

4th Quarter
May 2008

Yukon-Koyukuk School District

Staff Connections



Departing Words from the Superintendent ~ by Chris Simon

Prior to school closing and summer vacation I want to thank you for your hard work and dedication to the students across the district. You have touched the lives of many young people over the course of the last nine months. In addition, a heartfelt thanks for your support and understanding over the last six and a half years during my time as superintendent. All that has been accomplished is the result of several minds put together and the action of many.

As the superintendent I have seen many positive changes in the schools:

- Laptops for teachers and students in grades 6 - 12
- Distant delivery courses via video-conference and internet
- Native language taught in the schools daily
- Substantial increase in travel opportunities for students
- An overall increase in the district revenue from \$11 million to \$20 million
- An equitable method of funding each school
- Over \$21 million in construction, including the renovation of two schools.

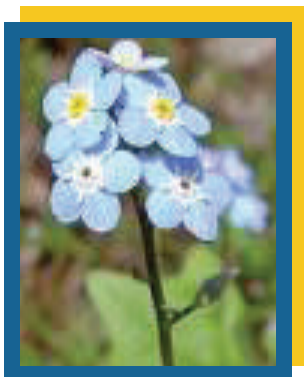
While there have been accomplishments, there is still work to be done for the sake of the young people across the district and it is time for someone else to take the role as leader.

YKSD is in a time of change, which I foresee will go smooth because of the transition plan that was put into place months ago. The new administration and I have been working on the calendar, budget, professional development plan, organizational chart, etc... for the next school year. I see many successes for the new administration and wish you all the best of times. The goals set by the Board of Education have not changed and the district will march forward in a timely manner. Stability has become one of the hallmarks of Yukon-Koyukuk.

I have truly enjoyed serving in the numerous roles in Yukon-Koyukuk and want to thank you again for your support. The journey from student to superintendent has not been mine alone, and I extend my appreciation to those who helped me. The overall experience has been outstanding and wonderful; and my wish is that another student of YKSD has a similar trip of a lifetime. **Bassee'**

Inside this issue:

State & Federal Programs	2
Instruction & Curriculum	3
Grants and Accreditation	4
Academic Academy	5
Allakaket News	6-7
Huslia, Nulato & Ruby News	8
Summer Fun. . . .	9



State & Federal Programs ~ by Kerry Boyd

Highly Qualified Paraprofessional

Congratulations are in order for Yuko Heinrich who recently achieved Highly Qualified Status! Yuko teaches students at Merrelaine A. Kangas School.

Teacher Aides working with students who are not highly qualified should contact Johnathan Sommer at jsommer@yksd.com to sign up for the HELP test. By passing the HELP test you will not only become highly qualified, but you will receive an immediate raise in pay!

About the HELP Test

The HELP test is free to all YKSD individuals working in the capacity as a teacher's aide. Upon request, we will send the test to your site for an approved proctor to administer the test to you. The test lasts approximately 3-4 hours and results will be available within two weeks.

Passing Scores for the HELP test must Meet or Exceed all three scores in the following areas:

- Essential Math Skills
Score: 54%
- Science Reading
Comprehension: 41%
- Written Expression
Composite: 55%

Praxis II Testing information for Highly Qualified Status

Teachers, please remember there are funds available for you to take the Praxis II. The last testing dates for the fiscal year are 6/14/2008 and 7/26/2008. For more information about testing, please go to www.yksd.com and click Federal Programs. NCLB requires you to be highly qualified in all core content areas you teach. Please take advantage of the district's support to meet the requirements.

Northwestern Alaska Career and Technology Center (NACTEC)

YKSD is partnered with NACTEC to offer our junior and senior students vocational opportunities with Nome's vocational education program. The majority of our students are interested in the Driver's Education program. The second most popular is the Fishing Industry/Outdoor Engines program, and the 3rd is Money Management. Ten students in all were selected by NACTEC; four students ended up actually participating. Those students are from Nulato, Minto, and Manley. At NACTEC students practice employability skills, such as interviewing, resume writing, job/school application completion, job shadowing, and social skills for two week sessions.

