

# REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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*days grow longer and we begin to think of spring activities...*

## SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

### Jack Foster, Superintendent



## On Service to Others

"To do something, however small, to make others happier and better, is the highest ambition, the most elevating hope, which can inspire a human being"

--John Lubbock

## Great Teamwork!

The Southwest Region School District staff serves students everyday as a team, teaching the students in their communities. I want to thank each and every one of the staff for the work they are doing for the students in Southwest.

## Site Visits

David Piazza, Herman Gerving and myself visited the

Twenty-Seventh Alaska State legislature on March 6th and 7th. It was great visiting Senator Lyman Hoffman and Representative Bryce Edgmon. We also visited several others. Even though we did not feel that they were looking at more money next year, recent information from Hoffman is taking into consideration the increase in the price of oil income. I also made arrangements for David,



Herman and myself to meet all of the staff in the Education Department. Cindy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support walked us around the state building meeting all of the able staff. Cindy was great to do this for me. The best part of the visit was being to see and visit with Governor and his aide. Below is the picture with the Governor of Alaska and us. He was very impressed with what Herman Gerving had done in Manokotak.



### **Student Count**

Student count is 638 students as of March 11, 2011.

### **Staffing**

As of March 11, 2011 we have not received all of the signed contracts yet. We are in the process of hiring as the resignations are sent into the office.







## Curriculum & Instruction

**David Piazza, Director of Instructional Programs**

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### eRate

Since the District's current three-year contracts for Internet and Distance Learning Services expire at the conclusion of the 2011 school year, the District entertained bids following E-Rate guidelines. The proposal presented by GCI was selected. The service provides the ability to connect to the Internet via terrestrial means when they become available versus the standard satellite connection that we have been utilizing for the past 13 years.

As mentioned previously, the filing due date for the E-Rate Form 471 Application was pushed back until March 24th, this year to accommodate changes to the forms and online data entry system. However, the District's Application was submitted well before the deadline. While the E-Rate application process involves many individuals, most of the paperwork and compliance issues have been completed by David Piazza in the past. This year, Les Parks worked closely during the bidding and application process to learn the details in order to take on more of the E-Rate responsibilities in the future.

At this time of year, after the application has been submitted, the District waits while the review process commences. One or more Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviews take place as the Universal Service Administration Company (USAC) wades through the applications to ensure program compliance. The District has already received its first PIA review, and the requested documentation has been submitted.

### Recruiting & Staffing

This time of year is always busy with the needs that occur as staff determine their future plans with the District. Interviews have been conducted as job openings have been created due to resignations. New staff have begun to provide input into the planning for the next school year, in order to provide a smooth transition at the beginning of the year.

### Legislative Fly-In

With the 90-day legislative session underway, the District has several opportunities to meet with legislators and the governor's office to provide supporting evidence for the successes that are occurring in public education as well as for the need for continued and at time increases for educational funding.

Before the Fly-In, the District submitted written letters to Senator Majority Leader and Education Committee Co-Chair Kevin Meyer, Education Co-Chair Joe Thomas in support of Senate Bill 84 which looks at forward funding of the Base Student Allocation (SBA). In addition the District requested consideration to ensure funding for the Koliganek school is forthcoming in a timely manner. Letters were also sent to Representative Edgmon and Senator Hoffman. Additionally, a letter was sent to Representative Tuck regarding support for the funding of Parent as Teachers programs which have successful been implemented in Southwest Region Schools in the past.

Superintendent Jack Foster, Manokotak Principal Herman Gerving, and Director David Piazza were able to attend the Alaska Association of School Administrators (AASA) Legislative Fly-In in Juneau in early March. During the time, formal meetings with House Education Committee Chairman Alan Dick, Representative Paul Seaton, Representative Chris Tuck, Representative Peggy Wilson and Senator Lyman Hoffman took place.

While we had several "hallway" discussions with Representative Bryce Edgmon, his schedule did not allow him to be present while we met with his staff.

Several opportunities to meet and talk to the State's new Commissioner of Education, Mike Hanley also took place. Director of Teaching and Learning Support Cindy Curran provided Southwest Region Schools participants a guided tour of the Education Department. It was enjoyable and beneficial to meet many of the staff members that we correspond with routinely via the phone.



