



YKSD STAFF CONNECTIONS

December
2007

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Staff:

First of all, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Also, if you are going somewhere for the holidays, I wish you the safest of travels. It appears we have some real Alaska weather this year after all, so dress appropriately, especially when traveling by air.

Recently the Board of Education held a retreat to create goals for the district. After a day of committee meetings and another day to meet, the Board came up with the following goals:

- Continue improving the Native language and culture at the schools
- Implement the Voluntary Public School Choice (VPSC) Grant without doubt
- Provide quality vocational education for the high school students
- Offer after school programs for the students, especially at the elementary level.

As a direct result of this goal setting, additional funding will be provided to bring the Native language specialists back into the schools. On January 11, 2008, certified employees will attend a day long session on the goals and implementation timeline of the VPSC grant. Administration will meet next month to formulate a plan to provide quality vocational education courses to the students. The idea behind this goal is to have high school graduates transition directly into their career of choice. In addition, a survey is being conducted of what after school programs are being offered at the schools and additional funding will be provided. These are the initial steps taken to begin marching forward to meet the goals.

The Board of Education formally accepted my request to step down as Superintendent at the end of June 2008. The next step is the process of hiring another Superintendent has already begun. I have been very lucky in that I have worked for a very understanding and supportive board. I have no doubt they will keep the kids first as they make decisions in the future.

I would like to inform the staff that I don't see the direction of the district changing after my departure because there are written goals and policies set in place for the next chief school administrator. I know there are often questions and uneasiness when change takes place but all is fine with YKSD. Please do not let my personal decision to step down shed a negative light upon this district. What makes this district stand out is the quality and dedication of *all* its employees not just one individual.

I look forward to hearing how you rested, relaxed and enjoyed yourselves during the winter holidays!

Chris Simon

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Federal Programs Department by Kerry Boyd

We have two new employees working with the Federal Programs Department, Andrea Durny and Johnathan Sommer. Andrea will be working in a new capacity as our Assets and Resiliency Assistant and Johnathan is helping manage the Voluntary School Choice Grant and other federal and state programs.

Also, there is a vacancy for an Educational Specialist. If you are interested in learning more about the position, please contact me for a full overview of job responsibilities.

RUS GRANT AWARDED

The Yukon-Koyukuk School District recently received a **\$485,117** Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant; United States Department of Agricultural Rural Development (**RUS Grant**). The primary purpose of this grant is to connect rural communities to educational programs that bridge the miles between students and teachers and provide classroom teaching at the touch of a button.

YKSD has partnered with the Tanana Chiefs Conference and Yakutat School District to expand cultural education and to provide training in skills needed to thrive in rural Native communities.

Our videoconferencing system will combine the resources of the Tanana Chiefs Conference with the Yukon-Koyukuk School District and other statewide and national resources to deliver educational and cultural learning opportunities to students across Alaska. The soon to be built Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center will host several cultural activities. The center will provide the classroom and learning space for the new distance learning equipment so that three different classes can be originated simultaneously.

When the facility opens in Fairbanks in 2008, it will be linked to YKSD through videoconferencing and will provide exhibits, a theater, an artisans' workshop and demonstration area, an Elders' gathering area, cultural and environmental education classrooms and outdoor recreational space. The installation of the new videoconferencing equipment will begin in the spring of 2008 with an expected completion date of June 2008. Shawn Coyle, our Technology Coordinator was instrumental in helping the district get this grant. Thanks Shawn!

NEW GRANT APPLICATION

Gina Hrisko applied for another Native American Program grant. The grant, if awarded, will be \$1.4 million dollars over a five year project period. The award notification will be sent in March.

Gina is also working on another grant, the Elementary School Counseling Grant. The purpose of this

program is to support efforts by local educational agencies to establish or expand elementary school and secondary school counseling programs. If awarded, we will be funded for \$1.2 million dollars over a three year funding period. Notification will be sent in June.

