

# Yukon-Koyukuk School District

# STAFF CONNECTIONS

3rd Quarter

March 2009

## Superintendent's Corner

Thank you again for yet another great inservice. Your active participation really makes a positive difference. As we plan future district-wide inservices, we will be reaching out to you for your input on professional development needs. One thing is apparent; our paraprofessionals are essential to the future growth of students and must be included in PEAK training. What talent we have!!!

Remember our 333 activity? We have three months to achieve proficiency scores of 300 or above on all three subjects of the Standards Based Assessment and High School Qualifying Exam. We can do it!

I recently met with Les Morse, Deputy Commissioner of Education, and Larry LeDoux, Commissioner, regarding YKSD school improvement status. The good news is that we are already in motion to-

wards meeting all the requirements for districts in corrective action. There is still work to do on our part but we are surely excelling. Thank you! I will post the list of requirement per the Department of Education on our website for you to review.

Good luck at Regionals. I hope to see you there! Happy Saint Patrick's Day!

*Submitted by Kerry Boyd*

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Paraprofessional George McGinty, Co-Principal Dan Reum, and Director Carol Doyle share their emotion sculptures during the Clay and Sculpture Act at the YKSD Dinner Theatre.



Attentive staff participating in the PEAK inservice at Wedgewood Resort in February.



Principals Doug Woods and Anne Titus enjoying some collaboration time during the PEAK inservice.



Pete Moyryla, Nicholas Graves and Kurt Hadley giving the PEAK training a 'thumbs up'

~COMING SOON~

PEAK  
Summer  
Institute  
opportunities

## Curriculum & Instruction

Thank you, staff, for getting your Terra Nova testing answer sheets back to me so quickly. It is very much appreciated. They will be sent out to McGraw-Hill this week for scoring. Return results will come back to us as soon as all tests are received from the state of Alaska. They say there is a 3-week turnaround after all tests are received. When you get the results back, please see that parents get a copy of their child's results. The state has a law that says parents will receive their results within 21 days after the district receives its results.

Most everyone completed their AimsWeb testing on time. Thank you again! After doing the reports for the Board, it was very evident that we need more improvement from fall to winter than we got. The two grades that stuck out were the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades in math computation. Out of 21 students tested in the fall, 13 made the benchmark, but in winter only 2 made the benchmark in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and 18 declined from the fall score. In 6<sup>th</sup>, 14 students made the benchmark in fall, but only 7 made the benchmark in winter and 9 declined in their score. Please look at your students' individual tests to make sure they were scored correctly and what their major problems were. Is it the curriculum at this time of year, or some other factor that could have caused this? Please use your collaborative meetings to talk about this and come up with some strategies to correct this in the spring testing. Remember in scoring, you count the correct digits, not just if the answer was right or wrong.

SBA and HSGQE tests should be in the district office by March 10<sup>th</sup>. They will be sent out as soon as we can inventory each box. Since most of you will be on spring break the week of

March 16<sup>th</sup>, you should receive your tests in the first few days following the break. Please inventory your tests and pre-code labels right away in case we don't have the right amount of tests and materials. We had a couple of problems with this inventory during Terra Nova testing, but the testing window is longer than for the SBA's. HSGQE need to be given on April 7, 8, and 9. There are no exceptions to this. All HSGQE tests must be taken during this window and returned to this office right away. The SBA window (grades 3-9) begins on April 6 and ends on April 20. The SBA tests also include a science test for grades 4, 8, and 10 given after the HSGQE and the reading, writing, and math SBA tests.

Recently, I sent you an attachment to an email that included a writing template completed by our Writing Committee. It began when Joan, Will, and I attended the curriculum alignment training in Anchorage a couple of months ago. Nancy Mason, Anne Titus, and Joan Jones worked very hard the two days they were here in the district office to finish the strategies and assessment columns. This will be included in Classroom Solutions for next fall so lesson plans can be completed within Classroom Solutions. The template will be interactive so you can access the GLE's, content, strategies, and assessments as needed for your plans. We need to do the same thing with reading and math, which is also partially done. Strategies and kinds of assessments need to be written into the template for these two subject areas. We will need your help to do this in a timely manner before the end of the school year. I will be getting back to you on how we can possibly do this. We would like each school staff to work on

different grade levels to spread out the work.

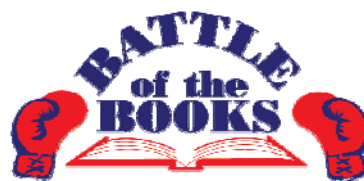
The Language Arts Committee also looked to see if the Writer's Choice text was a valuable text resource. We have decided it is and have already made out a purchase order for the materials. You should have the books within a month. The books will not be new, but used, acquired by Follett Company. The books are supposed to be in excellent shape.

Kudos to you who participated in the Battle of the books. District winners will be battling other district teams this week. The Yukon-Koyukuk School Board has directed me to tell you that you all will be participating next year. Beginning next year, it is not an option. Books will be ordered this summer and mailed out in August. Your teams will need to be ready to battle in mid-January. Because of so many teams, we may need to get started right after Christmas break. High School, 7-8, 5-6, 3-4 will take place in that order. K,1,2 will take place after the rest because they do not go to a state battle.

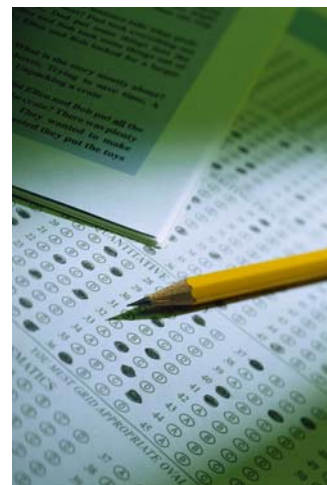
We had a great PEAK inservice. Thank you to all of you for your enthusiastic participation. Please implement what is appropriate to use for the grade levels you teach.

