

REPORT TO THE SWRS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Educating our future...



Superintendent's Office

David J. Piazza, Superintendent

Building Student Success Conference

Superintendent Piazza and Steve Noonkesser, the Director of Instruction & Information Systems attended the **RTI: Building Student Success Conference** in Anchorage on January 27th and 28th. Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI) continues to be emphasized across the country as Districts try to meet the learning needs of each student under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. While the conference provided a variety of sessions to over 1000 Alaskan school district administrators and teachers, Superintendent Piazza and Director Noonkesser attended the Leadership Strand.

Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read.

-- Marilyn Jager Adams

Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.

-- Emilie Buchwald

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photo courtesy of Amy Wassillie, Instructional Aide - Togiak School

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Here Dr. Judy Elliott, the Chief Academic Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District and George Batsche, Ed. D. Professor and Co-Director of the Institute for School Reform, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL provided sessions on “How to Do It” and “How to Lead the Doing.” This problem-solving model strives to help students reach desired educational outcomes. Many of the instructional practices have already been started by Southwest Region School District including benchmarking student

One notable study referenced at the conference linked student performance to the amount of time teachers are able to spend with students in a day. Also referenced was the need for teachers to have enough quality planning time.

progress three times per year, utilizing data to place and progress monitor students, and providing intervention strategies to meet students at their ability level, One interesting fact that was discovered during Dr. Batsche’s RTI implementation in Florida was that students performed better in classes where teachers stayed at least 75 minutes after the school day. Further gains were found when students were engaged in “Bell-to-Bell” instruction so it is imperative to find ways to eliminate or minimize transition times between activities or classes.

Instructional Support

Superintendent Piazza has been monitoring the changes to the State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The proposed changes are currently out for comment before they are reviewed and most likely adopted by the State Board of Education in June. Three webinars were conducted by the Department of Education and Early Development during the week of February 6th. Karen Melin, the state’s Literacy Specialist, provided the overview of the new English Language Arts (ELA) Standards. Cecilia Miller the state’s Math Content Specialist, provided the overview for Mathematics. Interested individuals will be able to participate in additional training sessions this Spring.

The new Standards remove the language of Grade Level Expectations (GLE) that the District has spent considerable time and effort to align District curriculum and materials to. The proposed Standards include additional rigor, as well as, items appropriate for the junior and senior students. This is a change from the current standards that primarily focus on grades 3 to

10, although Kindergarten to 2nd grade standards have been recently added. The timeline for implementation of the new State Standards indicate that during the 2015-2016 school year all students will be assessed utilizing them. With this in mind, the State is strongly suggesting that the new K-2 standards are implemented immediately next year, to ensure that the students have the background instruction in order to meet the required competency levels in three years.

Staffing

After the winter break, the District had two certificated teacher vacancies to fill. Through successful recruiting efforts, the District had both teaching assignments covered in short order. Rich Harrelson who had previously worked as a long-term substitute in Togiak, was selected to complete the remainder of the year in Koliganek as the High School Social Studies/Vocational Education teacher. The District welcomes, David Hebert who filled the itinerant Special Education vacancy also based out of Koliganek. Robert Kelso has also returned to New Stuyahok this spring to complete a second long-term substitute need.

At this time of year, the District begins the recruiting process for the next school year. This process begins with each teacher indicating their intent to remain with the district. The intent forms allow staff to request grade level and/or site placement preferences that are taken into consideration as the District determines the projected revenue, the vacancies at each site, and the overall staffing pattern for the District. All of the tenured and non-tenured teacher contract offers have been sent to each site for distribution to staff. This begins the 30-day window of time where teachers may consider the offer and either accept or decline the contract for next year. Following the standard recruiting timeline, contracts should be returned around the middle of March, so that the District has a good idea of all vacancies before the primary teacher recruiting fairs held in April. Typically, the District has had success finding qualified candidates at the Anchorage and Minneapolis Job Fairs. Other efforts including utilizing the Alaska Teacher Placement website and database will continue to be primary recruiting sources.

