demonstrations of Alaskan resources and administrative technology tips utilizing Apple iPads by Bob Wicker and Steve Nelson as part of the Consortium for Digital Learning (CDL) at the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB).

Although Dave had to return early before the end of the ASTE conference, he was able to participate in the sessions "Google Sketchup Pro in Alaskan Classrooms", "Managing your Mobile Device Ecosystem with AppTrack", and GIS for the Alaska Classroom". One of the Keynote speakers Richard Gerver provided his expertise and experiences on cultural and organizational transformation. This year's opening session included an informal discussion between Dr. Jason Ohler (Professor Emeritus, Educational Technology at the University of Alaska) and Hall Davidson (Director of Global Learning Initiatives for Discovery Education) on Exploring Creativity in school systems that seem to be focused only on core academics.

Superintendent Piazza, and Steve Noonkesser, the Director of Instruction and Information Systems were honored during the ASTE conference. Both individuals were presented a certificate and jacket for the Making IT Happen Award from the International Society for Technology in Education.

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As stated previously, Dave attended the AASA Legislative Fly-in. In addition to attending legislative appointments, he was able to participate in workshops dealing with topics for superintendents and district level administrators. This included presentations by Allen Dick the chairman of the House Education Committee, Murray Richmond the legislative aide to Senator Joe Thomas, Representative Reggie Joule, and the Commissioner of Education Mike Hanley. A discussion with Gary Mathews the Executive Director of the Alaska School Activities Association provided additional information regarding the necessary policies and procedures for students with a concussion. Dave was also able to meet with several Department of Education staff members at their offices.

Staffing

The District has distributed teacher and administrator contracts and has almost completed the 30-day period for employees to accept their offer for next year. At the present time, the District has received 10 certificated staff resignations. However, it is still too early to predict overall staff turnover rate as we still have an additional 9 contracts remaining to be returned.

What appears to be a first for a really long time or possible ever in the District's history is that the Togiak School staff all signed contracts to return next year. This 100% commitment by certificated staff to return next year should be celebrated by the students, community and District. This demonstrates the staff's positive feelings regarding the school and community climate, as well as their desire to continue to make a difference in the lives of their students. Extended learning opportunities for students should occur as the usual amount of startup time at the beginning of the school year should be lessened as all of the staff will already be familiar with the students, parents and community, and the students will already be familiar with the general rules and expectations of the school and staff.

The District is scheduled to participate in on-line recruiting efforts through the Alaska Teacher Placement system, as well as to attend the Anchorage, Seattle, and Minneapolis Teacher Job Fairs in April to hire quality staff to meet the instructional needs of students. Often candidates are sought after by more than one District. The Job Fairs are fast-paced, so it can be challenging to complete an interview, check on references, and meet with a candidate to make sure that they will be a good fit for the community and school in a short amount of time.



Instruction & Information Systems

Steve Noonkesser, Director

We continue to work on a number of large projects. The Science Curriculum committee is getting closer to a final recommendation to the School Board for science.

Building Student Success Conference

Steve Noonkesser attended the final two days of the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference. This workshop “What every Administrator and Service Provider Needs to Know about Special Education Law,” presented by Art Cernosia, provided us with a number of new strategies for properly handling special education issues. The workshop was one of the best we have attended in recent years.

Togiak Phone System

We are currently finalizing a contract for the new Togiak School phone system with Integrated Logic, an Alaska-based company with capability to provide service in our region. We anticipate that the new phone system will provide far better service and

reliability than the current one. We are looking at installation dates yet this spring.

Science Curriculum

The Science Curriculum Committee is nearing a decision on K-5 and 6-12 science curriculum and materials. The group is currently considering a state recommended curriculum created by Alaska Science Consortium Members for K-5 and is working on a set of six core science classes for high school students that will meet the requirements of the Alaska Performance Scholarship as well as SWRS graduation requirements.

Spring Curriculum Consumables Orders

It is the time of year for ordering materials for 2012-2013 school year. Each teacher is contacted and their requests are compiled into larger orders. Creating these grouped orders saves the district considerable money, as it gives us more buying power. With technology being more prevalent in classrooms, the

Instructional Support Team



Shannon Clouse
Media Specialist



Deb Endicott
Instructional Support
Specialist



Corey Evans
Computer-Aided
Instruction Specialist



Les Parks
Technology Coordinator

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cost of printed workbooks has also decreased considerably. We anticipate these orders going out shortly.

Media Center Update

Shannon recently returned to the office after a maternity leave since January 16th. In her absence, Deb Endicott took the reins for Battle of the Books by holding practice battles and also organized the district Battle of the Books tournament for the 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 and High School teams.

We are working on wrapping up the last of our duties for the Migrant “Literacy at Home” program. These include hosting two literacy activities at the schools and ordering books for our students who qualify for the program. The Migrant Literacy coordinators at site have been doing a fantastic job coming up with fun, creative ideas to entice our students to participate in these literacy activities.



The next few months we will begin ordering our books for the RIF program for the 2012-2013 school year. Our RIF coordinators at our school will collaborate with a team of other volunteers (parents, students, teachers) to choose enough books for the students at their school for three distributions for the upcoming school year. All students at our schools will have the opportunity to choose three books and participate in a literacy based activity.