### **PowerSchool Support (Nate Preston)**

We are in the process of storing grades and printing report card for the districts 638 students. In addition, we are gathering graduation information on the districts 39 seniors to determine who will be graduating and who will be returning. Furthermore, we did a comprehensive review of the sites STEPP plans to make sure they were in compliance with State requirements. Lastly, we are in putting all the student accommodation for the HSGQE into PowerSchool.



### **Curriculum (Deb Endicott)**

Emphasis of Writing Instruction and Curriculum has been identified by the administration as a goal for next year. Reviewing data from a variety of resources, improvement in writing instruction has been chosen to be a district wide goal. We are researching the possibility of using Northwest Professional Development opportunities to Dillingham and construct a year-long writing curriculum for teachers to implement in their classroom.

May 1-7, 2011 is Teacher Appreciation week. Not only do we appreciate our teachers, but everyone else in our schools that work tirelessly for our students. During this week, we show our appreciation to the Instructional Aides, the Cooks, Secretaries, Maintenance Staff and District Office personnel.

Student consumable orders have been trickling into the district office. The amount being requested is remarkably down. Many teachers are using the technology available and not relying on the printed student workbooks as a major component of their instructional strategies. Using the technology with core programs is a way to engage students into their own learning. As our budgets get smaller this is a good thing allowing us to use our consumable budget smarter.

Cross the District Curriculum is developing a stronger place in our schools. Language Arts and math both share the same core programs with all eight schools. We are getting closer to start the process with the Science curriculum soon.

Professional Development for all staff is a continual concern for all. What we have been hearing from Administrators and Teachers is having professional development last from August beginning of the year in-service to earning credit for continuing education requirements. We are gathering information and different resources to hopefully facilitate some of that for the 2011/2012 school year.

Fall Textbook orders are beginning to form. We are starting the 4th quarter and teachers begin to plan for the upcoming school year. Once again, having the common curriculum we will be spending considerably less on "unique" classes this coming year. Also, the Language Arts program uses E-books for students textbooks. The per student subscription price for the e-book is much less than the printed version. Another proof of teachers using the technology to engage students and being cost effective for all.



# State & Federal Programs

**Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director**

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## **Alaska STEPP**

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

The district improvement plan continues to progress. All 22 key/SMART indicators have been assessed and plans created for those indicators requiring plans. The district is now in the process of monitoring the progress of the tasks outlined in the indicator plans. One of the indicators (6.5) involves the development of a system to monitor the school improvement plans. A process is being developed that includes a monitoring tool, monthly conferences with school principals, and making use of the AK STEPP online system to provide feedback to school improvement teams. In the board packet is the updated comprehensive plan that outlines the assessment, planning, and monitoring of the indicators current to March 9th, 2011.

## **Title I District Parent Involvement Policy**

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

The Title I district parent involvement policy has been revised based upon the feedback received from parents and community members during the various CSC meetings attended throughout the year. Each school maintains a parent/school compact outlining the how parents, school staff, and students will share the responsibility of improved student academic achievement and the development a partnership to help students. The activities outlined in the district plan are linked directly to the school parent involvement plans. In the board packet is the revised draft of the title I district parent involvement plan for the 2011-2012 school year.

## **Corrective Action: Twin Hills**

### **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

A corrective action plan is required for any school at level 4 of improvement. Twin Hills School

is at level 4 of improvement and a corrective action plan has been developed in conjunction with school staff, parents, and community members. The plan was presented at two separate public CSC meetings, as well as, mailed to each parent in Twin Hills. The plan was revised based upon the input resulting from the CSC meetings and mail correspondence. The corrective action selected was to institute and fully implement a new curriculum, including providing appropriate professional development for all relevant staff. This action aligns with the language arts and math curriculum audit occurring over the past two years. In the board packet is the corrective action plan for Twin Hills School for the 2010-2011 school year.

## **Site Visits**

### **SVRS**

I traveled to Clarks Point on March 1st and to New Stuyahok on March 7th to attend local CSC meetings. During these meetings information was provided and input was solicited regarding a number of topics including the title I district parent involvement plan, the highly qualified requirements for certified and paraprofessional staff, the No Child Left Behind grant application, and overview of other federal and state programs, and review the AK STEPP system for school improvement planning. In addition, the parapro assessment was administered for one person in New Stuyahok.



