



REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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school is in full swing and learners are hard at work...

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Jack Foster, Superintendent



*"Coming together
 is a beginning,
 keeping together is
 progress, and
 working together is
 success."*

- Henry Ford

Great Team Work

We are working together, and, as Henry Ford said, that is success. We can watch what is going on in the Southwest Region School organization with pride. We are seeing the finest display of teamwork that I have experienced in the twenty-five years of education.

Each department and each individual is working hard to help our team complete the projects indicated by our own assessments and by state department requirements. Curriculum, STEPP, new resources, new computers are just a few of the projects that we are working on as a team.

The Department of Education has several new process

for us to learn: Alaska Steps Toward Educational Progress and Partnerships

The AK STEPP process is EED's revamped district and school improvement process required by NCLB. AK STEPP is a continuous process involving the assessment, planning for, and monitoring of 22 key indicators that have research has linked to improving district and school achievement. More will be included about this new process in the Federal Programs report.

Enrollment Count

The count will end on October 22, 2010 but it will take about three weeks before we have the official count.

AASB Quality Schools

Right now, it looks like, \$4-5000 of the \$30,000 is not yet allocated to a particular activity, but principals are still working on plans. The plans the principals are generating are good and adequately funded so far. Principals have not been given spending limits besides the overall \$30,000 amount for the project, and this is just how it is coming together so far.



Manokotak teacher Nate McDonough and his class.



CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

David Piazza, Director of Instructional Programs

eRate

We are now at the time of year that we begin focusing on next year's E-Rate application for Internet, Distance Learning, and Telephone service. We have been told that the application window may be slightly delayed this year, as the FCC and Universal Service Administrative Company finalize changes to the online application programs.

At the same time we have finished the paperwork process for the eligible telephone charges that we pay in full and request reimbursement at the end of the fiscal year. As stated previously, our current year's application is still being processed and no further information is available.

Student Records/PowerSchool Support (Nate Preston)



The end of quarter Report Cards are being finalized and by the time of the Board meeting they should be printed and have been distributed during Parent Teacher Conferences.

The "SY 2009-10 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) Part 2" report is being completed online. This report requires The purpose of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) CRDC is to obtain data about the nation's public Local Education Agencies (LEA) and elementary and secondary schools. The CRDC collects information about students in public schools, including enrollment and educational programs and services disaggregated by race/ethnicity, sex, limited English proficiency, and disability. The CRDC is a longstanding and important aspect of ED's Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) overall strategy for administering and enforcing the civil rights statutes for which it is responsible. This information is also used by other ED offices, as well

as policymakers and researchers outside of the Department.

Curriculum (Deb Endicott)



The Language Arts Curriculum Committee met on Friday, October 8th to further their work to fill the gaps in the K-12 program. Student Textbook resources were chosen to meet the needs of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students.

The series complements the resources selected for the High School literature and grammar areas as they are published by the same company.

The Middle School and High School Language Arts teachers stayed for a hands-on training on Saturday. Colleen Smith, a 30 year retired teacher, from the EMC Publishing company, showed the staff how each of the printed and electronic resources for the Mirrors and Windows literature series may be used in the classroom.

Additional resources vocabulary development are being ordered in order to pilot and select an appropriate intervention to assist struggling students.

Additional shelving has been built in the new Curriculum Materials library. One of the efforts during recent weeks, has been to pull together copies of each adopted curricular resource used across the district into an organized library.



Student Leadership

Two students will be attending the Youth Leadership Institute at the AASB Conference. Utilizing funding from the School Board and the AASB QS2 project, New Stuyahok Student Council President, Timurphy Andrew and Manokotak Student Body President Tiarna Fischler are scheduled to attend.

Student Photos

Richard Johnson with Purnell Photography was able to make it out to each community and complete the student photos. The district was able to obtain and upload the low-resolution student pictures into the district's student records system (PowerSchool).