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Legislative Update

The Alaska State Legislature is well into their 90-day session. Superintendent Piazza had the opportunity to visit the Legislative Information Office (LIO) in Dillingham twice to sit in on the House Education Committee meetings. These sessions have included a presentation by Dillingham City School District Superintendent William Mcleod, as well as, the reading of House Bill (HB) 256 to repeal the state intervention in schools. He was also able to attend a session at the LIO in Anchorage focusing on Senate Bill (SB) 171 regarding the recommended increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA), the Commissioner Hanley Press Conference regarding the settlement of the Moore VS State lawsuit and the House Democratic Press Conference regarding education matters. District office staff have also tuned into Gavel to Gavel on the web to view streaming video-conferences of several additional committee meetings and reports including discussions at the Joint House Education/House Finance Education Subcommittee regarding “Education Funding from School Districts’ Perspectives: Sitka, Fairbanks, Lake & Peninsula, and Kodiak”.

SB 171: Increase Base Student Allocation has made it out of the Senate Education and Finance Committees. It is on its way to the

House Finance Committee. This bill calling for increases to the BSA of \$125 for FY13, \$130 for FY14, and \$135 for FY15 will help the district offset rising utility and fuel costs as well as help to meet instructional program needs. However, continued remarks by Governor Parnell indicate that he is in strong opposition to adding any additional funds to the education funding formula.

In order to gain more public support for public education, the January and February letters to parents from the Superintendent have included contact information for members of the legislature and the governor’s office. The parents, community members, and community organizations can help to send a positive message regarding the good things that are happening in the schools, as well as, the need for additional funding to keep quality efforts for school improvement moving forward.

Superintendent Piazza is scheduled to present to the House Education Committee on Monday, March 12th regarding the District’s accomplishments and challenges.



Instruction & Information Systems

Steve Noonkesser, Director

This is a busy time of year as we continue support of our programs, while beginning to plan next school year's activities.

This year's SWRS Battle of the Books Champions!

Grades 3-4: Jospesh Goodrich (KEK)

Grades 5-6: Jessica Rau & Natasha Hobson (KGK)

Grades 6-8: Martha Kasayulie (KGK)

Grades 9-12: Brenda Norbert, Magdaline Kapatak,
Amanda Norbert & Courtney Rau (KGK)

Building Student Success Conference

The Building Student Success Conference this year was very interesting and was heavily focused on the research-based need to get all of our students reading on grade level to ensure their chances of success. A number of the ideas presented were discussed with principals and the leadership team at the February Leadership Team Meeting in Dillingham. One result of the discussions was the team's decision to focus on K-2 instruction and teacher planning this coming school year.

Instructional Program

Sites completed their Winter Writing Assessment and have scored the papers. Individual student reports are being generated and will be distributed to teachers to assist them in planning instruction.

Work continues on Science curriculum, with meetings fitting in around the usual weather challenges this time of year.

Preparations are also being made to organize and make spring consumable orders for the workbooks and other materials projected for next school year.

Togiak Phone System

The phone system at Togiak School, which is now over ten years old and no longer supported by the manufacturer has been progressively failing for almost a year now. Over the past month and a half after months of vetting, a vendor has been selected and they are working with staff to engineer a new phone system for

Instructional Support Team



Shannon Clouse
Media Specialist



Deb Endicott
Instructional Support
Specialist



Corey Evans
Computer-Aided
Instruction Specialist



Les Parks
Technology Coordinator

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

the school. We hope to have a new system installed in the next couple months and improve communications for the staff and community.

Assessment

We have completed the 2nd AIMSweb winter benchmark and teachers have had an opportunity to meet in their collaborative groups and analyze the data.

As an Instructional Team, we have been reviewing the MAP Assessment from NWEA. We will be piloting this new assessment in the spring with selected sites. After review, we believe that the assessment will give us better data on where our K-2 students are at skill-wise and help us better tailor instruction to meet all of our students' needs.

Apple Certified Repair Center

The technology department is an Apple certified repair center, which allows us to repair our own equipment saving us time and money on the maintenance of our Apple assets. Corey Evans will be participating in the upcoming technology training to earn his repair certification in early March. He will join Les Parks and David Piazza as a Certified Apple Repair Technicians.

