

STAFF CONNECTIONS

2ND QUARTER

DECEMBER 2009

Teaching and Learning Support



Site administrators are working diligently on the Self Study tool. It is giving all of their staff a great opportunity to 'self reflect' on school practices and strategies. With their dedication, we are presently ahead of schedule in this process which includes 6 domains. As a team, they had adopted the state guideline of 2 domains per year, however are moving into their third domain in January. Dan Walker, the state assigned Mentor/Coach has been to Kaltag and Koyukuk to assist with this process, with Huslia being assisted by me in person. Additionally, site administrators are meeting for collaboration on the Self Study and other

items, one Saturday per month.

Organization for the January visits with our PEAK team is nearing completion. Nulato and Huslia will be visited by PEAK coaches along with district office personnel. All other sites will receive visits from State mentor/coaches, concentrating on Reading and Writing skills during that week.

Plans for the February in-service are also nearing completion. All certified staff will be traveling to Fairbanks in February with Administrators attending on Feb. 10, 11, 12 and 13 and certified staff attending Feb. 11 and 12. The concentration will be 'Teaching Reading' and 'Using reading to Teach'. This in-service will be mostly break-out sessions and will provide some choices to staff.

We are working with sites to analyze their data over the last 5 years and determine the strengths and weaknesses in instruction. This data is based on

their student test scores and is accessible on DIASA. Data as well as charts have been sent out with recommendations for collaborating with site staff on interpreting these results.

It would have been great to attend all of the programs and presentations occurring at sites last week. Watching children in the Holiday celebrations always warms the heart.

Submitted by Harry White

MARK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDARS....

- ◆ January 4
Back to School
- ◆ January 24-28
PEAK Teams visit
Huslia and Nulato
- ◆ February 1-5
Terra Nova testing
- ◆ February 10-12
PEAK In-service
- ◆ February 15-26
ELP testing

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Instruction & Curriculum



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you! May God bless you richly in the new year!

The Terra Nova materials are here. There is a box for each site. In the box are answer sheets, practice activities for grade 5, and 2 envelopes to put your answer sheets in when your students have completed their tests. Most of the student tests should be at your site or office. If they are not, I need to know right away so I can also put some test booklets and teachers administration books in your box. Your box will need to go out in the mail shortly after January 4th. If you happen to be in the office during break, you could pick up your box then IF you have let me or Victoria know what test booklets and administration materials you need.

Battle Book district battles need to start the second week of January. Those who are participating need to contact me ASAP. I have only heard from Huslia 3-4 and K-2 at the time of this writing. A time has been set aside for video conference battles between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. every day until the end of the month starting on the January 11th. Some of you may not be ready by then,

but the time had to be set aside. As soon as I have 2-3 teams, who are ready, at each grade level, we will begin our battling. Practice questions are on the website at <http://www.akla.org/akasi/bb/bbhome.html>. The handbook password with the directions is "jellyroll" and the practice question password is "bananarama". Please prepare your students for the battles.

Below are some important dates for testing:

District Writing Assessment: December 1st – December 11th.

Aimsweb Winter Benchmark K-12: January 11 – January 22nd

Terra Nova (grades 5 & 7): February 1st – February 5th; make-ups February 8th – 9th. Must be returned by the insert service dates of February 10th through 12th. Please mail or hand carry your answer sheets back to me during these dates.

ELP testing (English language) on IPT: February 15th – 26th

SBA, HSGQE, Science SBA (4,8,10): April 5th – 8th; Science on the 5th, SBA and HSGQE April 6, 7, 8

Spring Aimsweb Benchmark K-12: April 26th – April 7th

As you can see the majority of testing takes place in the second part of the year. Please make note of these testing windows so you can get your students ready and familiar with the testing format and skills. Practice tests for the SBA and HSGQE are on the EED website at <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/>

[assessment/SBA_ItemSamplers.html](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/tls/assessment/SBA_ItemSamplers.html)

At the time of this writing, I am still minus 7 schools of writing assessments. Please get them to me as soon as possible. We have to put all the information into a data sheet before we can send to Education Northwest for scoring.

All of the core materials that were ordered have now been sent to your site. If you requested something and it did not get ordered, it was because we didn't have the information we needed entered in the principals' spread sheets. Any other materials needed to be ordered in the core curriculum will need to come out of the site budgets.