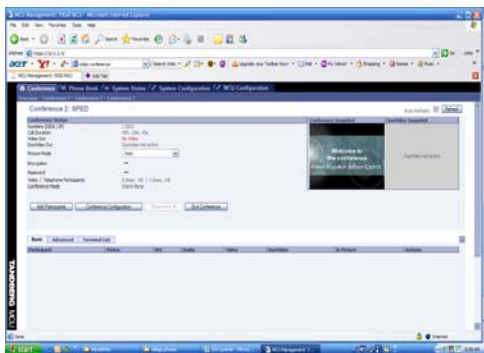
Thank you for your continue support and have a wonderful holiday season!



WHAT'S NEW

Be on the lookout for the new Federal Programs Website. On the website we will post Student Performance Data on Alaska SBA's 2005-2007 for individual school performance, forms, Highly Qualified Information and more.

Teachers and Staff from Allakaket from Nulato have now been trained on the Life Skills Training Curriculum. Feedback from teachers was extremely positive. More training will be offered in April of 2008.





Instruction & Curriculum by Carol Doyle & Joan Jones

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all! We are sure everyone is looking forward to the much-needed vacation to rest, relax, and spend time with family and friends. This time of the year puts a lot of demands on teachers and principals with tests, grades, visitors, and Christmas programs as well as the normal day-to-day activities. We would like to thank all the principals and teachers for getting the Aims testing completed for the fall as well as utilizing the ACFA website.

Next quarter will be busy with Aims winter testing January 14th-25th and Terra Nova Testing for grades 5 and 7 during the week of February 4th-8th. Specific details about each test will be emailed early in January. Please note the email that was sent to all about the Aims Webinars scheduled in January and February. That would be a great time to ask the state that burning question you may have.

The "Battle of Books" state battles have been scheduled for February 18th-21st. Don't wait until the last minute to have the students read the books and practice the questions.

We will be leading you in the district battles beginning January 22nd. Classes should sign up for battles so we know how many

teams we have. The scheduled open dates for video conference availability are January 22, 24, 29, 31; February 5, 7, 12, 14. High school, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 will need to be completed first. K, 1, 2 district battles will take place last.

Back by popular demand, the students in grades 3-12, will be asked to complete a District-wide Writing Assessment either the last week of February or the first week in March. Principals, please look over your schedule and let us know which week is best. Several sites are working with this office to write appropriate prompts. If you have any suggestions, don't hesitate to email them to this office. For those who are new to the district, the writing assessment is based on the 6-trait analytical rubric. We will have a video with the LA teachers across the district after Christmas break.

In March or April, the Math Committee

will be looking at adopting new textbook, materials, and writing a philosophy and syllabi for the high school math courses.

Checklists for students, parents, and teachers are complete and available on the district website under curriculum. Just click on

the YKSD Curriculum Library. Teachers and principals should be using these to insure that all Reading, Writing, and Math GLE's are being covered this school year.

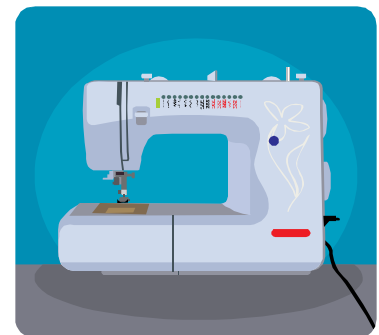
Both Carol and Joan have traveled to several sites and are impressed with the friendliness of staff and students and the willingness of all to improve instruction and motivation of the students, as well as using additional learning resources in the classrooms. Recently, Carol traveled to Montana to observe the instructional strategies and software that YKSD will be using next year within the Voluntary Public School Choice grant.

Coming soon for checkout through the library will be sewing/craft kits and 4 sewing machines. Teachers and parents will be able to use these materials. More details will be coming from Tamara early in January.

Again, have a wonderful and rejuvenating holiday break!



AimsWeb winter testing



2007 Jr. High Basketball Camp by Andrea Durny

With funding from the Voluntary Public School Choice grant, we were able to bring over 35 Junior High YKSD students together in Nulato for a Basketball Camp, provided by Challenge Life Youth Foundation. Here is a summary of the activities:

Day 1, Friday, November 30

All travelers made it safely to Nulato. In the first session the campers ran through a series of drills and stations. Water bottles were also given by the instructors to promote healthy living and clean bodies.