Cultural Materials Preservation

We are also working with our Yup'ik Studies Director and staff to preserve the district's cultural resources. We have completed a digital archive of a set of 1980's books on sled construction and uluaq making. The success of this process has lead to the Computer Aided Instruction Specialist, Corey Evans, beginning a longer -term project with Esther to use technology resources to make a digital archive of the cultural resource assets to which the district has copyright.

eRate

Les Parks, Technology Coordinator, has filed the eRate form 471 requesting our eRate funding for FY13.



photo courtesy of Amy Wassillie, Instructional Aide - Togiak School



State & Federal Programs

Jon Clouse, Director

Community Engagement

A draft of the Twin Hills School Alternative Governance Plan was presented to the public during the Twin Hills CSC meeting on January 25th, 2012. Information about the reasons for the Alternative Governance Plan was presented and feedback regarding the plan was solicited. As a follow up, the draft of the plan was sent to the parents in Twin Hills asking for feedback regarding the plan. The ParaPro Assessment was administered by Noah Graber (payroll technician) four times since the last board meeting to community members and to instructional staff.

NCLB: Alaska STEPP

Assessment data for the 2010-2011 school year and the fall of the 2011-2012 school year was reviewed by the instructional team in order to develop measurable goals in the area of language arts and mathematics (see indicators 7.2 and 7.3). The review of data will also assist in the development of the professional development plan for the 2012-2013 school year. The process of reviewing school-based AK STEPP plans and providing feedback to the school-based improvement teams has begun. Most of the communication between the schools and the district has been clarifying in nature and how to effectively use the AK STEPP online system. School AK STEPP plans are available online or at the specific school upon request. 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

Title VII: Indian Education

Part I of the Title VII Indian Education application is completed. During the 31-day count period occurring between December 27th and January 26th, the Indian Education certification forms were updated to reflect current student enrollment. Site staff was contacted in order to secure additional certification forms for those students that didn't have any on file at the district office. Currently, we have certifications for 602 students. Part II of the application process involves the definition of the activities, grade levels, served, and the overall direction of the grant.



Student Information & Support Specialist: Nate Preston

There are a number of projects occurring including finalizing the students in migrant education program, working through the process of the boarding home program and, printing mid-quarter progress reports. We have 632 students enrolled in the district as Feb. 13, 2012, which is an increase of four students since January.

We have our final migrant student count confirmed by the state, which is 163. This is based on the eligibility forms completed by the migrant recruiters and reviewed by the Department of Education and Early Development.

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

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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.



Assessments: Steve Ito

The Terra Nova tests for grades 5 and 7 were completed district wide during the EED assessment window of February 1st to the 19th. 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 in conjunction to our state Standards Based Assessment (SBA).

WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificates for grade 11 & 12 students that completed the WorkKeys test have been received and disbursed. Electronic reports with both reportable and state allowable scores will be available through EED the end of February to upload to Powerschool. The WorkKeys assessment targets the workplace "foundational" skills that are needed for virtually all occupations and at any level of education.

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.

EED mandated World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) ACCESS Test for the spring 2012 Limited English Proficiency testing cycle has begun. Coordination of training at all sites is currently taking place. Testing will be district-wide February through March. Identified teachers will complete web-based proficiency training in order to be qualified assessor/proctors for the February administration of the WIDA Access Test to identified Limited English Proficient grade level students. The WIDA Access test is family of tests are comprehensive standardized tests that assess listening, speaking, reading and writing.

100th Day of School Activities at Koliganek



photo courtesy of Genevieve Kapatak, Instructional Aide - Koliganek School



Facilities & Maintenance

Rick Dallmann, Director

Koliganek

Architectural Design Committee has made the recommendation to retain USKH as our Designers for the new school project.

The Negotiation Committee will start working with USKH to finalize contract amounts and define the scope of work to be completed.

A Village kick off meeting will be planned for towards the end of March.

A Design team will be assembled to work with USKH to ensure our Educational Specifications are met and Dept. of Ed Regulations are adhered to.

Togiak

A lighting upgrade was completed at all our teacher housing units, old style light fixtures and bulbs were replaced with T-5's or CFL type lighting.