Reading/Writing committees have completed their work with the frameworks! A huge thanks to Joan Jones, Peggy Bruno, Nancy Mason, Anne Titus, Dianne Shirrell, and Virginia Ned. It has been a big job, but we made the state's deadline, hooray! These frameworks will be entered into Classbright and will be a valuable resource for teachers as they choose the reading/writing GLE's for their plans and they can see all the strategies, assessments, resources that could be used for each GLE. Please frequent these pages. I will let you know when the finish product in Classbright occurs.

Submitted by Carol Doyle

**There will be
Terra Nova
training on
Wednesday,
January 20th at
3:00 pm.
Please be in
attendance.**

Counselor's Corner

Warm Greetings! During the fleeting moments of second quarter the guidance offices in Huslia, Nulato, and Ruby worked on a variety of tasks including: bullying awareness/prevention (K-8), empathy skills training (K-3), career exploration (6-8), and post-secondary planning (HS). Additionally, during November, a total of fourteen students from these schools, grades 11 & 12, completed the ACT!



Submitted by Travis Sutton

Megan Patsy & Courtney Semaken each volunteered to role-play successful responses to bullying (Martha Demoski's 5th grade class)

More from Counseling....

I work at 4 sites, Allakaket, Hughes, Koyukuk, and Kaltag and I love it. It is a lot of traveling, but when I get to the sites, I am energized. I love working with the staff and students. During my last trip to Kaltag on December 2, I worked with the Jr. High students in Thelma Saunders classroom from 5-7 pm. We made gingerbread houses and had pizza for snack. We enjoyed ourselves and got to know one another in a relaxed atmosphere. We worked on conflict resolutions in a very informal way. I administered the ACT testing to the seniors, and we spent a lot of time together on scholarships, deciding on other trainings through Voc. Ed. or attending Seward Skills Center.

I also traveled and worked in Hughes, and we had pizza and cookies with all of the students. We had a great turnout and a volunteer baked the pizza and cookies. The students worked on "teen relationships" and it was a great learning experience for them. I would like to thank Melanie for all her help and the students for their cooperation. I worked on a lot of activities and presented on "conflict resolution", met with the 2 seniors, and attended the evening activities with Madeline Williams.

I lived and worked in Allakaket this past week. It is always a joy to watch the kids perform, sing, and eat together with the community. The Christmas program was a success and I enjoyed the staff Christmas dinner and Chinese auction. Also, I presented "Conflict Resolution" to the students and got ready for closing the school during the Christmas Break.

I would like to thank the students, staff, parents, and community members at each site for making it easier to do my job and trusting me with your students. I have enjoyed my visits in the different communities and meeting with many of you at school or home. I am looking forward to working with you in the New Year and meeting the goals of the district. I hope that you all enjoy the Christmas with your family and have a Happy New Year.

Submitted by Evelyn Esmailka



News from Huslia



This has been a very exciting year for the K-12 Huslers. We are making great strides in the classrooms and in extracurricular activities. The students, staff, parents/home, village, tribe, and city are all doing a fantastic job supporting our school's continuing growth. We also thank the district office and PEAK for all of their support. Kudos to all!

Special congratulations go to all of our Juniors and Seniors, each of whom has passed the HSGQE.....Doug Woods, Principal

Ms. Penn's K-1 Class

This has been an exciting first semester for our class. The students have been working hard to accomplish their goals. It has been an exciting second year for me as well. I have implemented a few more PEAK strategies such as: SSFDDD, which is working well, using 10-2, and review circle in the morning.

I decided to add a few comments from my students, who were really interested in what I was doing. I asked them the question: What have you learned in school this year?

Replies from the K-1 students:

*Kaden says he enjoys learning the even and odd numbers, singing the vowels song, and learning to read.

*Jordan has learned to sound out the letters and has learned to count.

*Molly has learned to put sounds together and has begun reading and singing the days of the week song.

*Carl has learned to add and subtract numbers.

*Tyler enjoys singing the ABC's and the numbers.

Brandy Henderson's 2-3 Class

We are very busy this holiday season. We made pictures with colored rice and noodles for parents this Christmas. We learned to sing Jingle Bells in Denaakk'e for everyone. We are also practicing for the SBAs. We have been practicing our math facts with Skills Tutor. We are ready for a break.

Gertie Esmailka's Grade 4 Class

The fourth grade class has been very busy this past quarter. We are preparing for the SBAs. Also, the students have been doing Karaoke; they performed this for the Christmas program and for the YKSD Holiday program. For fun stuff, the students tie-dyed t-shirts this week (and dabbed a little on the clothes they were wearing). Most of the students are reading to earn a sleep over that we will be having in January.