Phlight Academy Leadership Training

Andrea Durny organized the very successful Phlight Academy for our students this past month. Derek Peterson of ICAR-US

(Institute for Community and Adolescent Resilience) traveled with Will Boger to Huslia, Nulato and Minto the week of April 21 to 25. The first stop was Huslia where they met six students from Allakaket with their chaperone Evelyn Esmailka. They joined five students from Huslia for a day and a half of training. The students quickly bonded with Derek who used activities and problem solving to engage them in thinking about their leadership roles. The students had a great time with a lot of laughter and team work. This continued at Nulato where they picked up students from Ruby and Kaltag for a total of ten. The Nulato group also worked with Derek late into the evening and most of the day on Thursday. They traveled to Minto for an afternoon and evening session with seven students. Derek is very enthused about our students and is looking forward to continuing this leadership development in the fall.

I wish you all a very enjoyable summer break and I hope that you will take time to relax and to enjoy your time with family and friends. I look forward to working with everyone again next year!

*Sow a thought, and you reap an act;
Sow an act, and you reap a habit; Sow
a habit, and you reap a character; Sow
a character, and you reap a destiny.*



Instruction & Curriculum ~ by Carol Doyle

Here we go again with AimsWeb. By the time you read this article, we would have completed our third and final AimsWeb testing for this year. The Department of Education and Early Development will continue to require this formative testing of us next year. We will be updating our training for all of you and new staff during the September district-wide in-service.

The Math Curriculum is now complete with the syllabus from Saxon being added. Thank you for any input that you gave to this process this year. A big "thanks" to Joan Jones, too, who compiled the information and put it together in notebooks for the Board and each of the schools for the coming year. Saxon materials are in the process of being ordered. The Board did adopt the math curriculum on at its May 9th meeting.

A Career class was also adopted by the Board on May 9th. There will have to be a policy change for the number of credits for electives. The career class will be required. There are two opportunities for this class. One from Joe Marley using an AGS book called, Career Planning and one with a syllabus and text that can be used face-to-face in your classroom. The text is a Glencoe text called, Succeeding in the World of Work. Both these classes are for a half credit.

It looks like some grades across the village schools have opted out of wanting the Battle of the Books for this next year. We are ordering soon so we will not order as many as in the past, but we will have two sets for each grade level at the library in case someone changes their mind. They will need to be checked out from there.

Please remember to put your students' district-wide writing assessments in their writing portfolios. These writing portfolios should be housed in a safe place in the office or in the next teacher's room who will have the students next year.

For the most part, I would say that the Academic Academy held at Camp Li-Wa was a success in that some students did pass the parts of the HSGQE they were lacking in. Nine students finally did attend, but one had to leave and another was sent home. The students who remained worked hard and enjoyed the climate of the camp. The food was wonderful!!

Looking ahead to next year, the district has been mandated to plan for extensive professional development. A plan is in the process of being written which includes all aspects of what we will do in the grant and what EED expects of us. We also want to include some content training for you who are returning. Writing, Saxon math training on the new materials, and learning styles are priorities for the district.

Carol and the district staff have been very busy trying to hire staff for next year. We have a few at this point in time. She has been to Anchorage and two places in South Dakota. South Dakota applicants were very qualified and they were looking to come to Alaska because of the low salaries in South Dakota. How would you like to begin your first teaching job making \$28,000?

Carol and staff wish all of you a wonderful summer. Thank you again for all you do for our district and children.



May 9th Board Curriculum Adoptions for Next Year:

- *Saxon Math*
- *Career Planning*

CTE Happenings at the YKSD ~ by Gina Hrinko

The district has been looking at ways to better meet the career and technical educational needs of high school students. This year, 18 students in Nulato and Minto successfully completed a year long Construction Mathematics course and will receive 1 high school credit and 3 college credits from UAF-IAC.

Additionally, 4 students participated in an opportunity to attend NACTEC in Nome. These students were enrolled in various programs such as Driver's Education, Fishing Industry/Outboard Engines, and Money Management. All participating students at-

tended a Career Skills class and a Life Skills class. One student was able to get his driver's license. The YKSD hopes to provide more of these opportunities for students next year.



NACTEC Participants:

Carol Pitka, Nulato

Cory Madros, Nulato

Aaron Smith, Minto

Peter James, Manley

Accreditation Evaluations

Three schools (Kaltag, Minto, and Nulato) went through their accreditation evaluation this spring. This evaluation occurs every six years. A huge thank you goes out to the school staff and administrators for working closely with our department on building your site specific ac-

creditation document. Next year, the remaining 6 sites (Allakaket, Koyukuk, Huslia, Hughes, Manley, and Ruby) will work on creating and preparing their accreditation document for your evaluation during the 2009-2010 school year.