Replacement lighting fixtures have been ordered for the Gym and Foyer areas

We hope to have the installation completed in March. These new fixtures should reduce our electrical costs by as much as 25%

The funds for these projects were secured through grants with Alaska Building Science Network.

Aleknagiak

Working on hookup of the emergency generator for the school and teacher housing the cold weather has slowed progress but we hope to have it on line by the end of the month.

We also have in conjunction with the city of Aleknagik applied for a emergency generator grant to help defray the costs of this installation.

New Stuyahok

Finalizing the Bulk Fuel Storage Facility plan these include approvals from the

U.S. Coast Guard – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Alaska DEC

We will have a compliant facility with Operations Manual – Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan – Facility Response Plan

This project was funded through AK Energy Authority Grants.

District-Wide

We continue to make progress on outstanding work orders as we can, the cold weather has not been kind to us there have been some freeze ups and heating issues, but we have been able to work through them with no major shutdowns.

Working on prioritizing and putting together cost estimates for summer projects.

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Yup'ik Studies

Esther Ilutsik, Director

A trip to Koliganek to interview Palascovia Johnson is the focus of this month's report.

Elder Interview

The Yup'ik Studies program received a small grant from the Alaska Humanities Forum to help us document oral histories. Marie Meade, Yup'ik Linguist and I were able to travel out to Koliganek on the 25th of January until the 28th of January. The interviews were done in the privacy of Palascovia Johnson's home where she shared the history of Koliganek, the "rites of passages" that she as a young girl experienced, storyknifing, how animals and birds played an important role in the lives of the Yup'ik people and many other topics that are recorded on 3 ½ cassette tapes. In addition, we used the flip-video to record stories that would be of interest to our current high school programs. This recording was transferred to DVD's which will be made available to our Yup'ik high school classes, our Yup'ik Studies Instructors and others who will utilize this information within an educational framework. Marie Meade, Yup'ik Linguist is currently contracted to transcribe and translate the interviews that will be published in a format that will be utilized by the Yup'ik Studies program. This material will also be available for those in the regular and/or SPED classroom who wish to integrate the local cultural knowledge into the regular classroom. Below is a sample of the work in progress:

Palascovia Johnson Interview

Pal'a: Naucarararqameng-gguq taugaam tuaten pituut. Pitarkatangqerraqan. Ayagyuat pitqata'arqata-gguq tuaten piaqut. Wagg'uq atmairvikluku neqkanek tulukaruum. Wagg'uq naucara'arluni neqkaq-gguq taiqatartuq.

[(Ravens) perform and display certain actions in the air when called upon and let the hunter know that he is about to catch an animal (Naucarararqameng-gguq, in Yup'ik). A raven would remove its load onto the hunter. In this way the raven would announce to the hunter that "food" is about to be given to the hunter.]

Waten tulukaruk pagaani tengauqan ayagyuamun
pisqaqluku,

"Tulukaruuk pagyuuq, atmangqerquvet atmairvikqernga."

Tua-i-llu-gguq ulpiartaarluni qavcirqunek, ayagluni-llu.
Tua-i-gguq iggluteng angukengarkat ellinun. Qanrutaqait-
gguq tuaten naspaaluki pishqelluk. Tauna-gguq
pitarkaugaqaan tuaten piaqut. Tulukaruut
ikasqiaketaqtartut..

[When a hunter saw a raven he was instructed to say this, "Raven, if there is a load on your back would you drop it to me." Raven would then do several flips in the air dropping its load and fly away. When hunters were out in the wilderness they were instructed to do this and if they were to succeed in their hunt the ravens usually respond like that. Ravens are very helpful.]





Business Office

Lee Ann Andrew, Director

Retirement Presentations

On February 10th, 15th and 16th there were presentations on how the TRS and PERS retirement systems work and what an employee can expect from the system for retirement. These presentations were given by Hueners Hall Romo Prorise, LLC. They are the district's third party administrator for our 403(b) and 457(b) programs that we offer our employees. The purpose was to get employees thinking about how much they will need for retirement and will the state retirement systems be sufficient.