The year is speeding away quickly and we have little time to help our students get ready for the state tests and finish up the year in good standing. We appreciate all you do for sure, but please put on your thinking caps for the kinds of instruction that will best suit your students' needs for the last push of the school year.

*Submitted by Carol Doyle*



*The Regional School Board has directed that all sites will participate in Battle of the Books next year.*



## Denaakkenaage' Hunek ~ 'Our Language'

Thank you to all of the teachers, paraprofessionals, district office staff, and professional support team for a great in-service. It is a pleasure to work with a team that strives for 'Whatever It Takes' to help our students succeed.

A team of Lower Tanana Athabaskan speakers met at the YKSD district office in January to work on the LT curriculum. They were able to translate several songs and units into Denaakk'e.

I've had the pleasure of visiting the following sites since January: Ruby, Nulato and Koyukuk for PEAK visits and Phlight Club. These visits are especially important for itinerant teachers to build positive relationships with the students, staff and community.

### Giving Denaakk'e Names

One of the regional school board's goals is to give each student in the YKSD region a Denaakk'e name. The first step is to document each student's family tree; second, research Denaakk'e names of relatives; and third, meet with the families to discuss the names. During my trips, students worked with the teachers, elders and their families on drawing out their family trees. I remember two girls looked at each other and said "Hey, we have the same grandpa, we're cousins!"

### Biographies

Another board goal is to have

students help write biographies for all of the elders in the YKSD schools. There were seven biographies that YKSD and the Alaska Native Language Center (ANLC) finalized in the 1980's, but they didn't have money for publication: Clement Esmailka, Martha Brush, Charlie Brush, Sally Pilot, and Andrew Johnson (missing document). The first step would be to send those copies to the families for final review and scanning photographs to supplement it.

Writing new biographies would require: interviewing elders, collecting photographs, and re-writing for publication.

Both would require collaboration between the tribal councils, elders, teachers and students. If your class is interested in this project, please contact Susan Paskvan.

### Spring Visits

I will be visiting the following villages in the Spring: Hughes, Huslia and Minto. The Hughes trip may be combined with the Allakaket Career & Wellness Fair. I would like to work with elders and students on writing down the local songs for Allakaket and Hughes. In Huslia the local songs were written down last year, but we now need to teach them to the students, so that will be the focus of the Huslia trip. Students will also document their family trees in these villages.

The elders of Minto and Made-line Riley discussed the loss of

the Lower Tanana language when they met in January. They would like the community to plan what can be done to stop the language loss and begin revitalizing it again. A meeting will be scheduled for May, 2009.

*Submitted by "K'etsoo" Susan Paskvan*



Setsookaal (grandma) Rita Esmailka shares stories with Tyler E. and helped her complete her family tree



Siblings, Lily and Percy L. work diligently together on their finger knitting and braiding skills. Finger knitting allows students the opportunity to be creative and allows quiet movement for kinesthetic learners.

## Susan Paskvan Receives AKABE President's Award

Susan Paskvan was the recipient of the Alaska Association of Bilingual Educator's (AKABE) President's Award presented to her during the Bilingual & Multicultural Education Equity Conference (BMEEC) in Anchorage in January. She dedicated the award to her family Steve, Jason and Adam for allowing her to travel so frequently and to the elders who have passed on that have shared their knowledge with us. In her speech she said, "I was thank-

ful for our elders for willing to teach us; the teachers for their enthusiasm in teaching; and the students who make teaching exciting. As I worked with our language I realized what a responsibility we, as bilingual educators, have in becoming the culture bearers of our people. It is a responsibility we do not take lightly. It is one in which we try to share that knowledge with our students. We are also the advocates for promoting our pro-

grams to make sure we have enough resources (time, technology, and funding). It's an honor to work in a field that I truly love."

**Congratulations  
Susan!**



## Students & Staff Attend BMEEC

The 35th Annual Bilingual Multi-cultural Education/Equity Conference 2009 took place in January. The opportunity was open and advertised for four high school students in our district to attend. Only two students, Gerald Patsy, from Nulato and Tammy Tanape, of Minto took the opportunity to represent our district at the conference.

The BMEEC is a uniquely Alaskan forum for sharing both proven and pioneering educational programs, projects, and practices. YKSD was among 80 presenters and over 300 students/adults in attendance. **Andrea Durny**, **Heidi Wright**, and **Joan Jones** held a session on behalf of YKSD covering "Professional Development Activities That Work", focusing on Peak Strategies, Integrative Youth Develop-

ment, and professional development. **Susan Paskvan** held a session on "Denaakk'e: Using Technology to Develop and Deliver the Denaakk'e Language". School board members in attendance were **Gloria Patsy**, **Wilma David**, and **Shirley Kruger**, along with **Vernon Albert**, as the male chaperone. The students had a great time learning about all the different programs

throughout the state, while interacting with the adult and students at each of the different sessions.

While at the conference we had the opportunity to see **Susan Paskvan** be presented with the 2009 Presidents Award. Congratulations Susan!