Grants, Grants, and more Grants

This was a busy year for grant writing. Although awards have not been announced yet, we are hopeful that YKSD will be one of the successful recipients. We were awarded a continuation for our Tobacco grant project for next year. Allakaket and Nulato were piloted with

the project this year. Next year, we will add Huslia to the project.

Grants were submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program, Alcohol Prevention Program, Alaska Native Education

Programs for Limited English Proficiency (this would continue our current SIOP project), and the Alaska Native Education Program for Early Childhood and Literacy. It is anticipated that we should hear from the US DOE by the end of June.



Academic Academy ~ by Joan Jones

“Building Our Academic Future”

During the week of March 17th-21st, Melvin Demoski, Dylan David, Aaron Smith, Peter James, and Dax Lollitz participated in the District’s first Academic Academy at Camp Li-Wa. The purpose of this camp was to give students expert preparation for the HSGQE. Two top-notch language art teachers in the state taught reading and writing: Kathy Alton and Leigh Anne Cox. Three resident chaperones, Teddy Franks, Liz Franke, and Tyler Franke provided

fun, games, movies, various outdoor activities, team building activities, horseback riding lessons and the favorite, horse training. The students were treated to home-made meals and a different tantalizing dessert every night. We even had a barbeque in the snow! Susan Paskvan visited the students each night and brought an elder with her to tell stories while the students worked on a native craft.

During the school day, students worked in make-shift classrooms and re-

ceived specific instruction to meet their individual academic needs.

Students had to earn bonus bucks during the camp in order to earn a trip to town, receive a free ipod and an itune download card worth \$25. All participants were given a camp t-shirt that was designed by the students in Al-lakaket.

The students and staff would like to thank Superintendent Chris Simon for his support of this year’s Academic Academy.



Allakaket Health/Career Fair ~ by Evelyn Esmailka

On April 17, Allakaket School sponsored our Annual Health/Career Fair and it was a great success. We had 12 presenters from out of town and 4 from the village. Each of the presenters went into the classrooms for K-12 during the day and set-up booths at night for the community members. We had a community cover dish and had the Allakaket Singers perform.

The presenters were: Linda Diemientiff, ADEC; Ken Carr, Interior for Non-Violent Living; Andrea Van Ravenswaay, ACPE; Laurie Calderhead, PHS; Delores Saunders, Allakaket Health Clinic; Jullianne Nagy and Madeline Patterson-Odell, Diabetes (TCC); Erin Harmon & Trevor White, TCC Environmentalist & Engineer; Brandy Berkgigler (Biologist) and Kristen Reakhoff, AK Fish & Wildlife; Karlene Borja, TCC Tobacco Cessation; Manny Carlo, TCC Wellness Program; Janelle Dayton, Alatna Environmental; Elisa Bergman, Allakaket TFYS; and Shawn Arnold, Construction & Training.

Everyone had fun and they enjoyed the entertainment and good food, but the best thing that came out of the fair is that the community members were able to get their blood drawn for diabetes and check their sugar level. Brandy Berkgigler, a Biologist from Fish & Wildlife, taught the students how fish use smell to return to their spawning areas with a fun activity in the gym. We also learned to wash our hands with antibacterial soap for 20 seconds to get them very clean from Trevor White and Erin Harmon.



Marion Acker's son Nik Acker, graduated from Illiiksavik College at Barrow on April 25th. He attended Allakaket school K through 10th grade, and graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe.

Rose Urban Rural Exchange Program ~ by Shawn Arnold

Kids from Allakaket leave town for exchange program.

One thing Levi Williams said he noticed about staying in Juneau that's different than Allakaket, is the indoor plumbing. "The toilet flushes," the seventh-grade student said. Williams and four other middle school students, including their teacher Shawn Arnold, traveled from Allakaket to Juneau on April 19th through the Rose Urban Rural Exchange Program.

Allakaket students stayed with families of Floyd Dryden Middle School students who traveled to Allakaket once the students returned home. The students spent the week exploring the capital, including tours of the Governor's Mansion and the Juneau Police Department.