Fuel Expenses & Purchases

With the cold winter villages are finding that they do not have enough fuel for the winter. The district helped out Ekwok and New Stuyahok by loaning and selling fuel when they needed it. We had to be careful in New Stuyahok because we only have a one year supply in that village. The district will be looking at purchasing more than a year supply on this year's fuel purchase. If we purchase more it will directly affect our unreserved balance. However, it is in the best interest of the district to ensure that we have enough fuel to cover a colder than usual year.

FY 12 fuel and electricity costs are coming in really close to the budgeted amounts. When this year's budget was prepared we cut those expenses back to what has actually been happening the past few years. In the past we have budgeted worst case scenario because we did not have an unreserved fund to fall back on. We are hoping we do not need to fall back on that with this cold winter. We will keep a close eye on them to make sure we will not be needing additional allocations.

Fuel bids will go out before the end of the month. A fixed price bid has worked well for us in the past so we

will continue with that type of bid. This year New Stuyahok and the state DOT would like to look into joining us on our purchase. This should only help our price, we have been doing this with Manokotak Natives Limited for years and it has worked well. As mentioned earlier we will probably increase our number of gallons in New Stuyahok.

Impact Aid

Impact Aid is paying 85% of the maximum per student rate. Which means out of potential \$5,558,457 we will receive \$4,724,688. In addition to this amount we will receive the special education and construction allocations. The remainder of that allocation can come at any time in the next 5 years.

Student Transportation

The current bill on pupil transportation allocations will support 100% of our current program provided our contractors do not raise their prices.

School Lunch Program

The new regulations for the school lunch program came out. Walter Williams has been aware of this for some time and has already started adjusting our food purchases to meet these new regulations. He is in the process of educating the cooks on these regulations and ensuring that the meals they prepare follow these so that we receive the maximum number of reimbursable meals.

Health Insurance

With the addition of classified personnel on the district's health insurance plan the expenses for insurance will come in close to budget this year. We had budgeted a 10% increase and only had a 4%. This allowed us the funding to add the additional group of employees.

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Aleknagik School

Audra Finkenbinder, Principal

It is hard to believe that we are already in the month of February and that the middle of the third quarter has come and gone! Progress reports were mailed during the second week of February and we will be holding Parent/Teacher Conferences at the end of the quarter in March.

Aleknagik School has recently completed a round of student assessments that includes AIMSweb, the District Writing Assessment, and the TerraNova. Thus far, the results have been positive with an overall improvement in scores. During the month of March, we will be completing the LEP assessments and in April are the Standards Based Assessments.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Mrs. Gilbertson's K-2 students are doing well with the Reading Mastery program in addition to the daily spelling, vocabulary, and Daily Oral Language exercises. They are also completing a state project and will be exploring the planets next.

After Mr. Gilbertson's 3rd – 5th grade students learned about the Body Systems, they went on to learn about the effects drugs and alcohol have on the body. Their next learning adventure will be volcanoes, which will include making paper mache' volcanoes that actually erupt.



The 6th – 8th graders in Mr. Finkenbinder’s class recently completed a lesson on angles and projectile motion, which was followed by a Marshmallow Catapult Lab. After building catapults out of a block of wood, tape, and a spoon, they launched marshmallows at varying angles ranging from 10 to 90 degrees to determine which angle would catapult launch the marshmallow the farthest. The next exciting lab will be utilizing the Newton Meter.

I would like to congratulate the Students of the Month for January: Jamal Romie, Tasha Gilila, and Jessyka Creasey. Keep up the great work!

Coached by Jennifer Gilbertson, some of the Lakers recently competed in the Battle of the Books. The 3rd/4th grade team, consisting of Jolynn Bavilla, Autumn Coolidge, Tasha Gilila, and Marki Tinker, placed second. The 5th/6th grade team, composed of Jeshae Active, Lodi Active and Lelend Andrews, placed 3rd. Congratulations Lakers – keep on reading!

The Student Council, advised by Randy Finkenbinder, has been very active with hosting a lock-in and planning a 3-on-3 Basketball tournament. The students have really taken to their roles of the council, remain highly enthusiastic, and are developing great leadership skills.