ASTE Conference

The annual Alaska Society for Technology in Education (ASTE) conference was held in Anchorage the last week of February. Southwest Region Schools was represented by attendees from the technology department as well as a few teachers. The representatives were able to avail themselves of the opportunity to join sessions on deploying technology and using technology in the classroom. All returned with new ideas to try out as we enter into the spring and look for new ways to motivate students to concentrate on their education in the face of longer, warmer days.

A highlight of the conference was that David Piazza and Steve Noonkesser were awarded International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Making It Happen awards. From the ISTE website, "Making IT Happen is an internationally recognized awards program for educators and leaders in the field of educational technology integration in K-12 schools. The program identifies and rewards educational technology leaders around the world for their commitment and innovation." Beside their efforts at Southwest Region Schools, Dave and Steve have been active ASTE members and have served on the ASTE board as president and conference planners. These efforts have gone far towards making the Southwest Region Schools technology department a department recognized and well regarded across the state.

TERRA Project Turn-up

Closer to home, the technology department expects to be signing a contract soon for the new phone system to replace the failing system at Togiak School. A vendor has been selected, and design features are currently being finalized. All but two of our schools are now on the new TERRA Southwest network, but by the time you read this all of our schools should be

enjoying faster, more reliable Internet and wide-area network connections. The new TERRA network does not provide us more bandwidth than we previously had, so many of our usage level constraints will still apply, but web pages will load much faster and Power School and Power Lunch traffic back to district office will work much more smoothly. It also make remote management to site from district office much more capable, as lag time issues no longer apply.

Acceptable Use and Cyber-Bullying

The spring sets in, the technology department will be working update out Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) to identify a teacher- and student-friendly anti-cyberbullying and social networking awareness curriculum. Beginning with the fiscal year 2013, we will be required by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to address these issues in our AUP and to actively teach about them in our schools in order for us to remain eligible for eRate funding. eRate funding provides the district over 1.2 million dollars, without which our networking and Internet services would not be possible.

Student Government

At the March 2012 meeting, we reviewed the goals for the Southwest Region School District Student Leadership Program. As well thought out as our goals for the Program are, we don't anticipate them changing in the next academic year.

Overarching goals of the program include building and earning respect by demonstrating character, commitment, hard work, and selflessness. Perhaps the best means of expressing this is sharing the following anecdote as an example and reminder of why we do what we do and why it really does matter:

(Hey Dana,) I have been meaning to tell you this... A while back....I witnessed something really powerful. During warm-ups, a toddler was wandering on the sidelines and an adult yelled that the young toddler was choking. TJBF dropped the ball she was warming up with and ran to the sidelines to help the choking toddler before anyone else could even get to him. It turns out the little guy was choking on a Jolly Rancher, but I just thought it was the coolest thing to see a student completely stop warming up and rush to the aid of another child. I am always impressed with TJBF, but was particularly in awe of what a wonderful human being she is when I witnessed this happen a couple weeks ago. Anyways, I know you have always been a strong influence in her life, and I think it shows. Just thought you should know... (-Robin)

The Dana and Robin mentioned are Dana Bartman, Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School Assistant Principal and District Student Leadership Program Facilitator, and Robin Jones, 'Chief' Ivan Blunka School Counselor. The student, referred to as "TJBF" is District Student Council member and Nunaniq Student Council President, Tiarna Jo Bartman Fischler. She is an exemplary product of our district programs, having attended Head Start, Kindergarten through twelfth grade, and participated in many of our extra-curricular programs. including Migrant Summer Reading, Student Council.

Our second Student Government retreat is planned in Togiak on March 30-31, 2012. This will be our final retreat this school year and will focus on the topic of Suicide Prevention and will continue to reinforce ideas presented throughout the year. Tessa Baldwin, from Sitka, will be in attendance to work with our student leaders.

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State & Federal Programs

Jon Clouse, Director

Title III-A: English Language Acquisition

The Title III-A grant is one of the No Child Left Behind grants that has its achievement targets specific to students identified as Limited English Proficient. These targets include (1) making progress in learning English, (2) attaining English language proficiency by the end of the school year, and (3) making adequate yearly progress on the standards based assessments. The district has not met the targets in several years and an improvement plan specific to Title III-A is required and will be developed within the Limited English Proficient Plan of Service.

NCLB: Alaska STEPP

The district-wide Alaska STEPP process has moved into the monitoring stage, meaning that the plans put into place are being reviewed to ensure that the tasks are being completed and to provide support to those responsible for implementing those tasks. To date, six of the plans put into place have been completed and the objective of the indicator met. In addition, there has been quite a bit of communication between the sites and the district leadership team regarding the review of the site AK STEPP plans. The feedback tool has been developed to provide input to site SI teams regarding the site AK STEPP plans. A pacing guide has also been developed and implemented to act as a reminder about what indicators should be addressed each month.. The public has access to the district improvement planning process online at the following address: <http://www.centerii.org/SchoolRestructuring/Login.aspx> The login information is below.

Login: guestdAK1147

Password: guestdAK1147

Carl Perkins

The updating of CTE curriculum and alignment to Carl Perkins grant requirements is still moving forward. Don Levine, from the Department of Education came out to monitor our Carl Perkins program. The overall result was the need to update a number of our courses so those courses meet Carl Perkins requirements, which the curriculum team is already doing, update our post-secondary connection, provide evidence of career planning, and develop a district improvement plan specific to the Carl Perkins achievement targets. The district improvement plan for Carl Perkins has been developed and has been approved by the department of education (included in the packet).