*Submitted by Andrea Durny*



Gerald Patsy, Tammy Tanape, and Andrea Durny



Gloria Patsy, Heidi Wright, Wilma David, Shirley Kruger, Susan Paskvan,



Vernon Albert, Gerald Patsy, and Tammy Tanape

## Close Up—Juneau

This past January, 10 students from YKSD had the opportunity to spend a week at our state capitol in Juneau to attend Close Up: Joseph Alexander of Minto, Maureen McCarty and Nicole Cleaver of Ruby, DeVon Esmailka and Michael Ambrose of Kaltag, Dewey Simon of Allakaket, Nichole Silas and Karina Painter of Nulato, Chris

Moses and Barbie Sam of Huslia. Our students joined 4 surrounding school districts January 25th thru 31st. While in Juneau students had a fun filled week including a visit to the governor's mansion, meetings with state representatives and senators, holding mock legislative sessions, and the chance to tour our state capitol. A big thank you to

Christina Semaken and Jake Kramer of Kaltag for doing a great job chaperoning our students. Everyone had a great time and learned a lot from this great opportunity.

*Submitted by Andrea Durny*



Maureen McCarty and Nicole Cleaver of Kaltag, Chaperone Christina Semaken of Kaltag pictured at the Governors Mansion in Juneau



Devon Esmailka of Kaltag with Senators Albert Kookesh and



Students with Governor Sarah Palin

## Phlight Club

February 18th thru the 21st marked the spring Phlight Club Phase II which took place in Nulato. Due to travel restraints we limited the number this time around to 19, with a total of 18 travelers. I am pleased to say it was a total success, it is so amazing to see the positive steps our students are taking in the right directions. They are making commitments to try and be leaders in their communities, create bonds with each other, achieve personal growth, along with their growing dedication to school. To

each of our teachers, staff, and administrators, your contributions to our students in actions and in words is making a lasting impression on our kids. For those involved in Phlight Club, we can see the difference first hand, especially between the last Phlight Club in October and now. Seeing a change this fast gives a whole new meaning to the statement "Our Kids are Worth Whatever it Takes". I hope you all have a great spring and continue to encourage students to apply for future opportunities. As part of the

grant, we will be doing more Phlight Clubs in the future and it is our intention to rotate it through each of the sites over the next three years. This Spring we will send out an invitation to bid (kind of like the Olympics) based on a rubric scale to sites willing to host the Fall 2009, and Spring 2009 Phlight Clubs. Again, thank you for your time and dedication, Keep up the good work!

*Submitted by Andrea Durny*



"It was a pleasure for Andrea D, Evelyn, Laura B., Derek and I to chaperone the Career & Wellness Fair and Phlight Club in Nulato. Thank you AKD staff for hosting 19 students, numerous out of town guests, putting on an excellent fair, and Derek for another successful Phlight Club. We are all seeing positive growth in the students over the past couple of years. We made a commitment to the students to remain united as a group and to support one another through emails and my space. The relationships we build when we're with them 24/7 are unbelievable - we laughed, played cards, did beadwork, flipped cartwheels, played basketball and ended with a Valentine Dance". ~ Susan Paskvan



## The Gathering of the Phlock

On February 17 - 21, twenty-nine YKSD 7-11 graders gathered in Nulato for the second official meeting of the Phlight Club. The Phlight Club is a group of 41 YKSD students who are committed to making their schools GREAT PLACES TO LEARN.

The Nulato Career Fair was a perfect introduction to the Club meeting. Members were able to learn about career options, money management, water safety, job hunting and more. On Thursday morning, the club began with the customary "getting to know each other" activities, and then proceeded to get involved in problem solving activities that demand creative thinking and leadership skills.

The two day meeting, which goes from 8:00 am - 11:00 pm each day, focused on getting young people connected, identifying the group's three year service project that could CHANGE THE WORLD, collecting information on the web of support that each student has, and having the students teach the adults how to use technology to keep the phlock connected - even when we can't all be

together. Members participated in a candle light "put up" circle, worked on identifying the adults who anchored their lives, and worked as teams to lift, carry, and protect each other throughout the two days.

Members of the Phlock will continue to get the monthly PHOCUS MAGAZINE of the club mailed to their homes. The PHOCUS blog can be read at <http://phocusnow.blogspot.com> and the members are already using MySpace to share information, and keep friendships alive.

If any of the readers want to get connected, you can log in to [www.Myspace.com/phlightclub](http://www.Myspace.com/phlightclub) and ask to become a "friend." We'll sign you up. And, to join the Phlight Club group, go to <http://groups.myspace.com/phlightclub> and ask to join. It is that easy.

Derek Peterson and Andrea Durny were the facilitators. In our evaluations, the members reported that they were disappointed to

have this meeting end. The good news, is we will meet again, in the fall. In the meantime, we'll stay connected through the US mail and MySpace.

*Submitted by  
Derek Peterson,  
International Child/Youth  
Advocate*



**YKSD is a great  
place to learn!**

## Upcoming Student Opportunities

### Washington DC Close Up

Approximately 4-5 students will have the opportunity to participate in Close Up at Washington DC. Please have interested students grades 11 and 12 grade apply, although we encourage 10th grade students to apply, upper classmen will be preferred. This trip will be 6 days and 5 nights, applications can be picked up at your local school or [www.yksd.com](http://www.yksd.com) or contact Andrea Durny at [adurny@yksd.com](mailto:adurny@yksd.com), 907-374-9434. Application Deadline, March 12, 2009.

### Career Connections Academy

We have the opportunity to participate in the Career Connections Academy with SERCC in Juneau. This academy is for

11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students and will take place March 23 - 27. We have funds to send approximately 3 students and 1 chaperone. Participants will learn about Alaska's high growth industries and employer expectations, take mini "field trips" to tour and experience these industries, and develop a career portfolio that will benefit them in the future. If you have an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at your site that would be interested in this opportunity, please discuss this with them and make sure they fill out all of the necessary paperwork. For more information please email Gina Hrinko at [ghrinko@yksd.com](mailto:ghrinko@yksd.com). Application deadline, March 6, 2009.