STEPP

Aleknagik School staff is diligently working on the STEPP. We have updated all of the indicators and are currently working on a comprehensive plan.

DOT VISIT

The Department of Transportation held a Public Meeting/Open House On February 14th to update the public on the Aleknagik Wood River Road Bridge Project. After greeting the DOT with a Happy Valentine’s Day DOT, We Love You banner, some students took the opportunity to find out more information on the status of the project.



REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Clarks Point School

Nate Crabtree, Principal



Here is some of the recent material that the lower elementary has been working on:

- Math: adding two-digit numbers, estimating and measuring
- Science: Working in the science stations to develop the skills of observing, measuring and collecting data from explorations and using this information to classify, predict and communicate
- Reading: Reading Mastery and individualized independent reading goals

Art

Lately, the students have been wood burning. Initially, the students were required to complete small projects to develop and hone their skills. Once a basic level of ability and safety was demonstrated, they were given the opportunity to design their own project. The creativity has been really enjoyable to watch! The students have designed a variety of projects.

Technology

Most of the students have completed All The Right Type, a program designed to teach keyboarding. The younger students continue to use Study Island and Education City on a regular basis. The focus for the older students has been on developing word processing skills, introducing spreadsheet capabilities and developing presentations with the electronic tools that we have available. The eighth grade have been working on a biographical presentation that will be viewed by their family and friends at the eighth grade promotion ceremony.

General Information

The Clarks Point School continues to function in a productive and efficient manner. We have recently filled the maintenance and operations position at the school. As this report is being written, the school is still seeking a qualified candidate to fill an instructional aide position.

At the present, the main issue facing the school is the prospective enrollment numbers. Currently, there are ten students. Only six students are projected to return next year for school. This type of scenario requires careful planning and thoughtful consideration to determine the next steps. Dialogue has already occurred between the school, community and district office as to what those next steps might be.

Academics

Clarks Point School continues to have a strong academic focus. Here is some of the recent material that the seventh and eighth grade students have been working on:

- Math: Surface area, volume, geometric shapes and figures
- Science: Biomes and Plants
- Language: Diagraming sentences





William ‘Sonny’ Nelson School

Jeff Goodrich, Lead Teacher

The highlight of the past several weeks, here at William “Sonny” Nelson School, was our annual Pinewood Derby. Without a basketball team, we were unable to attract other teams to come and play, but we were able to host a great Pinewood Derby! Twin Hills and Lake Aleknagik brought students down Friday afternoon and Chief Ivan Blunka School came down on Saturday for the races. Clark’s Point sent one representative, winning first place for the K-5 racers. Friday evening was spent playing games in the gym and having a pep-rally. The feedback we received was very positive and we look forward to hosting another race next year. We want to send a big thank you to the schools and chaperones that supported our activity.

We are continuing our preparations for state testing this spring. We are reviewing the GLE’s with students and helping them understand the expectations. Practice questions are also part of our preparations for the SBA’s. As the test gets closer we will spend more time reviewing concepts and practicing for the test.

The students have enjoyed the increase in daylight and warmer temperatures. They are convinced that spring is right around the corner. They enjoy the opportunity to play outside again for recess.



We have completed several assessments recently. They include, Tera Nova, District Writing, Aimsweb and LEP. Our students are continuing to make progress, especially in reading. Reading Mastery is helping our students become better readers. Although it is sometimes challenging to complete both a reading lesson and a Language Arts lesson each day, we are doing our best.



REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Koliganek School

Cody McCanna, Principal

Alaska STEPP

Koliganek School, like the entire district, is using the AK STEPP process to identify weaknesses and create a plan to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the school. Koliganek School has created a plan for all of the indicators that needed to be improved after the initial assessment. Last month we finished doing the AIMSweb benchmark testing and the District Writing Assessment. Both of those items are part of our plan under Indicator 2.3, which states, "Universal screening assessments are administered multiple times a year, in all SBA tested content areas." Furthermore, we analyzed the data from both assessments during professional learning communities (PLC) time and our Collaborative Meetings to discuss instructional changes that would improve student learning. For instance, our AIMSweb Quadrant Analysis showed us that most of our students in grades 1-8 are very accurate readers and that the rate at which students read is our weakness. Therefore, teachers are now implementing reading strategies that will help students read at a faster rate.