Student Information & Support Specialist: Nate Preston

There are a number of projects occurring including a review of the districts migrant education program records by the

Department of Education. Kristine Gaffney, from the state's Migrant Education Office came out to assist with the recording keeping aspect of the migrant education program. As a result of this review, we have a total of 193 migrant students confirmed by the state. This is an increase of 50 migrant students from last year.

As a district we still have eleven students in the boarding home program, the same as last month. Each of our high schools is providing education to boarding home students. As part of the boarding home program, we develop a budget based upon the number of students at the beginning of the year that is submitted

to the state. This is the budget that the state reviews when we submit our reimbursement requests.

On a final note, there are 632 students enrolled in the district as Mar. 14, 2012. This is an increase of four students since January.



Assessments: Steve Ito

The Terra Nova Normative Reference tests for grades 5 and 7 were administered district wide during the EED assessment window in February. Completed answer documents were compiled and delivered for scoring. Terra Nova testing satisfies a federal mandate requiring the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to administer a national normative referenced assessment in two grade levels.

ACCESS Testing concludes March 31st. All sites administered tests to identified LEP students district wide. Completed answer sheets will be delivered for scoring. The ACCESS Test is an assessment of English language acquisition required by EED for identified Limited English Proficient students that focuses on listening, speaking, reading and writing.

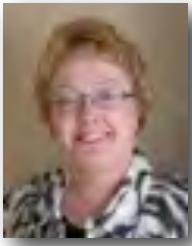
Alternate Assessment testing has been completed for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Alternate Assessment satisfies the requirement for all students in grades 3-10 to participate in statewide assessments. The Alternate Assessment is a non-diploma track test, based on Alaska standards but measured against alternate achievement goals.

Standards Based Assessments (SBA) and High School Graduating Qualifying Exams (HSGQE) have been received and are currently being shipped to sites. The grade 3-9 SBA and grade 10 SBA/HSGQE are proficiency-based, criterion-referenced tests developed specifically for Alaska. The purpose of the assessments is to provide information about what students know and are able to do in reading, writing, math, and science (science for grades 4,8, & 10). The tests include multiple-choice and constructed-response items. District-wide SBA reading, writing and math testing will be on April 3rd -5th make-up testing will follow if needed. District-wide SBA science testing will take place on April 10th.

The Grade 10 SBA-HSGQE and the HSGQE Retest are proficiency-based, criterion-referenced tests developed specifically for Alaska. Test administration will occur April 3rd through April 5th. Schools administer the reading test on April 3, the writing test on April 4, and the mathematics test on April 5. EED regulation does not permit variations on this schedule. There are no provisions for make-up testing with the HSGQE. There is no Science test for HSGQE retest individuals.

SBA scores are used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on participation and performance for schools and school districts statewide each year.

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Special Education

Robin Gray, Director

Child Find

The special education staff is providing scheduled Child Find activities for the second time this year. Special education staff is working with other school staff, community members, parents, and outside agencies to identify children, ages three through five, that have developmental difficulties and require further assessment and support.

Site Wellness Days

The district continues to work with BBAHC provided a Koliganek Wellness Day on March 13th. Everything from physicals, immunizations, hearing and vision screenings, along with wellness topics occurred.

Alaska State Special Education Conference

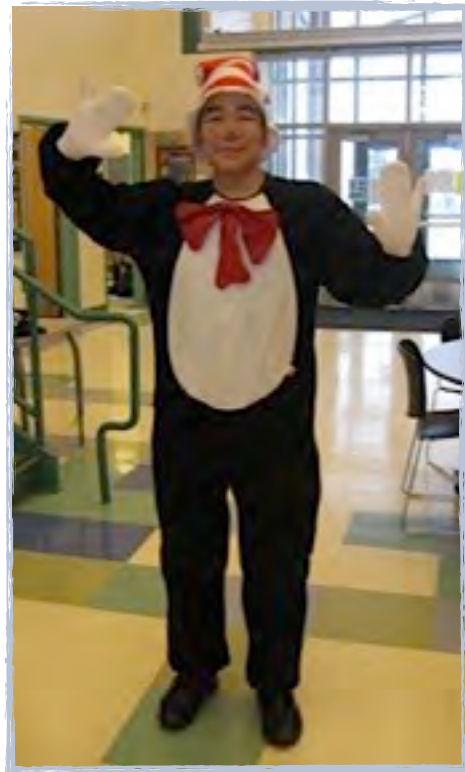
The certified staff, along with Robin Gray, and Lisa Ilitsuk from the District Office went to the Alaska State Special Education Conference in Anchorage. Don Enoch, the Alaska Special Education Administrator came to an evening working session with all of our staff and provided an opportunity to get answers to questions and get instruction on the IEP process, SEAS, related services, early childhood, and a wide variety of other questions from us.

Director of Special Education Session

This was a two-day session and the directors, in collaboration with EED staff, worked together on the new special education handbook, IEP process, recent legal decisions, related services, and other topics that participants brought up.

Special Education and the Law Seminar

This was a two-day session and David Piazza, Steve Noonkesser, and Robin Gray attended. Scenarios were presented in different areas of special education law and compliance. The class worked collaboratively in processing compliance with the scenarios. Mr. Cernosia spoke on Due Process, IEPs, behavior, assistive technology, accommodations, least restrictive environment, special education and bullying, court cases and the decisions, and did an excellent job answering questions.