Media Center

(Shannon Clouse)



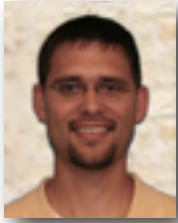
The media specialist recently made a site visit to Togiak. The identification method of Accelerated Reader books was evaluated to see if students are able to easily identify books in their reading level. Based on this evaluation, additional color coding of the books will be completed.

The Imagination Library project is being implemented in Koliganek. Site Library Aide Margie Nelson and Shannon attended a training session in Anchorage.

School sites have continued to complete their Reading is Fundamental (RIF) distributions. This program continues to provide books for students to select and take home at three times during the school year.



Koliganek students participating in a culture week activity



FEDERAL & STATE PROGRAMS

Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director

Alaska STEPP School Improvement

Alaska Dept. of Ed. & No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

What is AK STEPP?

Southwest Region School District is participating in the first cohort of Alaska Steps Toward Education Progress and Partnerships (AK STEPP), which is a replacement for the previous district/school improvement process. AK STEPP is an entirely web-based improvement system used by district and school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities. AK STEPP replaces paper-based templates such as the Self-Study Tool for Alaska Schools, the District Improvement Plan, the School Improvement Plan, the Intervention District Improvement Plan, as well as certain Title I planning and report requirements. It will guide improvement teams through a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring using the domains and key indicators from the AK Self-Study Tool. While this process is required for districts and schools at level 2 or higher in improvement, the leadership team, including site principals, believe that there can be improvement at all of our schools, so all eight of our schools are participating in the AK STEPP process.

In addition, there is a supplemental component that addresses the required Title I schoolwide plan required by all schools. This supplemental component is a series of questions that are answered and in combination with the AK STEPP process will be the Title I schoolwide plan. This is especially helpful as the redundancy of information in two separate plans is eliminated and a significant amount of time will be saved.

There are 22 key and/or SMART indicators spread across six domains that will be assessed,

planned/implemented, and monitored by each school and at the district level. The six domains include curriculum, assessment, instruction, professional development, supportive learning environment, and leadership. Key indicators are "rapid improvement indicators" that are high leverage and/or first phase indicators. SMART indicators relate directly to SMART goals written for the student subgroups that do not make AYP and support the implementation of the SMART goals developed through the Needs Assessment. The state recognizes that planning for and monitoring 22 different areas in a single year is very difficult and have suggested that the district, collectively pursues a few indicators to concentrate on this school year by developing plans at greater depth for these indicators.

There are seven steps in the AK STEPP process. Step 1 is to register the district/school. Step 2 involves providing basis student and staff demographics as well as assessment data (SBA data is required). Step 3 is forming an improvement team. Step 4 is to complete a needs assessment based on SBA data with the option of using other district data. Step 5 is the assessment of the 22 indicators by the improvement team. Step 6 involves planning activities to address the indicators that are not fully implemented. Step 7 is the monitoring of the activities planned and to determine if revisions to the plan need to be considered or implemented.

Where are we now?

The district leadership team (including principals) has attended three training sessions regarding the philosophy and application of AK STEPP. At the last training session, a pacing guide was developed so that every school and the district had common goals to work toward. The first goal is to have the

needs assessment (required by schools at level 2 or higher in improvement) complete and the 22 indicators assessed by November 29th. At the next principal's meeting the leadership team will complete the pacing guide by determining which indicators should be an area of focus and completing the pacing guide to plan for and monitor the 22 indicators.

The district has completed the first five steps including a district-wide needs assessment based on SBA data and the assessment of all 22 indicators. All of the schools have completed the first three steps of AK STEPP and are at varying stages of the needs assessment and assessment pieces, which will be completed by November 29th.

Enclosed in the board packet is information about the AK STEPP process that may provide more insight about the key and/or SMART indicators and the AK STEPP process as a whole. Also included is information about the district-wide needs assessment, the results from the assessment of the district indicators, the pacing guide for completion, and a guest password.