UAF Visit

High school students worked with Natalia Zinger from the UAF campus on February 7th. Students got registered for DEVS 102, Introduction to Distance Education, and Mrs. Zinger started the class with the students. Students will be meeting with her again online using Blackboard and logging into UA online. Students will be learning how to use Eluminate live and all the other tools they will need if they take a distance course from the university in the future. Nine high school students will be taking math courses, Algebra and Algebra 2, this semester from UAF professor Victor Zinger. Students will have the opportunity to earn 3 college math credits while learning at a pace that will set them up for future success in college.

SBA Preparation

Koliganek students will be exposed to practice SBA materials from February until SBA testing begins in April. Students will be taking practice tests that are supplied by EED on their website. Teachers compile scores in specific sections and then analyze the data to make changes to instruction. For example, in the past we have had difficulty with 3rd grade students who are overwhelmed by the pure amount of questions on the SBA tests. Therefore, we have found that exposing students to the style and format of the test a little at a time helps to eliminate some of that testing anxiety. Students still have the opportunity to hone their skills that will be tested using Study Island and Education City during our after school program.

Books for Proficiencies

Koliganek School has added a component to our after school program. Students who complete three modules on Education City with a score of 90% or higher get to

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

order a book of their choice from Scholastic every two weeks. After implementing the program for a couple of months, it is obvious that students are motivated to work on the Alaska State Standards on Education City so they can order their favorite book. The bonus for the school is that students are working to improve their SBA scores while also getting a book to take home and read.

Carnival Time!

Koliganek School, with the supervision and support from the CSC, will be putting on a carnival on February 22, 23, 24, and 25. The carnival provides an opportunity for the community and school to work together to raise money for the student activities account while building positive relationships.





'Chief' Ivan Blunka School

Brett Scott, Principal

We have had a great start to the 2nd semester. Our students came back rested and energized ready to finish the school year strong. Also, as the school year continues down the home stretch, it is time to evaluate our progress and reflect on what is working and what needs changing for the upcoming school term. Through this continual process of self-analysis we can stay on a path of continuous improvement. Teachers will look at data and make decisions on programs.

As we evaluate our progress we have many successes to celebrate. Students are definitely making progress. Reading and math scores continue to climb. Our student government is very active and involved with our school. Nearly half of our students are making honor roll.

Events at our school have brought members of our community and surrounding villages to our school where we have been able to showcase our new facility. The response from visitors has been 100% positive.

At this time of year, it is also appropriate to celebrate our blessings. We have great students at Chief Ivan Blunka School. Our community is terrific. The support for our school is almost overwhelming at times. Community events bring hundreds of people into the school. We have many healthy families and a great amount of support for one another. These things are truly blessings that make New Stuyahok a great place to live and work.



REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Seuss Family Literacy Night

On March 2nd, Chief Ivan Blunka School will celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday with a Family Literacy Night. Parents, grandparents, and students will all be invited here 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. There might even be a chance Dr. Seuss himself may make an appearance!!

Rose Urban Rural Exchange

Chief Ivan Blunka School sent in five students and a teacher on an exchange program to West High School in Anchorage during the second week of February. The students reported back that they had a fantastic time. In return, we will have the great fortune to have five students from West High School visit us for a week at the end of February. Our guests' will attended school and partake in the culture within the community. In addition, they will be taken on a snow-go ride to watch our subsistence class check and set traps. While at school the visiting students will all make ullaqs to take home with them.

Alaska STEPP

The school improvement team has been meeting to work on the Alaska STEPP process for school improvement. The team is working on the identified indicators to make sure that the plans and tasks developed are being implemented and still relevant to our school. The team is also is continually monitoring the indicators 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.