### 2009 Transition Camp

April 19-24 here at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Campus. Open to 15 high school students ages 14-18 from YKSD. Please contact Cristina Poage at [cpoage@yksd.com](mailto:cpoage@yksd.com) or her assistant Jen McClean at 907-374-9424 for more information. Application deadline is April 1, 2008

All opportunities are open to all sites and students. Please encourage our students to apply. For more upcoming events district wide please visit [www.yksd.com](http://www.yksd.com) under our featured link is the District Calendar of Events. Please email submissions for upcoming calendar events at your sites to Patty Hill, [phill@yksd.com](mailto:phill@yksd.com).

*Submitted by Andrea Durny*

Please share these opportunities with your students!

## State & Federal Programs

Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter from the State and Federal Programs Department! This has been a busy time for us as we prepare proposals for three grants - Safe Schools Healthy Students (SSHS), Alaska Native Education (ANE), and Improving Literacy through School Libraries (ILSL). The projects selected for these submissions are aligned with the district's priorities and the Board's goals for the district.

The SSHS grant focuses on 5 key elements for a comprehensive prevention program. These elements are: 1) Safe School Environments and Violence Prevention; 2) Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Prevention Activities; 3) Student Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Support; 4) Mental Health Ser-

vices; and, 5) Early Childhood Social and Emotional Learning Programs. The ANE project will focus on developing our Career and Technical Education program, in partnership with NAC-TEC, and the ILSL project will concentrate on 1) establishing a district-wide, usable system for cataloging media materials; 2) completing a district-wide inventory of materials; and, 3) purchasing media materials for each site based on the results of a community survey that will be sent out.

Plans are in the works for looking at and revising our current tobacco use policy. This is in conjunction with our tobacco grant project. We will be following up with all sites to ensure everyone has returned the

tobacco surveys that were sent out a while ago. If you have yet to return these, please get them back to us as soon as you can. We still need to tabulate the results prior to the policy meetings that will occur March 18 - 20<sup>th</sup>.

### Happenings in Career and Technical Education (CTE)

We are in the process of updating all of the district's CTE course offerings. This is an EED requirement. Each course is on a three year review and update rotation. To date, 15 course reviews/updates have been completed. At the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, each site will receive an updated CTE binder.

We are also offering 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students an opportunity to participate in a Career Connections Academy that will take place in Juneau, March 23 - 27<sup>th</sup>. If you have students who are interested, PLEASE work with them to complete the application process. I will be sending out emails as reminders for you to encourage your students to take a look at this offering. We only have funding for 3 - 5 students to participate...

*Submitted by Gina Hrinko*

## Special Education

Welcome! to Jennie McLean, the new administrative assistant to the Special Education Department. Jennie was born in Tanana to parents Richard and Mary McLean. Coby is her son - 6th grader at U Park. Grandparents are the late Fred and Jennie Stickman of Nulato. Jennie lived in Nulato for three years, while going to school and worked for YK as a long term sub, student

teacher, and volunteer. She is currently finishing up UAF for her BAS in Education. We are pleased to have Jennie on board here at YK. Already she has made such a huge difference in our department. Jennie's exceptional organizational skills and high spirits are a wonderful addition to our department. Oh, and everyone (especially the maintenance department) LOVES

her home cooking! Feel free to contact Jennie at 374-9424 or [jmclean@yksd.com](mailto:jmclean@yksd.com) anytime.

Thank you and WELCOME!

*Submitted by Cristina Poage*

Welcome!



## Spring Technology Update

Administrative PowerSchool/Power Grade implementation support has taken a lot of work, but I believe we have most everyone ready for our next reporting period. I will be scheduling Principals, Administrative Assistants and Site Techs to work out final configurations, reports, and updates, for PS/ PG.

PowerGrade- We need to verify that all teachers are taking daily attendance and inputting their daily assignments, so their information can be checked for accuracy before the report card posts. I will contact each principal teacher and discuss their schools status.

PowerSchool- We have been working with sites preparing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Progress Re-

ports and will be looking to back load the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter grades for report card continuity, before the end of the year.

Video Conference- Video Conferencing equipment is expensive and slow to replace, please ensure it is in a safe place and all equipment is secure. Please make sure that your sites Video Conferencing Equipment is plugged in and ready for video conferencing. It takes a lot of valuable conference time to troubleshoot a faulty connection at the start of a conference, thanks!

Power Tech Tues- Tech How to Tues. will demonstrate how to setup and manage file directories and backing up your files.

*Submitted by Shawn Coyle*

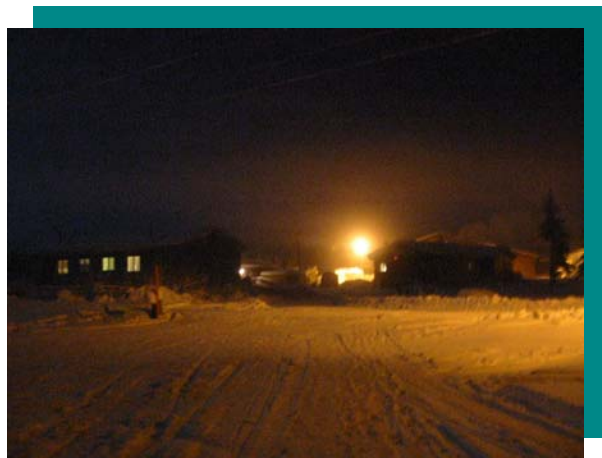


## Facilities & Maintenance

It has been a long winter!