The Cat in the Hat visits New Stuyahok (Lawrence Gust)

Staff Comment on the Alaska State Special Education Conference

PEAK Training Strategies

PEAK provides strategies that are appropriate for a variety of ability levels and are perfect for differentiated instruction in the general education classroom. PEAK philosophy is very upbeat and its motto is “our kids are worth whatever it takes!” --Kirsten Tesch

IEP Issues Under the IDEA: Legal and Policy Implications

This session was lead by a lawyer. He walked us through the legalities of IEPs. It was a good refresher in how to write an IEP that can stand up to due process proceedings. --Kirsten Tesch

Accommodating Instruction for Special Minds

During this session we were presented with multiple ways to provide accommodation and modifications for our students, as well as strategies for differentiation. The presenters also brought o light some points for special education and general education to begin a dialogue on accommodations, modifications and differentiation in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). In “best practice” and in our setting, we need to work together to provide for our students. With the information in this session I’ve been able to help my colleagues provide services for special education students within the general education classroom. --Kirsten Tesch

Great Conference

I thoroughly enjoyed the Special Education Conference in Anchorage. The two I really found useful in particular were the ones about “Modifications and Accommodations” and the session regarding “IDEA.”

As I am a new special education teacher, I felt that each of these sessions were very helpful in my understanding of the IEP process, bylaws, and the difference between an accommodation and modification. Each of these sessions provided great ideas for me when writing IEP’s and gave me new insight into choosing goals for my students that are both measurable and achievable.

Our meeting with Donald Enoch over dinner was probably the most informative and best “session” I attended all week. He answered a lot of questions and cleared up a lot of things I had been confused or thinking about over the course of the school year. --Mike Tozzo

Sharing Common Direction

As educators, we can sometimes get so focused on our classrooms that we forget that there is a life for our kids outside the classroom. They have homes, families, games, televisions and more waiting for them when they get out of school. Carmen Katasse presented about how our own cultural differences and individual needs play a role in communicating with a student’s family. She stated that the brain only takes seven seconds to judge and make an assumption about another person. That is why it is crucial to be open and positive with students and families.

Carmen gave a few helpful hints to create a positive relationship with parents and caregiver. The first is to be a part of a team who will advocate. Second, use casual register language (culturally appropriate language). Third,

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use humor or a personal story to help the care-provider feel comfortable and relaxed. Lastly, remember equity does not mean treating everyone the same way. It consists of sometimes using “extra and different measures” to bring about the condition of equality. --Ben Griese

Great Keynote Speakers

The keynote speakers were excellent. Dr. Stuart Robershaw, aka Dr. Humor, was super. I like humor and use it often in class. When used correctly, it helps build rapport while maintaining respect. It isn't everyone's style and some people don't understand it (okay, me), but it works for me and I'll continue to use humor. --Kip Layton

Training Regarding Visual Impairment

I attended the breakout session titled “Introduction to Braille.” It was great. We learned the history behind invention of Braille and got to use a Brailier. We were also shown some tools to use with any student having trouble seeing/reading, etc. First, we had to wear eyeglasses with varying prescriptions that modeled different degrees of low vision. I had a 20/200 pair. We tried to find and pick up coins dropped on the floor. It wasn't easy. By the way, 20/200 is considered legally blind. We then experimented with monoculars, colored overlays for reading, etc. I came out of the session with a better understanding of teaching visually impaired and with information for courses to take if I desire. --Kip Layton



LEARNING
IS A
TEAM
EFFORT

IN
NEW
STUYAHOK



photos courtesy of Vera Walcott, Instructional Aide - Chief Ivan Blunka School



Business Office

Lee Ann Andrew, Director

Spring Activities

Sites are getting their spring orders in for supplies for the 2012-2013 school year. We are hoping to get all orders received before the sites close for the summer.

Fuel Bids

The fuel bids went out on March 5 with an April 2 deadline. We sent them out directly to all known distributors in the area.

Draft FY13 Budget

The draft budget went out to sites on March 14 with the certification page required to be returned by April 16th. A copy was sent to the board by email and by mail.

Insurance Costs

After contacting the district's health insurance broker a tentative potential cost was determined if the district chose to insure all employees in full and bill for family member coverage. The current negotiated agreements limit what can be charged for family members. Assuming that all employees working 30 hours or more a week would take advantage of full self-coverage the following estimated cost to the district was developed.

Current costs with Premera coverage						Potential cost with the state Political Subdivision coverage			
	Number enrolled	Employee monthly cost	District monthly cost	District annual cost		Number enrolled	Employee monthly cost	District monthly cost	District annual cost
Self	44	137	686	362,324		100	0	586	703,660
Self/spouse	14	344	1351	227,013		14	164	1350	226,888
Self/children	4	345	1177	56,509		4	145	1179	56,582
Self/family	20	502	1892	454,116		20	252	1869	448,562
Total annual district cost				\$1,099,962	\$1,435,692				

The potential costs are hypothetical because we could not get a full quote without having staff members complete a health questionnaire. The scenario does establish that it will cost approximately \$300,000 to fully cover qualified employees in full.

Audit

We have contacted Altman, Rogers, and Co. to perform the 2012 audit. With board consensus they will come out on April 30 for the preliminary audit and perform the final audit the week of September 17.