Title IIIA English Language Acquisition **No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**

Title III is a grant intended to provide students that are identified as being limited English proficient (LEP) instruction in order to meet both academic growth and English language proficiency standards. The model that Southwest Region School District uses to assist LEP students is the "Sheltered English" model. The goal of this instructional approach is to make academic instruction in English understandable to LEP students in order to help them acquire proficiency in English while at the same time

achieving in content areas. Sheltered English instruction differs from ESL in that English is not taught as a language with a focus on learning the language. Rather, content knowledge and skills are the goals. In this model, teachers use English language, physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects. This approach is integrated into our current curriculum and the resources used to teach the academic content. In addition, the current curriculum has a language component that is used with all of our students to develop vocabulary and oral language skills.

Annual Measurable Achievement

Alaska Dept. of Education

Southwest Region School District recently received new information regarding the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) that are used to determine the level of progress in academic growth and English language proficiency. The AMAO targets are changing for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school year and results based on those changes should be sent by the state in January. Southwest Region School District did not meet the AMAO targets for the 2008-2009 school year. Included in the packet is correspondence from the state outlining the AMAOs, definitions of proficiency and making progress, and other relevant information.



BUSINESS OFFICE

Lee Ann Andrew, Director of Administrative Services

The national Association for School Business Official's conference was attended at no cost to the district. The session preparing business officials for the certification at a national level was really informative. There was a lot of information on educational co-ops that could save us money on our annual school purchases. A session on student activity accounts gave multiple ideas on implementing solid internal controls for site accounts.

The final numbers have been verified for the New Stuyahok housing, that we moved into in March 2009, which means the long term loan will be finalized and we will start paying that. In January we will have the maximum necessary in the escrow account, for the older Togiak housing, which means we will be able apply an extra \$658 per month to the loan principal. The closing of the Togiak and Manokotak housing, that we moved into in November 2009, was put on hold until the New Stuyahok project closes.

The 2010 audit is done. Due to conservative budgeting we have \$1,015,054 unreserved funds in the general fund. The housing fund needs

\$310,135 to clear the expenditures in that fund and the new Manokotak and Togiak housing projects need \$132,269 to complete our participating share. The fuel inventory is about \$250,000 lower than 2009 due to delivery times, which may not be the case next year so that amount should remain in the unreserved to allow for any difference next year. Our 2011 actual student count to date is averaging around 10-13 less than budgeted. Other funding should cover the shortfall however there may be a need to utilize unreserved funds.

On October 18, Dennis Niedermeyer held an OASIS training for both Dillingham and Southwest Region School employees that are involved with the student count.

The school lunch program has spent about \$192,638 about 31% of its \$704,000 budget. At this point programs should be around 20%. Staff is working on ways to maximize efficiency in this department. District staff is also researching the cost of unreimbursed meals and the benefits to the overall program.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Lee Webster, Director of Special Education

The Special Education Department has been busy doing initial evaluations, placements, and service plans (IEP) for 3 and 4 year olds over the last 4 weeks. The Child Find screenings from last spring with the coordination of Head Start and ILP have resulted in an increase in referrals to special education. Children are screened for delays in motor, cognitive and language development, as well as, vision and hearing screening. Information is provided to parents to explain what they can do at home to help their children develop skills like their peers who enter kindergarten at the age of 5. If the children show significant delays in one or more areas, they will receive services to help them develop those skills. The three large sites, Manokotak,

Togiak and New Stuyahok, have Head Start programs in their villages where the special needs students are enrolled. The special education staff goes into the Head Start programs to work with the children identified. Any child whose parents do not meet the income requirement for Head Start is given direct intervention by the special education staff until an opening does arise. At sites without Head Start programs, if we've identified 3 or 4 years olds who need services, the special education staff provides those individually at the school; but, ideally, service is implemented to the greatest extent possible among otherwise normally developing children.



EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Steve Noonkesser, Director of Information Systems

Equipment Refresh

The refresh planned for this year is well underway. Equipment has been purchased and has nearly all been received. Deployment is planned to begin around November 1, 2010 if all remaining parts and supplies arrive as expected. It will take approximately a month and a half to complete the deployment. We hope to have all new equipment in the hands of teachers and students by Christmas break.