Now that the sun is returning and the temperatures are rising, spring is finally in the air. There are a few things we would like to remind everybody about.

As the temperatures rise and fall please remember to keep icicles cleared over doors, watch for falling snow from roofs, ice forming on steps and walk ways over night. Keep windows and doors shut tight to prevent ice buildup and damages to frames and walls. Watch for water that puddles under the snow as it melts, and as the snow falls in March it becomes wet and heavy so please remember to keep track of the amount of snow that is on your roofs. We don't want that snow to end up inside. From all of us in maintenance, as always please be safe and thank you for all your support. We could not have done it without you.



Evening photo of Allakaket school yard on January 7th. The ice fog was very thick and more than 50 below. *Submitted by Marion Acker*

*Submitted by David Pratt*

## **YKSD Technology Department weekly Top 10**

1. Internet Filter Activity- we have a new filter online and have adjusted the settings for this new service, please see site tech for your requests concerning site filtering, so we may place the correct web sites in the correct filter time/ site slots. These requests should include after 4pm site overrides, 8-5 site block requests, and any educational related site that may be blocked but needed for instructional resources etc.
2. Administrative Power-School/PG implementation support- I will be scheduling Principals, Admin Assists and Techs to update school configurations, reports, and updates, for PS/ PG. PowerGrade- All teachers are taking daily attendance and inputting their daily assignments, so their information can be checked for accuracy before the report card posts.
3. PowerSchool- We have been working with sites publishing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Progress Reports and will be looking to start End of Year and New Year functions School Inventories- Site Tech property inven-
4. Erate- Subsidies are dependent on the return of each schools Erate Family questionnaire, as they provide extra funding we need to keep our internet and video programs strong.
5. Computers- We are working on a nominal number of laptop bags to checkout laptops for new equipment to go home when needed for homework.
6. Video Conference Video Conferencing equipment is expensive and slow to replace, please ensure it is in a safe place and all equipment is secure. Please make sure that your sites Video Conferencing Equipment is plugged in and ready for video conferencing. It takes a lot of valuable conference time to troubleshoot a faulty connection at the start of a conference, thanks!
7. Please send me the **model#** and **serial #** of the NEW video cameras in your school. Also a brief description of **any** BUGS/ problems they are having.
8. Tech Tues- Tech How to Tues will demonstrate how to setup and manage file directories and backing up your files.
9. Please send me the **model#** and **serial #** of the NEW video cameras in your school. Also a brief description of **any** BUGS/ problems they are having.
10. Tech Tues- "Tech How to Tues" will demonstrate how to setup and manage file directories and backing up your files.



tory sheets need to be completed by April 1 in order to document site technical inventories for Erate purposes.

## Hughes News

Here at Johnny Oldman School we have been and always are quite busy. When I taught in Michigan, only 90 miles from Chicago, 60 miles from Kalamazoo and 5 minutes from our Administration building, we never had so many visitors. I think it shows that our district has the *Whatever It Takes* frame of mind.

I don't have the exact dates, but here's what's been going on. About four weeks ago Evelyn Esmailka came out and we did a nice pre-Chane Beam visit on the Six Keys. After she did her presentation and was on her way, I remembered how our PEAK group had moved around and put the six keys in

order of importance. I had each of the children go to the white board and write them in the order they felt was most important to them. I thought for sure *fun and enjoyment* would be number one. I was wrong, *Safety* was first for every single child, and they hadn't copied each other. After Safety there preferences were not all aligned.

The following week Chane flew in. It was cold; he looked cold. On his second day he did some wonderful and fun PEAK strategies that I would never have thought to do with my small group. One was the table race and the other a dice game. They worked great and we have

continued to use them.

We did our AIMS testing and I was really happy to see the progress the children are making.

Next, Laura Kaiser came out, along with Michelle Patterson and we did art work and the student outcomes were marvelous.

A group of musicians came out to teach the children some fundamentals of music while we were in Fairbanks for the PEAK inservice. I hated to miss the action, but I was glad to be able to get some groceries and see everyone in town, and learn some more PEAK.

*Submitted by Dianne Shirrell*



Art teacher, Laura Kaiser with Hughes students



Mrs. Shirrell's students and Paraprofessional Madeline Williams enjoyed a visit from Chane Beam, who shared several PEAK strategies with the class. Chane enjoyed the warmth of the students and classroom. (Don Curtis, Keith, Shila, Natasha, Ethan, Chane and Madeline)



Cody, Kelsey, and Collin. Cody brought his snowboard back after Christmas. Collin and Cody pay Kelsey to pull them around.



Walking to school in Hughes yesterday was quite difficult. We've had three days of snow, snow, snow! It's beautiful.

# Huslia News

## Annette Penn, Kindergarten and First Grade

The students in my classroom are making great strides in reading and writing. In the morning when the students arrive, they do journal writing. I like to do journals first because they are excited about something they did the day before. I use the PEAK strategy of time over quantity in their journal writing. I don't limit the number of sentences, they just write for one-half an hour. The student responses have been great so far. Each student is focused on writing and is not worried about writing a set number of sentences. After journal writing we do math.

Our classroom is filled with PEAK strategies that my classroom aide, Valerie Sam, and I use every day. We use a word wall (which is relatively small), solution stations, music, movement, repetition, and most importantly, keeping students safe.

This is my first year teaching and I cannot believe that it is almost over, only one more quarter. Each day I have learned something new, whether it was from the students, my aide, or a colleague. This proves that a person learns something new every day and never stops learning. It has been an absolute joy to be finally a real teacher (as my own kids say).

I am looking forward to many fun filled years in the classroom.