## Business Office

**Lee Ann Andrew, Director of Administrative Services**

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Request for Proposals for fuel and bus contracts for FY12 went out in early March

Fuel proposals are due March 28, Bus contract proposals are due April 5.

The FY12 budget went out to sites for review on March 4 and comments were expected back on the 25th.

Four members of the business office staff attended the annual training for the current financial software ALIO from March 21 to 24. This is a one time opportunity for the staff and should have a lot of good information on the software.

The business office is now fully staffed with two new employees. Marlene Nelson started on February 21, is our new purchasing and travel technician and Guy Snyder started on March 14, is our new accounts payable technician. Noah Graber will move over and assist Denise as payroll technician.

Most of the spring orders are submitted from the sites and Marlene has done a wonderful job getting them typed and out to the vendors. The goal is to have all orders received before the sites close for the summer.

The preliminary audit is scheduled for April 12-15 with the final audit scheduled for August 29 through September 1. This should allow it to be finalized and presented to the board before it needs to be submitted to the state.



## Special Education

**Lee Webster, Director of Special Education**

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All but one of our special education teachers, Anges Gamechuk, Special Education teaching assistant from Twin Hills, Nioce Rasmussen, general education teacher at Manokotak, and Lisa Ilutsik, the administrative assistant for Special Education attended 3 days of the Alaska State Special Education Conference in Anchorage February 21-23. Three of our 1st-2nd year Special Education teachers went into Anchorage for the pre-conference thanks to the support of the Mentor Teacher Program. All the special education teachers attended one day of training in the SEAS program used throughout the district to write and create IEPs and Lisa finished the week with administrative training presented by SEAS.

March 4-6, 2011, Special Education students and teacher from Manokotak attended the weekend course presented by UAF on "Practical Gardening Basics". They all received 1-credit from UAF for attending. Our friends from BBNA Workforce Development helped support the travel and participation. Students sent thank you notes to the instructor. These students will be involved in setting up the greenhouse being constructed at Manokotak this spring. The green house will give our special education students work and life experience sustaining themselves with fresh vegetables they grow themselves.

Several Special Education students from New Stuyahok will be attending the Job Fair March 15th, along with their classmates and Special Education teacher.



# Educational Technology

**Steve Noonkesser, Director of Information Systems**

## Telecommunications Service

The technology department has been continuing the eRate process. We responded to our first request from the federal Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) for supporting documentation for our funding request for Internet services as a result of being chosen for a Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review which an effort by the eRate offices to ensure we are properly utilizing eRate funds. Les Parks has been assuming a more central role in this process in preparation for changes in upcoming years.

## District-wide Technology Plan

A major focus of our department this past month has been on the completion of the State EED required Title II-D Technology Plan. The plan has to be in Juneau by April 1st. It is usually a hundred plus page document that describes all aspects of our technology program and goals.

## Advanced Training

Several members of the technology staff recently completed four days of training on PHP and MySQL, which are the language and database technologies that underly many of the resources on our district website, student records, and other on-line sites.

## AASTC and AACTe Certifications

After a two year process, we have officially become an Apple Certified Training and Testing Center for Repair Technician, IT and ProApps courses and certifications. This allows us to provide training and testing for technology certifications required by Apple, as well as offer classes to maintain our Repair Center certification at a reduced cost. It is a special honor to be allowed to do this as there are no other K-12 institutions in the country who have all of these abilities.

The status will now also allow us to begin a project that we have been discussing for a number of years - getting our students certified with industry-standard certifications in technology before graduating from high school.

## Other Activities

As usual day-to-day troubleshooting and repair activities continue. We are also preparing to dispose of obsolete equipment and preparation for next school year is beginning.





## Facilities & Maintenance

**Rick Dallmann, Maintenance Director**

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### New Stuyahok

AVEC is moving forward with the Bulk Fuel upgrade next to our school site, our 2 bulk tanks will be moved into the new Tank Farm area

### Ekwo

Easements have been given to ANTHC to construct new sewer lines for the school and teacher housing and tie into the Village Lagoon System

### Aleknagik

The gym lighting project is complete.