The refresh will put new laptops in the hands of all 7-12 students and certified teachers, will provide newer models for classified aides and will also replace nearly all of the aging elementary equipment in the district.



Computer Aided Instruction Specialist (Corey Evans)

In addition to troubleshooting user issues and supporting our computer-based instructional and assessments, Corey has been working to prepare our inventory system to handle the influx of new equipment.



Technology Specialist (Les Parks)

In addition to day-to-day troubleshooting, Les has been working to create the images necessary for a smooth deployment of all of the new equipment to schools.



Aleknagik School

Jeff Ambrosier, Lead Teacher

Students and staff are continuing to work towards increasing student engagement and student achievement. This is being done by giving AIMSweb and ACFA assessments, using Study Island and Education City as well as good old fashioned talking to the kids and getting them excited about what we are studying.

The kids are excited about the upcoming Halloween Carnival as well as the raffle that is taking place in December. Last year with the help from Randy Tinker, the kids made 2 sleds out of hickory. One is a small child's sled and the other is a large freight sled. Tickets are being sold now and the drawing will take place in December. We want to thank Mission Lodge and Bristol Bay lodge for donating pop and other "goodies" to be used at our carnival.

In the classroom, Mrs. Gilbertson's little ones are working on "All about Me" books. They are taking pictures about the things that are important in their lives and writing paragraphs about them. Mr. Gilbertson's class are using boxes to create personal spacecraft which include the world's biomes which they are going to transfer to another planet.

Apparently they are looking for another planet to live on with a longer summer vacation. Mr. Ambrosier's class has been busy with the microscopes and dissecting scopes. They recently sampled the lake water and surrounding creeks to find interesting protists and other small organisms. Currently, they are investigating local mushrooms and lichens. Mrs. Schiaffo has been busy coordinating Battle of the Book events on the weekends with fun activities for students that are reading at least 1 battle book per month. The latest event was a Wii party with Hamburgers and hotdogs.

Staff has been entering data in the STEPP program which is a data system that incorporates the school improvement/district improvement plan along with the title 1 school improvement plan. It is helping us create a roadmap that allows us to document our strengths as well as developing a plan for areas that need improvement.





Clarks Point School

Doug Bushey, Principal

The students have accomplished many tasks this first quarter. They attended the Alaska State Fair and many educational sites in the Matanuska Valley to broaden their understanding of this wonderful State of Alaska. Each student participated in the AIMS web screening/bench mark assessment, and all students needing RTI (Response to Intervention) have been receiving modified instruction. The school is providing after school tutoring for all students to assist with school/student achievement through the use of the SFSF funds.

The student's have elected their student council who has been busy planning for the school sponsored Halloween Carnival to be held October 29. The student council members are busy stocking the student store from their first order for the year.

Our K-2 students are in the middle of helping to build their own literacy station for their classroom. This has consisted of them painting their new post office so that they can send mail and receive mail from other students, parents, and community members. This type of play context helps the students think about how print works, and gives them an opportunity to explore on their own.





Student Activities

Doug Bushey, Activities Director

We all would like to congratulate Freshman Drew Carlos from Togiak. She placed 25th out of 107 runners at the Alaska State Cross Country Meet for the 1A, 2A, 3A schools on October 2nd, 2010. The meet was held at Bartlett H.S. in Anchorage. We look forward to next years cross country season and invite all high school students to participate.



Wrestling - Volleyball Schedule

SCHOOL	EVENT	DATE
CIBS	Wrestling in Seward	Oct. 21-23
DLG	VB Spike Fest	Oct. 21-23
DLG	Wrestling – Wolverine Classic	Oct. 29-30
CIBS	VB Round Robin	Oct. 29-30
Manokotak	Mix-Six VB in Newhalen	Oct. 29-30
CIBS	Wrestling Invitational	Nov. 5-6
Togiak	VB Invitational	Nov. 5-6
ACS	ACS Wrestling Tournament	Nov. 11-13
Naknek	VB Silver Boot Tournament	Nov. 12-13
CIBS	Wrestling in Bethel	Nov. 19-20
CIBS	VB Round Robin	Nov. 19-20
CIBS	Region 1A/2A VB Tournament	Dec. 2-4
Bethel	Region 1A/2A/3A Wrestling Tournament	Dec. 3-4
Dimond H.S.	State 1A/2A VB Tournament	Dec. 9-11
Nikiski H.S.	State 1A/2A/3A Wrestling Tournament	Dec. 10-11