## Helen Huffman, First and Second Grade

Helen has a very active and effective classroom. Her kids benefit greatly from her many years of successful classroom experience. She also practices PEAK very much. Helen's room is full of PEAK posters and other solutions stations. Moreover, she is very adept at organizing small groups that she and aide, Irene Peters, instruct very effectively. Helen has decided to spend more time on math after much reflection in order to meet her

students' needs. At any time, you can walk in to her classroom, which is a busy and constructive beehive, whether she has a few students or her whole class.

## Brandy Henderson, Grades 3-5 Math and Reading Specialist

Brandy has a great variety of students grades 3-5. She is in the elementary library with her aide, Irene Peters. At any time, you can see both of them actively working with groups. Brandy also works individually with students and utilizes computer-learning programs. Brandy employs many PEAK strategies. Brandy also runs our after school SES program.

## Gertie Esmailka, Fourth and Fifth Grade

In the Fourth and Fifth grade classroom we are using a variety of PEAK techniques. I use music and we have a music center with headphones so those students who like to work while listening to music can do so. I also use movement and every now and then, I have the students do this: "Take a deep breath, let it out, stand up". Then we do various dance moves, exercises, etc. We also practice using the Six Keys principles. I am also taking an advanced learning styles class through UAF and some of the strategies are similar to PEAK strategies. First, I did a learning styles inventory of each of my students. Then I did my best to accommodate each student's learning style. Some of the learning styles element I took into consideration are noise, light level, tactile, and kinesthetic. I also considered whether they were global or analytical learners (or somewhere in between). I have learned a lot this year about learning styles, and it has prompted me to make a few changes in my teaching styles.

## Steve Swatling, 6-12 Math and Science

Over winter break, I prepared my room to be more interactive with students. I set up a Smartboard and projection

system along with ordering interactive clickers. Students were impressed and enjoyed the ability to answer questions in class and receive feedback immediately. The true power of the system is in having the ability to continuously assess students and keep them on task with the clickers while freely changing lessons on the Smartboard on an as needed basis. Though the potential is there for the system to work wonders in the classroom, the software for the clickers and Smartboard are not totally compatible. I am looking at clickers for Smartboards. My goal is to create an exciting and thus engaging atmosphere in my room where all students receive the feedback and direct support they need to realize maximum potential.

## Peggy Bruno, 6-12 Language Arts

Our middle school students are reading *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. In addition, they are using the writing strategy of "Finish the Story" and creating a legend. We use a good portion of Each English class to write in a variety of formats. Tawnya Yatling, an aide, helps enormously.

Huslia high school students are concluding Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. We had fun with PEAK strategy of "Around the Room" where the student matched a character from the book to his or her characteristics. They loved the movement and safety it provided. Our last writing assignment was a piece "The World According to Mr. Rogers". My cooking class is creating dishes with wheat. They are learning that coking with different flour produces different results depending on the gluten produced. My art classes are creating pieces of surrealist and art novae work at the present. They love working in the dream world.

## Kurt Hadley, 6-12 Social Sciences

This past quarter Kurt has been emphasizing learning enhancement at the grades 6-



8 level. Each of these students presents different challenges. He is raising expectations for the more interested learners. He is also working with the more reluctant learners. With those students, he is working with them on treating each day as a new day, giving rewards, and being consistent with behavior change efforts.

## Doug Woods, Principal

As you have seen and read, there are a lot of exciting things going on in Huslia.

The year has been a positive and growing work in progress. We have shown great growth in all areas due to the excellent teamwork of all staff.

In our collaborative mode, we are now looking at focusing not only on the SBAs, but also helping the child grow in all other areas of our local educational process. We recently added a cultural class in the high school and will be expanding it into grades 6-8. Our recent parent/teacher conferences were well attended.

We have excellent after school opportunities for all of the K-12 kids. Steve Swatling and Annette Penn have programs for each building. We also have the gym open after school as well as the computer lab. Kudos go to our staff for their great efforts and kudos go to the community for their great support of the school! Most of all, kudos to the kids!

*Submitted by Doug Woods & the Huslia Staff*

## Manley News



Manley students participating in Battle of the Books



*Submitted by*

*Heidi Wright*



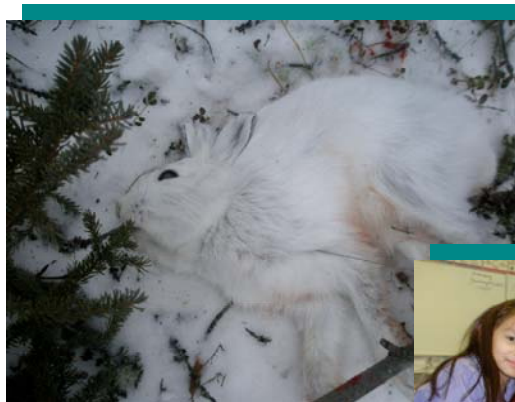
Manley students watch the historical inauguration of Barack Obama via video stream



Kjetil is on the visited Norway with his father over Christmas break. Here he is on the deck of the ship "Fram", that sailed Northwest Passage.

## Minto News

These pictures are of my class checking our rabbits snares. We are studying ecosystems and food webs. We caught 7 rabbits so far right behind the school. We cooked these for the funeral potlatch in January. I teach 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade.



*Submitted by*

*Madeline Riley*

## Nulato News

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, the Nulato Lady Wolves traveled to Unalakleet. The team consisted of Karina Painter-captain, Carol Pitka-co-captain, Serena Semaken, Nicole Silas, and April Esmailka (Kaltag student). They not only competed, but learned a lot of local history from Frances Degnan, author of Under The Arctic Sun, The Life and Times of Frank and Ada Degnan.