Casey Weter's Grade 5 Class

In our fifth grade class we sang Jingle Bells in Denaakk'e during our school Christmas program. In science class we grew red kidney beans for an experiment. The beans have grown to about nine inches and the students were really excited to watch their plants grow. The elementary students have been getting skis and are excited to be outside skiing in -30 below weather.

Mr. Swatling's Math/Science

Congratulations to the juniors and seniors of Jimmy Huntington School for passing their HSGQE's, way to go! We have been busy learning about force, motion and Newton's laws. Students put their skills and knowledge to the test and built balloon powered vehicles culminating into a very intense race day. Students have been studying the history of NASA and our missions that took us to the moon. Inspired by the desire to touch the sky, our students built rockets that did indeed soar into the blue above. Our woods class has become Santa's workshop as students work to finish small and large coffee tables, CD cases, and other projects.

Mrs. Bruno's Language Arts

I'm really excited about the changes in our Language Arts classes for the 6, 7, and 8 grades. Instead of one hour classes for each grade, we have divided by ability and integrated the ages for 90 minute blocks to concentrate on reading, writing, and math. Each student will then receive 2½ more hours per week of intensive instruction in all three of these areas. It seems to be working wonderfully. Each student is getting the help they need this way. The students appear to be happy about the changes also. In the class of students who need intensive work we have an

aide that follows that group from class to class. I hope the results will be just as positive in April.

Sam Barney's Math/Science



Emily Penn marking a waypoint on a GPS in order to map out the location of various snares for Snowshoe Hares.



From top to bottom, left to right: Madison Attla, Kelly Sam, Corrinna Sam, Jakob David-Simon, Emily Penn, Beattus Moses, and Darrell Sam. Mr. Barney's 6th grade class in Huslia warming up around the fire after setting some snares for a mapping/biology project.



Beattus Moses setting a snare.

Guitar & Fiddle in Nulato

On December 6 – 12, 2009, Belle Michelson from Cordova and Pete Peter from Venetie came to Nulato to teach music. In the morning they teach the K – 5 from 12:30 – 3:30 PM and they teach grades 6 – 12. Belle teaches violin and mandolin. Pete teaches Guitar. Their trip was sponsored by the Nulato Tribal Council, City of Nulato and the school. They

bought eighteen guitars, eight violins, and two mandolins. You don't have to learn only one instrument you can learn all three in six days or less. Belle and Pete formerly visited Hughes and Tanana. In the future, they want to visit Kaltag and some other villages downriver.

Written by Gabriel Pitka



Music at Andrew K. Demoski

Last week, we learned how to play the guitar and the fiddle. The Tribal Council and the city of Nulato bought many fiddles and guitars for the school. Our teachers were Pete and Mother Belle. They were here for a week and taught Mr. Lambert's class and Martha's class in the morning and taught middle and high school in the afternoon. Students had fun learning to play the guitar and fiddle. They also danced

the Salmon Dance and the Leadership Dance to the beat of a skin drum. On Friday, we had a cover dish followed by a concert of nearly all the students at Andrew K. Demoski School. People thought the concert was great and the kids are really talented. Then there was a dance. Mr. Dan had some good moves!

Written by Devon Agnes and William Agnes

Saturday Tutoring in Nulato



JUST ONE OF THE
 EFFORTS OF THE NULATO
 STAFF TRYING TO HELP
 THE SCHOOL ACHIEVE AYP



Saturday tutoring crew.... teacher Lisa Kleynenberg and Wesley

Manley's Holiday events



Alfred Wright and Gladys Dart are authors of the book: *In Deed, Indeed – Teaching and Learning in a One Room School.* Congratulations to them on a long and rewarding project. Copies will be available early in 2010.



Upper elementary students learned clogging this last quarter in PE with volunteer Dana O. They perform a routine at the Holiday program to the song; 'Fishing in the Dark'.



Students perform an play written by Cori Dart called, "A Nation Scrooged".



The Manley community came out to see the show.

STUDENTS ALSO PERFORMED PIANO, FLUTE, AND GUITAR MUSICAL PIECES AS WELL AS SONGS PLAYED WITH HAND BELLS. THE FINALE WAS "SILENT NIGHT" SANG AND SIGNED BY THE ENTIRE STUDENT BODY.