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Yup'ik Studies

Esther Ilutsik, Director

Yup'ik Studies High School Curriculum

The Yup'ik Studies Curriculum Committee held a day meeting on February 17, 2012 here in Dillingham to review and complete the YCC

201 – Yup'ik Orthography course that will be available for the high school students next Fall. Fanny Parker, 5th grade teacher & high school teacher for the YCC 101

Introduction to Yupiaq, of Togiak and Larry Bartman, Tech Liaison & high school

teacher for YCC 101 Introduction to Yupiaq, of Manokotak, and myself reviewed the draft written last spring and made revisions to flow with what is being taught currently in the YCC 101. In order to take the YCC 201 you must have successfully completed YCC 101.

YCC 201 Yup'ik Eskimo Orthography is a year-long course that will give high school students a 1 credit elective course requirement. The students will focus on learning the proper Yupiaq writing system using the modern Yup'ik Orthography.

The textbook titled, Yup'ik Eskimo Orthography by Miyaoka & Mather, 1979 will be the primary textbook. In addition the students be introduced to the traditional Yup'ik beliefs and practices with a focal point on the traditional seasonal cycle of



subsistence activities. Yuunaqpialleput by Ann Fienup-Riordan, 2007 will be used with other materials and local elders as resources. This course will also met the requirements for the Alaska State Scholarship for those pursuing further studies at the university level.

Classroom Visit in New Stuyahok

One of the themes that Colynn Isaacson, 5th grade teacher in New Stuyahok was teaching in her science class was the importance of compasses. The class also was introduced to traditional Yup'ik navigational skills with the Agyarllak (North Star), Tanglurallret (Milky Way) and Tunturyak (Big Dipper) embedded within the oral stories of the Yup'ik culture. The stories that were used came from Cungauyaraam Qulirai Annie Blue's Stories, 2007 and Tunturyak (The Big Dipper) as told by the late Annie Amatunak of Togiak. The end product resulted in the students creating raven wearing snowshoes making tracks (Tanglullret) across the sky using paint and then creating Tunturyak with cut-out stars positioned so that Agyarllak could be found.



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Aleknagik School

Audra Finkenbinder, Principal

Time is really flying by this school year – here we are already in the month of March! To celebrate the longer, brighter days, the students were treated to an afternoon of sledding. Although we got quite chilly, we all had a blast!

Aleknagik School concluded the third quarter with Parent/Teacher Conferences followed by a few days of Spring Break. Standards Based Assessments are right

around the corner so we are reviewing important test topics as well as test taking skills.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Mrs. Gilbertson's K-2 students continue to do well with Reading Mastery, which currently includes learning about synonyms, main idea, and verb tense. They are also exploring the planets in science and comparing geometric shapes in math.



Mr. Gilbertson's 3rd – 5th grade students are also progressing well in Reading Mastery. They recently finished a science unit on volcanoes and earthquakes and learned about mean, median, and mode in math class. In geography they are presently researching various countries.

The 6th – 8th graders in Mr. Finkenbinder's class have recently researched Yupik masks and are teaming up with Melody to carve the Yupik mask of their choice. Other topics in Mr. Finkenbinder's class include algebraic processes, numeration, and probability.

Student of the Month

I would like to congratulate the Students of the Month for February: Jaren Tinker, Jeshae Active, and Delilah Andrews. Keep up the great work!

Student Council

The Student Council, advised by Randy Finkenbinder, has been very active with hosting numerous lock-ins and a 3-on-3 Basketball tournament. They are looking forward to hosting another basketball tournament and will be assisting with the upcoming Easter Carnival. The students have really taken to their roles of the council, remain highly enthusiastic, and are developing great leadership skills.

STEPP

Aleknagik School staff continues to work on Alaska STEPP and has composed School Improvement Plans for the Data Analysis Domain indicator. We will be working on the Title 1 Schoolwide Plan indicator next which focuses on parent involvement.



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Clarks Point School

Nate Crabtree, Principal

General Information

The Clarks Point School continues to function in a productive and efficient manner. We have recently filled the instructional aide position with a highly qualified candidate. The school is now fully staffed with an additional two people in the community that are willing to work as substitutes.

The next two months are going to be very busy for Clarks Point School. There are two student trips scheduled and several more in the making. It is very exciting to take the students' learning outside of the confines of the school building and apply it in the world.

Academics

Clarks Point School continues to have a strong academic focus. Here is some of the academic material that the seventh and eighth grade students will be working on during the fourth quarter:

- Math: probability, percent proportion, graphing
- Science: cells, tissues, organs, organ systems and dissection of fetal pigs
- Language: speeches, outlines and essays

Here is some of the academic material that the lower elementary will be working on during the fourth quarter:

- Math: locating and identifying numbers on a number line, simplifying fractions, adding positive and negative numbers, estimating and measuring distance using feet.
- Science: identifying and examining local wildlife and the natural habitats
- Reading: Reading Mastery and individualized independent reading goals

Art

The students are nearly half way through an extensive mask-making project. Each one of the masks were created on the students' very own face. What the students create with the mask once they have the general shape is up to them. Some are choosing to keep them human in appearance while others are choosing to transform the mask into the resemblance of an animal.