### Manokotak

AK Building Science Network has been in the village doing building assessments and we are waiting for the reports to see where we can improve our energy efficiency. Sewer line extension project is moving forward, the school and teacher housing will be hooked into the City system by this August. Alaska DEC has completed their Source Water Assessment for our Class A water system this is done every 5 years (we are in compliance in all areas)

### Clarks Point

Our back up generator has finally quite and is beyond reasonable repair cost's. The school is functioning on City power, we are not able to use the lights in the gym, but most everything else is operating. We have ordered a replacement generator and it will be coming by barge this spring and will be installed before start of school next August

### Togiak

AK Building Science Network provided a 40 hour Weatherization Training. 2 of our local site guys attended the class. Alaska DEC has completed their Source Water Assessment for our Class A water system this is done every 5 years (we are in compliance in all areas)

### District-Wide

The week of March 7th I made the rounds to all of our school sites with the Alaska State Fire Marshall. There were deficiencies at each site, but most were minor infractions some were taken care of on site and the rest will be corrected.



## Aleknagik School

**Jeff Ambrosier, Principal**

We are kicking into high gear with the SBA's less than a month away. Each class is working on testing techniques as well as reviewing some of the material that was taught at the beginning of the year.

Even though the SBA's are at the forefront of everyone's mind, we are also now thinking of ideas for summer. The school is going to purchase a four pack of home books for each student to read over the summer break. These books also come with a workbook that allows for 2 worksheets per week. There is also a key for mom/ dad to use along with stickers to showcase excellent achievement. We believe that by reading 12 months out of the year, students will maintain the fluency and be that much more ready for the beginning of the new school year.

In Language Arts, the students are currently working on a poetry unit which will be capped off with a Poetry Coffee house reading. In Science, students are eagerly beginning a dissecting unit which will continue for the rest of the year.





# Koliganek School

**Cody McCanna, Lead Teacher**

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## PLC Progress

The Professional Learning Community (PLC), consisting of the teachers at Koliganek School, spent February and March working to identify and improve student writing. The team created writing assessments for students that were developed to mimic the formatting of the SBA tests. The team then met and assessed all students writing samples from grades 1-10. The data was collected and discussions were held around the instructional changes that will need to be made to foster student improvement. Teachers at Koliganek School have done an amazing job all year during their PLC work to create a positive and productive culture for the school that is centered on student learning.

## Art

We had the honor of having two art students from UAA come to our school and work with our students for three days. During that time they created maps, drawings, and masks with students in the entire school. It was a great opportunity for everyone to express his or her creative side. The artwork will be used as writing prompts

## School Carnival

Koliganek School held a fundraising carnival February 16th-20th. The CSC decided earlier this year that a carnival would be an appropriate way for the school to make money while creating some positive partnerships between community members and the school. The carnival was kicked off with a Family Night on the 16th. The gym was packed to watch elementary basketball games, Eskimo Bingo, and then conclude with a cakewalk. In the end, the school raised over \$6,000 while providing a positive and drug free weekend for the entire community. It would have never happened without the assistance of Grace Ishnook, Lindsey Rau, Elena Norbert, Margo Hiratsuka, Anecia Johnson, Genevieve Kapatak (lil gen), Nick Johnson, Edward Kapatak, Skin Wysocki, Gusti Larson, and a handful of others who were there for our students' sake. Qu yana!

## Alaska STEPP

Our school improvement planning has been assisted with the Alaska STEPP process. Teachers spent part of their in-service day on the 4th of March creating action plans for indicators that still needed to be planed. The planning team has been working on ideas to utilize the school improvement funds as well. The planning process has been very productive with one of the best things being the quality of conversations that people are having around student learning.



# Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

**Herman Gerving, Principal**

Basketball season has come to an end, with the girls' team winning the district championship and participating in the Region tournament at King Cove. The boys' team took part in the Region tournament at New Stuyahok. Both teams placed fourth, with Jason Mike, Matthew Andrews, Randa Moore, and Tiarna Fischler receiving All-Tournament Team honors. Additionally, Tiarna Fischler is this year's Region free throw shooting champion!

We are excitedly looking forward to Native Youth Olympics, hoping for increased participation. We are hoping the program will support an activity bus, and that the Birch and AmeriCorp programs will incorporate younger students to participate in Pee-Wee NYO.

Our school hosted the University of Alaska Southeast admissions and financial aid presentations, and several upper class students have expressed interest in their programs.