Alaska Math & Science Conference

I had the opportunity to attend the 2009 Alaska Math and Science Conference in Juneau. As I attended sessions, I looked for material to share with two groups of educators: my YKSD colleagues (both certified and classified) and my homeschooling parents in Raven.

A presenter that I thought our staff would enjoy was Lynn Williams. Many of her strategies dovetail well with PEAK training. And while she is a math teacher, some of these tips could be used in other subject as well.



Ms. Williams gives her students images to help them remember whenever she can. She teaches about proper fractions by showing a picture of a *proper* Victorian woman with a bustle. Then she struts around as if she's that woman and explains to the children that she's very *proper* (with her nose up in the air). She explains

that in Victorian fashion a *proper* woman always wants her bottom to be bigger than her top. She demonstrates this bigger bottom to her students by pushing her rear-end as far behind her as she can. She tells them that even her fractions must be *proper*. It has to have its bottom be bigger than the top. Keeping a visual in the room of the *proper* Victorian woman with a proper fraction next to it helps her students remember.

Teachers know that the math tests are reading tests as much as they are writing tests. Since it's crucial for students to know the vocabulary of testing, Lynn rec-



ommends using the Pyramid Game from TV.

Each student has a partner. Students sit face to face so that one can see the list of words on the overhead, chalkboard, poster) and the other cannot. The student who can see the words gives clues to get the other student to say the word. When all of the words have been said, the partners raise their hands to indicate they have finished. The teacher can indicate quietly in what order they finished with finger signals. When most of the class is done, the teacher debriefs the clues that students used to give students multiple ways to think about the words. Students switch places and work with another set of words. In true drip, drip, fashion, the teacher will rerun the list throughout the year. A sample list might be sum, product, numerator, and quotient.

Another strategy that Lynn modeled was using flashcards in several ways. A student might begin by seeing a triangle on a flashcard and saying the name triangle. After the student has mastered this, she shows a triangle at a different angle (not base down). Later she might show the word and have students draw it. She



emphasized that it's important to reverse the order of identifying a concept by name with later showing the name and having students draw or define it.

When a student gets a math answer correct, she asks him or her to tell how they got the answer. Then she asks if anyone else can tell a different method for getting the same answer. Students who couldn't understand the first method might understand the second. They are also learning that solving the same problem can be done in different ways. Explaining how to get the answer is also good practice for writing out the process on the SBA math items that require it.



I'm not a math teacher by training, but as a Raven teacher, I need to be a generalist in helping my families. I appreciated Lynn Williams workshop. Her last tip was to take a look at Mountain Math—probably familiar to math teachers but new to me. If you are interested, Google the phrase to see their bulletin board displays—good for sprinkles and drips.

Submitted by Kathy Vander Zwaag

Raven Family Art Night



RAVEN FAMILY ART NIGHT HELD AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE ON NOVEMBER 19TH



Raven Correspondence School Book Fair a Success



Lanessa and Chanz



Corduroy with Keri & Darth Vader



Jessie as Felicity



Kim & Ruth with Corduroy



Book Fair Story time



Kyra and Kyler



Raven "Bowl with your Teacher" Night



5 FAMILIES AND 2
RAVEN TEACHERS
PARTICIPATED IN
'BOWL WITH
YOUR TEACHER"
NIGHT ON
NOVEMBER 19TH.
EVERYONE HAD
LOADS OF FUN!

District Office Holiday Party



 **HAPPY HOLIDAYS** 

Halloween at the District Office



Kerry, Susan, Andrea D., Patty, Laura, Cristina, Cheryl, Edith, and Branden

3rd Quarter Birthdays....

December 21	Lynne Culbertson	February 16	Elecia Frank
December 26	Brandy Henderson	February 18	Josie Dayton
December 27	Christina Semaken	February 19	Nate Lambert
January 1	Gertie Esmailka, Thelma Saunders, Dianne Shirrell	February 20	Marion Acker, Eleanor Yatlin
January 8	Ruth Folger	February 21	Monica Garza
January 11	Cindy Furtado	February 22	Joy Shier
January 16	Jake Kramer	February 23	Bob Hawkins
January 17	Martha Demoski	February 24	Vernon Albert, Gloria Patsy
January 28	Cassandra Weter	February 26	Vicky Charlie
January 31	Irene Peters	February 28	Sarah Dayton, Tanis Joiner
February 6	Shawn Coyle	March 4	Alice Titus
February 7	Wilma David	March 5	Tanya Yatlin
February 12	Irene Henry	March 6	Johnathan Sommer