STEPP

The focus for Clarks Point School and the AK STEPP process as of late has been the section entitled Title I Schoolwide Plan. Specifically the process for communication between the three spheres: school, parents and the community. The school has continued to put forth a monthly newsletter outlining the upcoming events, activities and the curricular emphasis of the school. While the newsletter is a good starting for communication, the goal of the schoolwide planning team is to get more input from the community, specifically the parents, through increased interaction. We are in the planning stages of creating some activities and venues in which parents

can participate in, along with the students, to promote the ideas of strengthening the partnership between the school and the community. From these experiences, it is the hopes of the school that there will be increased input from parents in the decision-making opportunities during planning, implementation and evaluation of school plans.



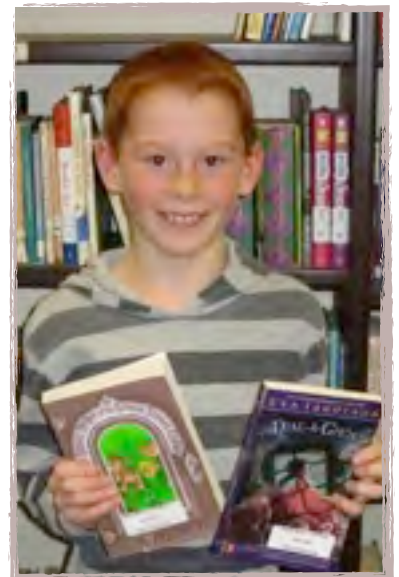
William ‘Sonny’ Nelson School

Jeff Goodrich, Lead Teacher

We have had a productive few weeks as we continue to prepare for the upcoming SBA’s. We are using the practice tests from the EED website to become more familiar with the format and the types of questions that will be asked. We are also utilizing Study Island as we prepare for the test. Of our eleven students, we have four students who will be taking the SBA’s.

Our third-fourth-grade team won the district Battle of the Books and had the opportunity to battle at the state level. Our one-man team, Joseph, made it past the first round of the state tournament and took twelfth place over all! We are very proud of his hard work and great reading.

Our school is having bingo for the next few Saturdays to raise money for new playground equipment. The community enjoys getting together and we’ve heard that our hamburgers are the best on the river. Several people from New Stuyahok have been coming down and supporting us as well.



Battle of the Books winner
Joseph Goodrich

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Koliganek School

Cody McCanna, Principal

Alaska STEPP

Koliganek School is working on its AK STEPP plan. The focus lately has been on improving the quality of teaching using informal feedback. Teachers have been conducting peer observations by choosing a specific lens and then asking one of their peers to come into their classroom and collect data. The teachers then meet to conduct a post observation where they look over the data and brainstorm ideas to improve the teaching and learning in the classroom. The instructional leader also uses the lenses to provide teachers with informal feedback to improve their teaching skills. Student led conferences is another part of our AK STEPP plan.

Student Led Conferences

Like always, students at Koliganek School conducted conferences with their parents at the end of the quarter. Students brought their parents/guardians into school and shared what they were learning and then met with their teachers. Students had the opportunity to reflect on the past quarter and write some goals for the remainder of the year to help them become more

productive learners. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity for learners to sit down with parents and staff to make sure everyone is “on the same page” with the educational concerns of each student.

Successful Carnival

Koliganek School would like to thank all the communities and sponsors in Bristol Bay who came and supported our carnival. The family night on Wednesday night was a huge success, with over 80% of the parents on attendance to participate in various activities with their kids. The carnival was only possible with all of the parents and community volunteers who came to donate their time to make it a huge success.

Reading Mastery

Students from Kindergarten to fifth grade have been learning to read using the new Reading Mastery curriculum this year. The paraprofessionals at Koliganek School have been doing an amazing job all year with students as the instructional teacher of the program. As a staff we have been making small adjustments to ensure that the program is being done



with validity. The certified staff will be meeting to discuss next year's groups and the various aspects of the program that can be improved for next year. For example, all instructors have found it very useful to compile all the necessary paperwork into a three ring binder to review as a group on a regular basis.

SBA Preparation

Standards Based Assessments are coming soon and Koliganek is in full swing to help prepare students. Students have been taking the practice SBA's that are available on EED's web site in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Moreover, teachers have been using the SBA testing format to provide students with sample questions on a regular basis. Teachers are also discussing the editing and review sheets that students get to use during the testing as well.



REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

Larry Johnson, Principal

Alaska STEPP

Manokotak School STEPP team is working together reviewing the school improvement plan. There are a number of domains with 20 plus smart and key indicators to address using student achievement data. Our students are continually being assessed giving us data to process to use in implementing interventions. Recent assessment the Winter Aims-web benchmarks Assessment given to all K-8th grade students. All students in grades k-12 were recently busy doing the Winter Writing Assessments. The Terra Nova Test was given recently to the 5th and 7th graders. These assessments help our school meet the indicator 2.3 under the Assessment domain. Our teachers use the data from these tests to implement instructional changes to improve student learning.

Manokotak School is planning two days of outdoor place based activities to help fully implement Indicator 4.6. We are taking the classroom to the outdoors. A trip to the Second Lake where students will learn from the Elders on Instruction for survival shelter construction,

survival fire preparation and other activities ... GPS location activity or KMO Search and rescue presentation. These activities will reflect cultural awareness and understanding of cultural values of the students and community.

Parent Involvement

Over one hundred adult community members, mostly parents of students, attended our first Family Activity Night. At the Math Fun Night we had free hot dogs and door prizes and the following math themed events:

- Estimation Station Ideas: Jars/boxes/flats of cookies... how many? WHAT is estimation? How does it differ from a 'guess'?
- Board Games Idea: Families play games.
- Read Aloud -Idea: Read 'math-based' stories in the library.
- Chess Room- Idea: Have chess sets available for students and parents to play chess. Teaches mathematical reasoning and use of grids.