Ms. Degnan, first laid out her artifacts of dancing people and blue beads. She shared how each figurine represented the traditions of her people and expressed the value of the string of blue beads. During the days of trading, one blue bead cost her ancestors about 3

feet high of animal pelts, so it was a very hard working and resourceful husband who gifted trade beads to his wife. She spoke about her peoples' history as she retraced their movements to their fifth and final site, Unalakleet. The previous village sites are hardly visible as the people lived underground.

Ms. Degnan's book is a treasure for her family and residents as it contains information about the extended families that make up the village, and also at the end recounts events leading up to the Land Claims Settlement act. Her family was very actively involved in this movement. Coastal and Inland people connected up with each others to share in natural resources on the trade routes, as

well as organized as a group (AFN) to resolve issues.

The girls represented their schools (Andrew K. Demoski School and Kaltag) so well and learned from a knowledgeable lady, Frances Degnan, who gave each one of us an autographed copy of her book.

*Submitted by Martha Demoski*



Frances Degnan of Unalakleet displays her artifacts for the Nulato/Kaltag students.

## Nulato Career & Wellness Fair

### Nulato Community Career & Wellness Fair

Thanks to generous support from the Nulato Tribal Office, Andrew K. Demoski School hosted the Annual Career & Wellness Fair on February 17-18, 2009. Despite inclement weather that kept nine of our presenters from being able to join us, the event was again a big success. Participants included: Tanana Chiefs Conference, Alaska Job Corps, UAF Interior Aleutians Campus, Alaska State Troopers, Galena Police Department, Chief Isaac Andrews, and Derek Peterson of the Institute for Community and Adolescent Resilience.

This year, several presenters agreed to visit the elementary classrooms making this year's fair a truly school-wide event. We were also fortunate to include the Phlight Club with 19 middle and high school student from villages throughout the district attending the two day event.

Highlights included students learning what it is like to walk when inebriated with 'drunk goggles' during State Trooper Nunley's Shotgun session; the benefits of Job Corps with Jane Baldwin; a rousing keynote with Derek Peterson that brought youth and community members together; and a com-

munity cover dish.

### Other Counseling Activities

This is a very busy time of year for counselors. In addition to the Career & Wellness fair, Laura Barnett hosted a parent/senior Financial Aid Meeting in late January. Students in Kaltag and Nulato have been busy applying for college, completing scholarship applications, and gathering financial information to submit the FAFSA. Most seniors have post-graduation goals and are in the process of making their goals realized.

*Submitted by Laura Barnett*

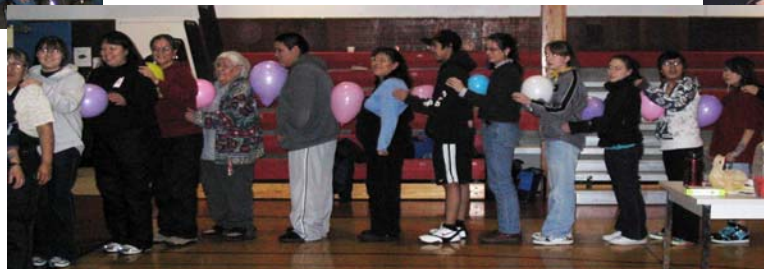


Michael Ambrose, Kaltag, tries to walk a straight line while wearing 'drunk goggles' as Trooper Nunley observes.



Sandra Perry, RN and Adrienne Stanley from Chief Andrew Issac Diabetes Center present "Food Play" to students.

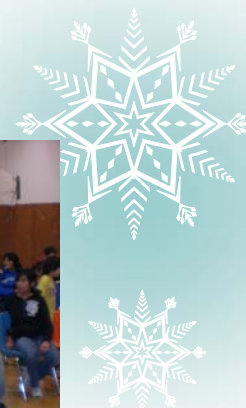
## Health & Safety



Derek Peterson involves students, staff, parents, and elders, in his Keynote.



State Trooper Nunley meets with an enthralled k-3 class



## Ruby News

As you can see we had a large turnout for last Friday's Literature Tea with our guest Illustrator Amanda Shepherd. She traveled up to Ruby from Arizona. Our students were engaged last week in several different drawing and writing classes. Parents were thrilled to be able to participate in a PEAK Activity which was called Copy Me.

We also had a Professional Development Day, which involved training on our new NEO2 units. It is a great program. On the first day the staff of MAK were trained on the new equipment and on the second day it was the students

turn. We are all thrilled to have this new technology in the school and were mostly delighted to have had the company send a trainer to us all the way from Texas!

Our playground fundraising project is off the ground and running at warp speed-just like the new slides that are ordered! We will give a full report at the end of the year.

Finally, we are fired up and ready to go in preparing our students for this years testing period.

*Submitted by Anne Titus*



## Raven ~ Delta

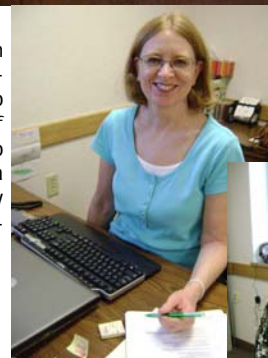
### Raven High School Students - Great Movers

On Tuesday, January 13, sixteen high school students, one parent, one middle school student and two community members efficiently and carefully moved the contents of the Delta Raven office across the parking lot to a larger office space to better serve our fami-

lies. We outgrew our old office some time ago and are enjoying having room to meet families, accommodate testing, and display resources so that families can see what is available for them to use for homeschooling their students. Except for technology equipment, everything was moved in one day. We celebrated our morning work with a pizza party at noon and contin-

ued until every item was moved. Unfortunately, we were too busy to take photos of the work crew, so we'll just submit a photo of two very happy YKSD employees.