For dinner the community hosted a cover dish. Afterwards the camp continued with shooting contests, drills, games, and all campers were divided into teams for the tournament the following day.

Day 2, Saturday, December 1

More instruction was given in the morning, and for the afternoon session, Al Sokaitis brought the campers in the classroom. The kids sat through a series of inspirational stories; talks on goal setting and follow-through, healthy minds and bodies, and the effects of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol. He also had the kids do a short poetry write up, and what



Camp Participants



Al Sokaitis & Mike Hajdukovich of Challenge Life Youth Foundation

they wanted to be when they grew up.

For dinner, a pizza party was given by the instructors, and the community returned for the tournament.

The round robin tournament featured both boys and girls, and consisted of mixed teams from around the District. Once the games concluded for the night, everyone cleaned up, and the campers organized a small dance.

Day 3, Sunday, December 2

The camp was wrapped up with the championship games, awards, closing comments, and all of the campers received a free

T-shirt. The instructors chose one boy and one girl who modeled outstanding characteristics throughout the camp; the two always helped with a smile, carried a positive attitude, and displayed strong work ethic. Chosen for the boys was Cory Madros of Nulato, and for the girls, Claudia Thompson of Minto. Both are going to receive a pair of shoes directly from NBA superstar, Stephon Marbury of the New York Knicks.

I must say the Jr. High camp was an absolute success! The students had a lot of fun, everyone made it safely, and there was 100% participation. The kids were able to experience something new and meet new friends. I am happy to report that there were no incidents or disciplinary actions taken. They are all great kids with great potential and such fun to get to know. I look forward to more of these opportunities in the future.

Thanks to the chaperones, cooks, cleaners, volunteers, community, YKSD, Frontier Flying Service, school success team, and everyone who helped make the camp possible! Happy Holidays.



Classroom Time



Boys Shooting Contest

Denaakk'e Program by Susan "K'etsoo" Paskvan

It has been a true joy teaching the students in six of our villages. As I travel around it is fun to meet the students face-to-face. They say I look taller than on TV, so I naturally tell them they look much taller than on TV. Thank you to all of the teachers and paraprofessionals who co-teach the students.

This is my first year teaching directly from our K-2 Native Language Curriculum. It is a very beneficial framework to plan and implement the course. Since the video-conference

courses are multi-grade, I combine the curriculum from all three frameworks. Hopefully the site teachers have been keeping track of the weekly changes they may have made to the curriculum. When this course is taught again the lessons should be well documented.

The grade 3-5 curriculum frameworks are still in draft phase. It has been challenging to find time to make the corrections from our workshop last May. There are still many

gaps in the translations.

As I travel around I can tell that the students have made tremendous improvements in speaking Denaakk'e since the start of instruction in January, 2003. We, as a district, hope that we can work closely with the organizations within your community next semester. Your ideas in how we can improve are highly valued, so please submit your ideas.

Christ Hooldlaanh Dedzaanh Soduhlets'eeh! Merry Christmas!

Traditional song workshop Dec. 4-6 in Huslia. (back row: Annie Vent, Edith Bifelt, John Sackett, Susan Paskvan; middle row: Mabel Vent, Alice Ambrose, Angela Huntington, Lorna Vent, Eliza Jones; bottom row: Travis Cole, Jason Mark, Wilson Sam)



Madeline Williams translating sentences in Denaakk'e for Kelsey J.



Koyukuk Community Wellness Coordinator, Sharon Pilot, beads with her son Robert. Beading project helps students gain cultural knowledge, sharing an activity with their parent, improve fine motor skills and is fun. Robert is working on a picture frame gift. Increasing after-school activities for elementary students is one of the YKSD's Board of Education goals for FY08.



Mrs. Gladys Dart shares the history of the Manley Highlights newsletter with Principal/Teacher Heidi Wright, students Ajay W., Jules M., and Jacob ?. Mrs. Dart encourages all schools to start a newsletter, no matter the size, as soon as possible. The Manley Highlights will celebrate it's 49th anniversary in January, 2008. The newsletter is a wealth of information about Manley school, families, and community.