- GREAT Math Websites – Computer Lab SBA’s– Idea: What makes a math site good? Where are they?
- SBA’s– Idea: What is it? How will Manokotak staff use this data?
- Math Art- Ideas: Parents and students make Origami & Tessellations.
- Saxon Math Parent Trouble Shooting – Idea: Set up a room with a teacher fielding technical questions from parents about the program.
- Chances Are- A Probability Station- Idea: Have activities that are fun and teach probability.

It turned out to be a very positive fun night for all with many request for another fun night and question about when will it happen. We are planning a Literacy Night in the month of March.

Our Literacy Night will consist of short stories from seven different genres (Science fiction, mystery, bibliography, fantasy, mythology, Poetry and Yup’ik culture) being read to small groups of people. Every 10 minutes the groups will rotate until they have a chance to hear all seven short stories from different the different genres.

There will be a literature-focused game room. All games deal with words. (Scramble, boggle, etc.).

We will free hot dogs and door prizes also.



School and Community

Terry Fuller and Jon Dyasuk from Dillingham Fish & Game came to Manokotak School to visit with your students about the AK Migratory Bird Calendar.

Staff from the Bristol Bay Native Association Workforce Development Center traveled to Manokotak to present to your juniors and seniors and promote their scholarship and employment opportunities.

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Open Gym is operated by the Manokotak Village Corporation and offered to the public. The junior class has a continuing fundraiser offering Yoga night on Tuesdays & Thursdays with their class advisor teaching it. The public is welcome for a cost of one dollar per night.

The local dental team is now visiting the Manokotak School twice a month.



Sports

Manokotak School hosted the Aleutian Chain Conference Region 1-A, Girls Basketball Tournament. Six teams were involved Manokotak, New Stuyahok, Koliganek, New Halen, King Cove, and Sand Point. It was a Double Elimination tournament bracket. New Halen won the tournament and went on to win the state tournament for 1A Girls. King Cove won the Academic Award and Manokotak was awarded the Sportsmanship Award. Our community was excited about having so many home games. They showed a lot of enthusiasm and excitement during the tournament.

Another activity that has brought excitement and fun for the student is the running of the halls. Before each game or before a team leaves for on the flight to a game, all of our staff and students line the hallways and the team(s) run by getting high fives from all those lining the hallways. The team players really look forward to it. On one occasion a visiting team was invited to run the halls with our team. The coach and players thought it was awesome and are going to implement the running of the halls at their school.

Manokotak school is going to take it one step further giving those students who have academic achievements recognition and the privilege of running the halls, so all Honor Roll, Students of the Month and students with Perfect Attendance will be running the hallway getting high five from all staff and students.

Community School Committee

The Manokotak CSC has been well represented at our meetings with all members being present. Only a couple times have there been less than five members present and that was because the member had to attend a scheduled training in Anchorage.



‘Chief’ Ivan Blunka School

Brett Scott, Principal

The third quarter is over and preparations for the Standards Based Assessments are beginning in earnest. Students have been working hard all year and the final push has begun. At our 3rd quarter Awards Assembly we gave Honor Roll certificates to 76% of our high school and middle school students! 42% percent made High Honor Roll.

Chief Ivan Blunka School is working hard to make AYP. Regular monitoring of students has shown much improvement over the last year. Students and staff have worked to make this happen. We hope the progress we have made will be demonstrated in our SBA test results. Regardless, we can be assured that our students and school are on the right track.

Our seniors are a primary focus this time of year. We will graduate 16 students in the spring. These students are preparing to continue their education beyond high school. Our seniors are enrolled, or preparing to enroll, in a post-secondary institution, including Job Corps, the University of Alaska, and UAF Bristol Bay. These students are also preparing by submitting scholarship applications to help with financing their post-secondary work. We are proud of our seniors, not only for graduating from high school, but also for making the choice to prepare to make the leap to post secondary education!!



REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Seuss Family Literacy Night

On March 2nd, Chief Ivan Blunka School celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday with a Family Literacy Night. Parents, grandparents, and students were invited to come to the school for real green eggs and ham, as well as two large birthday cakes made for us by our staff. Students and parents will move from room to room where specific Dr. Seuss books will be featured. Activities included making clay models of Dr. Seuss characters, a fishpond, and making Oobleck. Even Dr. Seuss himself made an appearance!!

Student Council

Our student council has been active all year and has contributed to a great climate in our school this year. We have some leaders that will be making a large impact on our community in the future. At the end of March the Student Council will be making a trip to Togaik for a district leadership conference. Our students are looking forward to great experience and bringing back great ideas for our school. A large group of students have participated in leadership activities this year with support of the district office and our Southwest Region School Board. Without this support, our student council would not be possible. So with this in mind, the staff and students at "Chief" Ivan Blunka School would like to say, "Thank you!"



Basketball Regionals

The Aleutian Chain Conference Regional Basketball Tournaments were held at Newhalen High School for the boys and Manokotak for the girls on February 29th through March 2nd. Schools from St. Paul, King Cove, Sandpoint, Newhalen, Manokotak, Koliganek, and New Stuyahok competed for the titles. Each day's games played to a packed house. The championship game for the girls was between Newhalen and King Cove, with Newhalen prevailing to claim the single berth to state. Our Lady Eagles fought hard and came away with a 3rd place finish. The boy's championship was a game for the ages, between Newhalen and New Stuyahok. It was a hard fought battle, with Newhalen prevailing by one point on a last second three point shot at the buzzer.