The students from Allakaket are one of three groups of rural students to exchange trips with Floyd Dryden this year. Money from the program comes from the U.S. Department of Education through appropriations secured by U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens.

The Sister School Exchange is intended to create a sustainable sister school relationship between urban and rural schools through contact and simple projects

designed for either high school or middle school students. The exchanges provide the academic and community activities that enable students to explore those personal, social and cultural connections that urban and rural Alaskans share, as well as those that make them unique.

Floyd Dryden Principal Tom Milliron said he hoped the exchange between his students and Allakaket would help develop "an understanding that as Alaskans we are more alike than we are unlike." He added that he hoped Juneau's students would get a greater appreciation for what life is like in rural Alaska. "It's part of our state and most of us don't have a clue," Milliron said.



5 students visiting a Aerovac Hanger with a Flight Nurse and Floyd Dryden student.



5 Allakaket Students (Levi Williams, Sidaadza Williams, Kaylen Gray, Shaylisa Moses, and Salone Saunders) with State Senator Albert Kookesh.





Huslia Kindergarten 2008 graduates:

Kaitlyn Peters, Talia Henry, JesCynthia David, Brendan Williams and John Vent (from left to right.)



I was hired for the second semester to teach Language Arts in Huslia's elementary school. Patrick Doyle has made a big contribution toward making this a great experience for me. I also want to thank Tami Rump in the Fairbanks office for all of the help, along with Brenda Carey, our school secretary and the other staff members. This has been a unique learning and enlarging opportunity which I have enjoyed immensely.

Phyllis Hammons

Love Your Veggies Grant ~ Dale Hargis

Andrew K. Demoski school has been awarded a \$10,000 Love Your Veggies Grant from Hidden Valley Ranch. The grant is for the building and startup of a greenhouse to help provide some fresh vegetables for the school's lunch

program. AKD is one of only 51 schools to receive the grant this year and plans are already underway for starting the greenhouse.



Thank you from Ruby ~ by Anne Titus

From Anne Titus at Merrelaine A. Kangas School. Spring has come to Ruby and the road here has been an interesting one. From moose hunting in September to tumbling into summer, the students at MAK School have kept busy. I would like to say that I appreciate the teamwork that my staff has demonstrated.

Just like we tell our students there is no "I" in team, we have all pulled together to make this year count. Academics have been a priority with some fun thrown into the mix. There have been days when we wondered how we would make it through the week, and times when we've been so busy we wondered where the week

went. I would like to thank my staff and fellow principals for making my first year as principal here in Ruby a good one. I would also like to thank the District support staff that gave of themselves whenever a question had to be answered and a problem solved.



Ruby students and staff united for testing week in their tie-dyed t-shirts.



Coach Max Larson and part of the Ruby girls gymnastics team at practice.



Have a great summer!



A few chuckles to send you on your way.....

The teacher asked, "Can you give me a good example of how heat expands things and cold contracts them?"

"Well," one alert pupil answered, "the days are much longer in summer."

1960s ARITHMETIC TEST: "A logger cuts and sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is four-fifths of that amount. What is his profit?"

'70s new-math test: "A logger exchanges a set (L) of lumber for a set (M) of money. The cardinality of Set M is 100. The Set C of production costs contains 20 fewer points. What cardinality of Set P of profits?"

'80s "dumb down" version: "A logger cuts and sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost is \$80, his profit is \$20. Find and circle the number 20."

'90s version: "An unenlightened logger cuts down a beautiful stand of 100 trees in order to make a \$20 profit. Write an essay explaining how you feel about this as a way to make money. Topic for discussion: How did the forests and squirrels feel?"

A teacher was retiring after 30 years of teaching, so each child decided they wanted to bring her a special retirement present. A little girl who was the daughter of a fine chocolate dealer brought her a box full of fine chocolates.

A little boy who was the son of a florist brought her a big bouquet of flowers. Another little boy who was the son of a fine liquor dealer brought her a big box that was sealed, and it had something leaking from the bottom of the box. The teacher said, "I bet I know what this is!"

She tasted some of the juices that were leaking from the box and said, "I bet this is some wine!"

The little boy said, "Nope!"

She tasted it again and said "Liquor?"

The little boy said, "Nope!"

She tasted it again and said, "Beer?"

The little boy said, "Nope!"

She said, "Well what is it?"

The little boy said, "A puppy!"