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

Herman Gerving, Principal

Student Activities

Manokotak Nunaniq School had numerous student-athletes participate in the cross-country running season for the first time in many years. Currently, the volleyball and wrestling seasons are underway. Our volleyball team is mixed due to numbers, and the wrestling team has increased participation, particularly from middle school. Coinciding with the onset of volleyball and wrestling seasons was Spirit Week, with the Kindergarten class winning the school-wide competition for the highest level of participation this year.



Visitors and Community Activities

We've had site visits from UAF - Bristol Bay Campus outlining numerous opportunities available to our students locally. Our facility served host to a recent Village Council meeting and an upcoming Youth Spiritual Feast.

Student Government

Our student council has been very active, meeting weekly and working on several projects. Four of our student council members served the State of Alaska as Youth Vote Ambassadors at the two recent elections. They will receive additional training before the upcoming November election. Planning and preparation are currently underway for our Fall Carnival, which is student-led and designed to provide an event and activities for the community.



‘Chief’ Ivan Blunka School

Bob Thompson, Principal

The first quarter is behind us and winter is just around the corner. Fall brings on the volleyball and wrestling seasons and both are well under way. The volleyball team traveled to Ninilchik to start the season and the wrestlers were in Seward. It looks to be a good season for both teams as meets are scheduled every weekend until regionals in December.

School Improvement

A school improvement team has been formed to work on the Alaska STEPP process for school improvement. The team has met and completed a needs analysis and has identified specific indicators that are not yet fully implemented in our school. Some of these indicators are work on formative assessments, professional development, extended learning opportunities for students and cultural awareness. The team's next task is to devise plans to address these indicators and then implement and monitor progress.



Student Council at AASG Conference

The student council traveled to Bethel for the fall Alaska Association of Student Governments' Fall Conference. Eight students made the trip along with their advisor, Brett Scott. Students at the conference can take workshops on leadership and can further their training in RSVP. RSVP is a program that encourages student involvement in school policy-making and management of the school. Education commissioner, Larry LeDoux, addressed the assembly on Friday.

Student groups at the conference can put forward resolutions to be acted upon by the association. Last year's group from Chief Ivan Blunka School introduced and passed a resolution opposing the development of the Pebble Mine in the southwest region.

Percent for Art

The Community School Committee has started a process to spend funds set aside to purchase artwork for the new school building. The process will begin with selecting a theme for the art projects. Students and community members will be involved in selecting the theme. This theme will be forwarded to the Alaska Council on the Arts. The Alaska Council will then solicit projects from across Alaska and the United States for the CSC to review. The CSC is interested in local projects as well. The purpose is to have our school reflect the local community with pictures and artwork of elders and other people important to our community and school.





Togiak School

David Morris, Principal

The school year is rolling through the end of the first quarter. Students and staff in Togiak are very busy. We are pleased with many of the initiatives we have established to improve the reading, writing, and mathematics skills of our students. We are continuously monitoring the effectiveness of our programs and adjusting them to best meet our student's needs. Education is a people business and we are fortunate to have a lot of great staff members and students in Togiak. This month I would like to recognize a few people who have done a great job working with our students, welcome some new employees we are pleased to have join our staff, and share some news about a couple of our students.

On October 4th, Jack Gosuk celebrated his 76th Birthday. Jack is one of the most respected elders in our community. During the school year he rides the bus everyday with our students and volunteers in the Responsible Thinking Classroom. His presence and support in the RTC has been part of what makes the Responsible Thinking Process successful in Togiak. Thank you Mr. Gosuk.