Special Ed. News by Cristina Welker

2nd Annual Transition Camp!!!

April 27-May 2, 2008, in Fairbanks!!!

Transition Camp will be offered for students ages 14-21 who are still in school. The purpose of Transition Camp is to assist students in transition from a school atmosphere to the adult world. Although this camp is sponsored by the Special Education Department, it is open to both regular education and special education students. All of the Transition Camp objectives and activities are aligned with Alaska Content and Perform-

ance Standards and feature five distinct themes:

- Independent Living
- Recreation and Leisure
- Education and Training
- Employment: finding the keeping a job
- Contributing to the community

Applications and a camp overview will be sent to each site in the near future, so keep in mind those stu-

dents who may benefit most from this wonderful opportunity!



Technology News by Shawn Coyle

Please remember your point of contacts at the District Office for various Technology needs:

Email:

Patty Hill

phill@yksd.com

907-374-9416



Raven Site Tech:

Joyce Billups

jbillups@yksd.com

907-374-9433

Video Conferencing:

Susan Paskvan

spaskvan@yksd.com

907-374-9405



River School Site Tech Point of Contact:

Justin Graham

jgraham@yksd.com

907-374-9425

Administrative

Network Issues:

Shawn Coyle

scoyle@yksd.com

907-374-9413





News from Nulato submitted by Mike Day

This past quarter has been a very exciting and interesting. The students are hard at work, but they are excited for the Christmas break. This quarter we have had lots of fun activities.

Events at Andrew K. Demoski School:

One of our first activities was a fall cleanup. The community, students, and teachers all participated. It was a wonderful morning and everyone worked really hard.

Our second event was when we had our first Pee Wee Basketball tournament. The winning team was Elizabeth Stanley, 6th grade; William Agnes and Chastity Alexie, both are 3rd graders. They won the championship by one point.

Next we had a school lock in. This event happened on November 2nd. Our high school teacher, Dale Hargis and his wife Tracy hosted this all nighter for the Jr. High and High School students. Mike Silas came in during the evening and stayed until the break of dawn, his help was really appreciated. Mike and Suzie Day came in the next morning and fixed everyone waffles for breakfast. Some of the activities were, basketball, kickball, and games of bump. They also had a snowman game (ask Dale about the details), team building exercises, and a whole lot more. Everyone had a great time, but they left extremely tired the next day.

Then on November 16th and 17th, the Jr. High School students traveled to Huslia and participated in their Jr. High Tournament. Daphne, Gerald, Venita, Tyler, Alyssa, Elizabeth, Larissa, and Gavin all participated. Although the team didn't make the finals they all had a wonderful time.

This was followed up by having a team from UAF come in to present a program to the students on Hydro Ponics. The students learned a lot from this and hopefully we would be able to continue with the program this spring.

Another exciting event was held November 30th through December 2nd; we had the fortune to host the Basketball Camp in Nulato. Students from around the District traveled to AKD to enjoy the weekend. Everyone had a wonderful time. We really appreciate the effort that the District did to get this activity rolling. As special thanks to Andrea Durny for all the hard work she did to put it together in such a short time.

To rap things up we had our Christ-

mas dinner and Christmas program on the 14th of December. The student did a wonderful job in the program and the parent enjoyed the activities. The following afternoon we held our first Christmas Carnival. The students who came had a wonderful time.

Each week we have been having our Caught Being Good Assembly. This had been a great motivator for the students. Along with this we have our Student of the week and then once a month we have a Student of the Month. Our Student of the week receives a cool water bottle, (primary grade, elementary, junior high, and high school students). The teachers pitch in each month and we buy one student a special gift. We recognize this student for all the accomplishments that they have done throughout the month. They are in school, on time, work completed, respectful to teachers, staff members, and other students; basically they are doing a wonderful job. Our first Student of the Month was Nichole Silas, she received a digital camera, our next Student of the Month was Gavin Sam, he received a Polaris snow-machine helmet, and finally our third Student of the Month was Brenden Patsy, he received an 8 inch portable DVD player. This program has been one of the best motivators the school has seen in a long time.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2008

The high school basketball will be traveling to Minto on the 10 of January, then on the 18th they will be traveling to Huslia for their Tournament. AKD will host their own tournament on the 24th and 25th. Then it is off to Nenana for their tournament. This year the team will be a co-ed because of students moving away. Their coach will be Kat Sam, (Mike Day is really relieved about that, for awhile he was afraid he was

What is Hydroponics?