*Submitted by  
Kathy VanderZwaag*



## Raven ~ Juneau

### Reaching Reluctant Readers

Sometimes it's difficult motivating your home school child to read. They are not in a classroom to feel challenged by other students. They are home, safe and comfortable. Raven School in Juneau came up with a reading incentive program to help our families solve that problem by giving the students some attainable challenges.

We began the program with the Scholastic Book Fair. Each child that came to the fair was asked if they would like to join Raven Readers. Many did and were excited about earning

points to be a Super Reader.

After signing up each child was mailed a weekly letter announcing a new prize/incentive for completing a reading activity. When they complete each activity and bring in what we call a segment they can receive their prize. The activities have ranged from book BINGO, creating book covers of favorite books, and sharing a book Valentine.

Each segment that belongs to our ever growing Book Worm is worth points. The points will eventually be tallied up and each child will become a Super Reader. Those children that

weren't excited about reading are reading. We have some children that have discovered they have a favorite author. Students have advanced from beginning chapter books to books with chapters.

Raven Readers' began with a few children and as the excitement of incentives continues to motivate, more families are joining. The activities are fun and engaging. With each new Book Worm segment added we know we are reaching our reluctant reader's. In our book, Raven Readers is a success.

*Submitted by Kris Peterson,  
Family Rep.*

## Raven ~ Soldotna

Geoff Johnson has been teaching a workshop on dancing the Irish Jig, and it has been really great. We routinely have between 10-20 kids show up weekly.

*Submitted by  
Holly Conner*



## Raven ~ Wasilla

In an effort to get students interacting and families involved the Wasilla Raven office started a monthly craft time. The kids had fun making Thanksgiving and Christmas crafts earlier in the year. In February they gathered in the office to make a Valentines themed creation. Each student made a love bug out of paper plates and construction paper. The love bugs had pockets in the front for students to tuck homemade cards into. The kids decorated the bugs with big eyes, pipe cleaner antennas, wings and legs. Then everybody got creative and started on homemade cards with an array of mediums to choose from. We painted, stamped, stenciled and cut out shapes to decorate our cards. The kids created a game pretending they were the Valentines Day "elves" and had to make cards to distribute to

everyone by Valentines Day! The cards were given to friends and family members. Lastly we frosted and sprinkled some sugar cookies for a sweet snack when we were done with our craft. The craft time lasted a couple of hours and the kids had a great time.

The crafts are planned out before hand and all the supplies are ready for the kids when they come in so they can get creative and assemble. It is great to see their imaginations at work and hear the stories behind their creations. Each creation is unique and so much fun to watch being put together. We look forward to more craft gatherings in the future!

*Submitted by Melinda Lewis*



Wasilla Raven students show off their Valentine's crafts



A little Wasilla Raven  
"Love Bug"



## RCS Cyber Science Fair

The registration deadline for the 2009 RCS Cyber Science Fair (RCSCSF) has been extended to March 7, 2009.

The RCSCSF is intended to encourage "Project Based" education and to provide an opportunity for students to display their work in science and technology, via the Internet, to the world. Conventional science fair projects will be created by the student and presented online, via MS PowerPoint presentation. Ribbons or plaques will be awarded to all project teams or individual entrants.

The RCSCSF differs from most typical "science fairs", in that it will include FIVE categories of projects, spanning three different age

groups.

Project Categories:

- Investigations
- Illustrated Scientific Report
- Demonstrations
- Collections
- Inventions

Age Groups:

Group I - Grades K-3

Group II - Grades 4-8

Group III - Grades 9-12

We are inviting all YKSD and Alaskan home-school students to join us for this year's RCS Cyber Science Fair. The process of designing, implementing, and presenting a science project, offers students an opportunity to excel and have a lot of fun in the process.

To find out more, go to the RCSCSF website and view the "NEWS" and "HANDBOOK" links.

<http://learningsurge.com/rcs/rcscsf0809/index.htm>

We hope that you will join us for this year's competition!

*Submitted by Mark Pope*





**Yukon-Koyukuk School  
District**

4762 Old Airport Way  
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Phone: 907-374-9400  
Fax: 907-374-9442

# YKSD Calendar of Events



## March

March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 5 End of the 3rd Quarter
- 6 Teacher Workday
- 6 Application Deadline for Career Connections Academy
- 9-13 Minto Spring Break
- 12 Application Deadline for Close Up—Washington DC
- 13 Regional School Board Meeting—Fairbanks
- 16-20 Spring Breaks (Allakaket, Hughes, Huslia, Koyukuk, Manley, Nulato, Ruby)
- 19-21 Festival of Native Arts — Fairbanks
- 23-27 Career Connections Academy—Juneau
- 23-27 Kaltag Spring Break

## April

April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- 1 Application Deadline for Transition Camp
- 2-3 Minto Career & Health Fair
- 2-4 Hughes Spring Carnival with dog races on 4/2,3.4 jr dog races 4/10,11.
- 3-4 Ruby Spring Carnival
- 7-9 Student Testing
- 9-11 Minto Spring Carnival
- 10-11 Hughes Junior Dog Races
- 10-11 Minto Flats Shootout XIII
- 16-18 Alaska Association of Student Government Conference—Mt. Edgecumbe
- 19 Transition Camp—Fairbanks

## May

May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 1 Final Regional School Board Meeting—Fairbanks
- 15 Minto Graduation
- 15 Ruby 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony
- 21 Last Day of School
- 22 Last Teacher Work Day