New Stuyhaok Showdown

Girls' and boys' basketball teams from around the region visited New Stuyahok for the New Stu Showdown during the first week of February. There were teams from Koliganek, Manokotak, Togiak. Mother nature played a large roll and prevented King Cove and Sandpoint from making the tournament. The sell-out crowds enjoyed many close and entertaining games. The Togiak girls prevailed in a hard-fought championship game over the New Stu Eagles, and the boys from New Stu battled to a championship win again over the Togiak boys' team. New Stuyahok rolled out the hospitality for this event. Coaches and players expressed their appreciation for a great tournament and the warm welcome they received in New Stuyahok.



Togiak School

Jason Mabry, Principal

Alaska STEPP

The Togiak School Alaska STEPP leadership team met in January and February. At our January meeting, we analyzed assessment data including SBAs, AIMSweb, Writing Assessments, and DRAs to identify instructional targets for Togiak School. In addition, we identified broad goals that we believe are important to creating a better school environment. At our February meeting, we reviewed our current school improvement plan and identified the strategies that address our needs and those that do not. Our next meeting will focus on refinement of plans for next school year and determining how those plans address our needs as a school. The process has produced conversations not only about our school-wide plan as defined by STEPP but has also resulted in beneficial discussion about how the school and community can work together to better take care of our children.



photo courtesy of Amy Wassillie, Instructional Aide - Togiak School

Student Activities

Our middle and high school students are enjoying a busy basketball season. Participation is very good this year. We are currently working on a grant to help pay for uniform replacement for our athletic teams. We are already setting our schedule for next year to make sure that our student-athletes have opportunities to play at Home and to travel. Togiak will be in a new conference this year that includes Naknek, Dillingham, and Unalaska. Because travel to many 2A schools is so expensive, it is important that we complete scheduling early in order to provide a reasonable travel schedule for our teams.

Upcoming Events

In cooperation with our Native Aspiration Group, we will be sponsoring a community potluck in conjunction with Parent/Teacher Conferences on Thursday, March 8. In addition, Student Council will be coordinating a Spring Crafts Bazaar during the event. We hope that this will dramatically increase attendance at conferences. Following Spring Break, a PeeWee basketball tournament for students in grades K-5 will be held as well. We are looking forward to an exciting spring in Togiak!

REPORT TO THE SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION



Twin Hills School

Meghan Redmond, Lead Teacher

After getting back into our school routines in January, most of February has already gone by smoothly. Before we know it, it will be SBA time!

In the past month, the teachers at Twin Hills School have been working hard on completing several required winter assessments. The winter district-wide writing assessment was completed at the end of January by all students, Kindergarten through eighth grade. Each writing piece was scored based on the six-traits by both certified teachers in the building. The results were then sent off to the district office, and will be used to guide our writing instruction for the remainder of the year. The winter AIMSweb testing was also completed at the end of January for all students, Kindergarten through eighth grade. Upon analyzing the results, we are seeing some great improvements in accuracy and rate. In addition to these two school-wide assessments, fifth grade and seventh grade students have completed the Terra Nova Assessment and selected students are completing the LEP Assessment as well.

This time of year always brings an event that Twin Hills students truly look forward to all year, the Pinewood Derby in Ekwok. We had seven students and two chaperones travel to Ekwok for the Pinewood Derby. We all enjoyed playing games and getting to visit with students from the other small sites. The actual Pinewood Derby on Saturday morning was very exciting, and our very own Sylvia Henry took 3rd place in the K-5 division. The week before the Pinewood Derby in Ekwok, we hosted our own Pinewood Derby at Twin Hills School, pitting the students against each other. We had a great turn-out of community members who came to enjoy the competition.

We continue to work hard to complete one Reading Mastery reading, spelling, and language arts lesson every day. Our students are really into the routines now, and it is encouraging to see the progress they are making. In the next weeks, we will begin to determine levels and groups for next school year.

As the year progresses, we are working more and more on our School Improvement Plan, through the STEPP process. We are focusing this year on how to organize and track interventions with our students who are not performing at grade level. This year, we have utilized Corrective Reading and will be using Correcting Math in the coming months to prepare for the SBA tests in April.

Healthy Living

This fall a group, from a number of regional health agencies in cooperation with our district and site staff, has been visiting our schools doing health screening checks and providing health education to our students.







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service to the children in this community.