Francis Dock recently retired from the Southwest Region School District. She was one of our outstanding paraprofessionals who worked with our first grade students for 16 years. She was always kind, thoughtful, and did an outstanding job working with our First Graders. We wish her the best in her new position as the Togiak Postmaster. Good luck Francis.

On October 12th, we hired two new paraprofessionals to join our staff. We are really excited to have Jeanette Dyasuk and Amy Wassillie working with our children. Both Jeanette and Amy have worked as substitutes in our school and have done a terrific job. Schools are only as good as the people we have working with our students. We are fortunate to have such highly qualified individuals joining our staff. Welcome Jeanette and Amy.

Drew Carlos represented Togiak well at the State Cross Country Championships. Drew ran the 5K course in 22:35 which placed her 25th in a field of 107. Congratulations Drew.

On Saturday, October 9th, we lost a child in our community. There are few things that are more somber than laying a child to rest. It is hard to believe that Cory Kanulie is no longer with us. Cory was an outstanding young man, good student and friend. Cory's absence has left a void in our school and community. Our thoughts and prayers are with Cory's family. Rest in peace Cory.



photo credit: Roy Corral, Alaska Newspapers





Twin Hills School

Esther Ilutsik, Principal/Teacher

Camai! Greetings from Twin Hills School!

One of the goals for school improvement is to ensure that the students have a good understanding of their Yupiaq heritage and an understanding of the environment that they live in presently. Research has shown that when students have an understanding of their cultural heritage and knowledge of their environment provides a foundation of positive self-esteem. (Indigenous Knowledge of Pedagogy in First Nation Education: A Literature Review with Recommendations - Dr. Marie Batlista, Director of Apamuwik Institute 10/31/02)

Twin Hills School begins the day with a very brief morning session where all the students K-8th grade and staff met. During this session all the day's activities are highlighted followed with a brief presentation of one of the Bristol Bay Values (developed by BB Elders in 1983 and up-dated by the Ciulistet Research Association) followed with a brief discussion. We focus on one value a week. Then we present the Yup'ik Philosophy (developed by Yup'ik Elders in a class taught by Cecelia Martz) by reading a phrase telling what it means then teaching the phrase on a daily basis until it is memorized. We emphasize the traditional oral method of teaching this philosophy to the students.

The Yup'ik class is offered to all the students three times a week. The first two sessions are focusing on family and kinship and the third session is a time for Yup'ik dancing. Yup'ik dancing is also taught in more of a traditional Yup'ik method of instruction by demonstration, listening and active participation.

Twin Hills School believes that field trips are crucial in setting the stage to understand and know their environment. So far we have taken two-field trips- our 2nd Annual Anchor Point for clamming and climbing one the namesakes of Twin Hills. We use the information that we have gathered during these outing



in our regular instructional program. They are either integrated into the science and writing disciplines and even become a part of our Yup'ik instruction.

We have also implemented "reading" partner's activities where older students read to the younger students on a weekly basis. The students were provided a short training session on the proper way to read to the students. This procedure is used during this activity.

And lastly, Twin Hills School is a part of the Alaska Learning Lab (SERRC) where students focus on improving their skills in reading, writing and math. These skills are aligned with the GLEs. The students with the instructors help build learning paths that they will partake. Some of those activities include computer based reading and math programs, books, journals and learning pallets (Saxon Math Learning Center). The lab is held 3 days a week after school beginning at 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm. Martha Foster, Instructional Aide is the instructor.

We hosted the 2nd Annual Akutaq celebration in conjunction with our 2nd RIF distribution on October 7, 2010 at 5:00 pm. The prizes for the akutaq contest included a grand prize donated by Alaska Island Air – a round trip ticket to Dillingham from Twin Hills. This was awarded to the best of all the akutaqs entered. This award went to Mathew Pleasant, 6th grader who beat six adult entries and one other student. AC in Togiak, also, donated prizes that included 2-Sweat Shirts, 2- \$25 gift certificates, a stainless steel akutaq bowl, Crisco and a bag of sugar. We appreciate the support and donations that we received from Alaska Island Air and AC in Togiak.

Quyana.