Class fundraising activities have included movie and gym nights and preparation for an April Fools Tournament.

Our student council members are excited to participate in the Leadership Retreat at New Stuyahok.

We will help facilitate teaching the Raising Student Voices and Participation process and creating entries in the statewide Suicide Prevent contest.

Tiarna Fischler has participated in several statewide audio conferences and an AASG winter business meeting and now has AASG Executive Board committee assignments. She is attending the March 2011 regular State Board of Education and Early Development meeting in Juneau, and is doing a tremendous job as she embraces her duties of representing Alaskan youth on a statewide level.

Manokotak Nunaniq School is eagerly waiting the April testing days. We are planning a potluck on Monday night before testing so that the community can express their support for the students. We wish all the student of Manokotak Nuninaq school the best of luck on their tests. GO LYNX.



With testing rapidly approaching, the students have put up a "Wall of Encouragement"



"Act of Kindness chain" Every good deed that a student does is put onto a link, these links are then put together to make a chain. Our goal is to go around the entire school.



## **‘Chief’ Ivan Blunka School**

**Bob Thompson, 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 64% of our high school and middle school students! Thirty-seven percent made High Honor Roll.

### **Metervit**

Our village youth group, Metervit, or Eagles in Yup'ik, has been awarded the Lifesaver and Prevention award for 2011 from the Spirit of Youth organization. Metervit made traffic warning signs for the community of New Stuyahok. Vehicles, sleds and bikes often interact on the village trails and roads. The youth saw this as a danger and they did not want to see a major accident or a death.

This student group was chosen by the teen action council of Spirit of Youth from over 160 nominations received from communities all over Alaska. Metervit will be honored at the Spirit of Youth annual awards banquet at the Anchorage Marriott in downtown Anchorage on Saturday, March 19th.

### **Rose Urban Rural Exchange**

We were fortunate to have five students from Colony High School visit us for a week at the end of February. Our guests attended school and were able to watch Winter Carnival activities. In addition, they were taken on a snow-go ride one evening and a dog sled ride the next day. While at school the visiting students all made ullaqs to take home with them. In a few weeks we have a group of students that will spend a week in Palmer visiting Colony High School.

### **Basketball Regionals**

The Aleutian Chain Conference Regional Basketball Tournament was held at Chief Ivan Blunka School on March 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Schools from St. Paul, King Cove, Port Lions, Newhalen, Manokotak, Koliganek, and New Stuyahok competed for the title. Each day's games played to a packed house. The championship game was between Newhalen and New Stuyahok. It was a hard fought battle with Newhalen prevailing in the end by five points.







## Togiak School

**David Morris, Principal**

Spring has arrived in Togiak!!!! The days are getting longer and the students in Togiak are making great strides in all academic subjects. Students are mastering skills in reading, writing and mathematics. In addition to improving those fundamental skills, our students are engaged in projects and courses that are both interesting and challenging.

In the elementary, we are continuing our intensive reading and writing interventions that have strengthened and complimented classroom language arts instruction. The focus of our reading and writing interventions are to help students with decoding, phonemic awareness, fluency, comprehension, and writing skills. We are seeing exceptional gains from students who are involved in the program. We are focused on test taking strategies and gearing up for the Standards Based Assessments students will take on April 5, 6, and 7.

In the middle school we have scheduled two 40-minute blocks each day. One is used to instruct and support students with specific content they have struggled with on the Standards Based Assessments. The second 40-minute block is used to provide targeted reading instruction and interventions for our middle school students. We have built in Physical Education time so our middle school students are able to get into gym several times a week. They are being even more productive academically in light of having a positive exercise component in their day.

In our high school, expectations and support for our students, as they strive to reach their educational goals, is also at a very high. We have just completed the high school basketball season. Both of our teams finished the year strong. Our boys placed fourth in the region and our girls are Region Champions. They will represent Togiak and SWRSD well at the state tournament.

As a staff, we are working through STEPP indicators and building a comprehensive improvement plan that will be our school's roadmap as we move forward - striving to better meet the needs of all our students. The success we are having, and will have in the future, can be directly attributed to the efforts of our students, staff, and teachers, as well as support from our parents. I want to thank everyone who is working hard on behalf of our students.