School Improvement (STEPP)

The school improvement team continues meeting to work on the Alaska STEPP process for school improvement. The team is working on indicators 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, and 8.7. The school improvement team has been diligently assessing these indicators to make sure that the plans and tasks developed can and will be implemented for the 2012 - 2013. The team is also continually monitoring the indicators and tasks previously assessed to determine if revising the tasks is in the best interest of the school. Some of these indicators are work on formative assessments, professional development, extended learning opportunities for students and cultural awareness.



Togiak School
Jason Mabry, Principal

Alaska STEPP

The leadership team has worked through assessment and survey data to identify areas of needs for our school. We are currently developing specific plans for addressing those needs. The committee is focusing not only on academic interventions to improve student success but also ways to increase parent participation in the learning process. Teachers will continue to focus on implementation of reading mastery. We will also be implementing guided reading and writer's workshop in every elementary classroom to ensure that students are receiving additional practice and instruction. Mathematics classes in the elementary and middle school will be grouped according to their needs rather than by grade level this year to better individualize instruction. We are all looking forward to a strong finish this year as well as a great start for 2012-23!

Upcoming Events

Togiak School will be hosting the GOAN (Gathering of Alaska Native) and Wellness Conference on March 21-24. High school students and community members will participate in sessions aimed at promoting a healthy community through cooperation between Tribal Elders, youth, and representatives of local organizations that serve our youth. Also, on Friday, 3/30 and Saturday, 3/31, Togiak School will host student government representatives from across the district at our Spring Student Council Retreat. April 16-20 will be Culture Week in Togiak as well. We are anticipating a busy and exciting spring this year!

Literacy

During guided reading instruction, students are learning to select reading materials at their level. Our reading specialist is organizing a book room where students can select from a wide variety of books and where teachers can select groups of leveled books to facilitate guided reading lessons for students. The room will include both fiction and nonfiction books. We hope to use our reading time to address student needs in reading while also introducing important science and social studies content material. Students that earned their Reading Mastery participation stars enjoyed their quarterly Reading Extravaganza on Wednesday, 3/7. This was our third party this year and our participation numbers continue to be very high in Reading Mastery.

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Student Activities

Basketball season in Togiak was a great success. The Togiak Girls are the 2012 Yukon/Kuskokwim Regional Champions. They finished the tournament with wins over Mountain Village (48-18), Chevak, (50-23), and Scammon Bay (24-19). Drew Carlos and Shanelle Coopchiak were named to the All Tournament Team. The Togiak Boys also finished the season with a fifth place tournament finish and wins over Emmonak (76-71) and Alakanuk (89-73). The boys won the Sportsmanship Award at the tournament and Jaron Wassillie was selected for the All Tournament Team. The Boys team was young this year with only one graduating senior. Both teams should be strong next year. The middle school basketball team enjoyed a great season as well. The Boys team won the Sportsmanship Award at the Super cub Tournament in Dillingham this year. While we are all proud of our wins, we are even prouder of our sportsmanship awards and the positive way that our children represent the school and community. We are looking forward to next year. NYO practice begins in Togiak on Monday, 3/19. The NYO team anticipates traveling to competitions in Koliganek and Dillingham this year.





Twin Hills School

Meghan Redmond, Lead Teacher

The third semester of the 2011-2012 school year is complete, and we are working hard to be ready for state testing very soon.

After having to reschedule, we were finally able to host a health fair at the end of February. This was the second year Twin Hills School has hosted a health fair. It was a great opportunity to complete vision and hearing screenings, fulfill some immunization requirements, and administer fluoride treatments. There were also chances for the students to learn about outdoor survival skills, dental health, and the negative effects of smoking. At the end of the day, weather threatened to strand the health care professionals in Twin Hills, but thankfully a break in the weather allowed them to make it home after a successful day.

At the end of February, Martha Foster, Bilingual Aide and Learning Lab Local Service Provider, hosted a Learning Lab Family Night. Parents, grandparents, teachers, and students attended the event. Family Night started with the students demonstrating what happens at Learning Lab, including the computer based learning activities, math and reading activities, and journaling. Delicious snack were enjoyed by everyone, and then the event ended with a drawing for door prizes. Thank you Martha for working so hard all year, making sure students are attending and getting the most from Learning Lab.



We held one Saturday School in February, during which the staff took the students on an ice fishing trip. Thankfully the weather cooperated with us, so we walked out to “First Pike Pond”. The students walked the entire way and then helped drill holes in the ice with a hand ice auger. We didn’t have any luck with catching fish, but it was still a great day.

Parent/Teacher Conferences were held in the middle of March. Conferences are a great chance for parents and teachers to discuss the progress each students has made throughout the year and also work together to solve any issues that may be going on. Everyone is so busy, having conference time set aside is very important.

This month, we are working to implement our school improvement plan, as it is written in Alaska STEPP. We are focusing this year on how to organize and track interventions with our students who are not performing at grade level. We have started one-on-one math tutoring for all middle school students with one of our instructional aides. Each students was given a placement test, and the results of that test have been used to design an individual instructional plan for that tutoring time. Activities, additional assessments, and results are being recorded and monitored.