Hydroponics from the Greek 'water working', is simply growing plants without soil. (Hydro=water and Ponic=working)



Huslia submitted by Terrie Aschenbrenner



Happy to be tobacco free in Huslia!



Huslia K-1 students enthusiastically perform a Thanksgiving play for the school and community!

Heavy Metal by Franc Wright

This first semester of the school year I had the opportunity to take a welding class that taught the basics of welding and cutting metal. For the first month or two I completed bookwork about what temperatures flames need to be at, the difference between DC electrode positive and DC electrode negative, and other stuff like what diameter welding rod to use.

Then when November rolled around I was able to do the practical part of my class, the actual welding. Greg Gau was my instructor and we



worked at his shop. He had a little wire feed welder and an oxy-acetylene kit that could be used for cutting, brazing, or gas welding. The first thing I did was tried to make some beads in a piece of metal with his wire feeder. At first I tried to go too fast and ended up with a few drops of metal scattered around. After a while I started to get some beads going and after a while I was welding.

Then I got to the cutting part of the lesson. The cutting was fairly easy but getting a clean cut was the hard part. Basically all you're doing with cutting was heating metal and then using air to blow the molten metal away from the solid metal to separate a piece of metal from another.

After practicing wire feed, cutting, brazing, gas welding, and grinding, we went to Tommy's hangar to work with his stick welder. Stick welding uses an electrode that holds a stick called filler metal, and since it is not automatically fed like a wire feeder, it

was somewhat harder to accomplish. After a while I started to get the feel for welding, I made a boat anchor out of a ripper tooth and some angle iron. Then I welded spikes to it! In the end I got a mean looking anchor



and some experience. Thanks to Greg Gau for putting up with my welding incompetence and thanks to Tommy for letting us use his hanger and welder.

I also did a career search for the profession of welding. While researching this I found information on what it takes to be a certified welder, schools that teach the profession, job opportunities, and more. I figure that when the natural gas line goes through ill be old enough to apply for a position in welding if I can advance my skills.

Manley Highlights

November - December 2007

Huyh Kk'aatl'o Leone

Issue 8

Manley Stars

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Holiday Funnies. . . .



Question: What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire?
Answer: Frostbite

Question: What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?
Answer: Claustrophobic

Question: What do snowmen eat for breakfast?
Answer: Snowflakes



HOLIDAY TIP#37



NEVER CATCH SNOWFLAKES
WITH YOUR TONGUE
UNTIL ALL THE BIRDS
HAVE GONE SOUTH
FOR THE WINTER.





Christmas Word Search Puzzle													Word List	
D	H	J	O	Y	S	E	S	S	L	E	I	G	H	Santa
J	F	P	W	R	N	L	N	N	T	R	E	E	G	Christmas
E	O	S	N	I	O	V	O	F	O	L	G	B	A	Presents
G	O	A	U	F	W	E	E	C	G	W	S	U	R	Reindeer
G	O	N	T	U	F	S	L	N	E	T	M	S	L	Noel
N	R	T	C	K	L	J	I	S	N	C	A	A	A	Holly
O	N	A	R	W	A	J	L	E	D	M	G	A	N	Ornaments
G	A	E	A	D	K	L	S	W	T	J	R	R	D	Tree
A	M	D	C	U	E	E	N	S	R	D	Q	Z	B	Wreath
N	E	H	K	B	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	Y	Eggnog
G	N	O	E	P	S	R	A	B	G	G	A	F	U	Snowflake
E	T	L	R	A	H	O	H	Z	A	G	T	T	W	Joy
L	S	L	G	C	S	J	X	T	Q	R	Y	M	H	Jingle
M	O	Y	V	R	Q	A	V	G	V	H	K	R	A	Bells

