

# YKSD Staff Connections



## News from the Superintendent

### Greetings!

Congratulations on the completion of the successful completion of first quarter! Below are some YKSD updates:

### Parent Teacher Conferences

As first quarter ends this Friday and report cards go out next week, I encourage you to continue your practice of student led conferences where appropriate. As we all know, parents enjoy the highlights of their children and will most always come to school to see their child's work.

### New Position, Educational Specialist

The District was recently awarded a grant through the US DOE Voluntary Public School Choice program in the amount of \$88,000. The funding will be used for a validation study and will also be used to hire an educational specialist. The position is a one year grant funded position and will be posted in house.

### Enrollment

We have enrolled just under 300 students across the nine river schools and 1065 Raven Correspondence School students. Our enrollment is very close to what we projected last year. In December we will begin putting together our enrollment projections for next school year. Those projections will play a role in our budget process to estimate how much state funding the district will receive. As we develop next year's budget, we will consider recommendations to help include more student centered

activities and courses.

(not including pre-k)

Allakaket 42, Hughes 15, Huslia 78, Kaltag 29, Koyukuk 14, Manley 12, Minto 39, Nulato 31, Ruby 32

### Whatever it Takes Incentive Program

The *Whatever it Takes Program* is in its second year and we will be taking nominations to present at the end of the second quarter. The criteria and program information will be posted on the website next week.

Thank you for your continued support and resiliency. Many of you have visitors from the district, AK Department of Education, and many other organizations almost weekly and you are always so gracious. Your hard work and commitment to the students does not go unnoticed.

*"Work spares us from three evils: boredom, vice and need."* Voltaire

Submitted by  
Kerry Boyd



### Special points of interest:

- > October 19  
Board Meeting in Fairbanks
- > October 21-23  
AFN Basketball Tournament
- > November 10  
Board Meeting in Anchorage
- > November 18  
Raven Family Art Night

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Raven Correspondence School entered a float in this summer's Golden Days Parade to advertise our home school option. District Office staff worked on the float and in spite of rain on the day of the parade, our float won the "Best Non-Commercial" entry. Great job to all who helped with the float and came out to support Raven Correspondence School!

## Golden Days Parade



## Welcome "Adysnn Elizabeth Poage"



Adysnn Elizabeth Poage was born on September 8, weighing in at 7 lbs. 13 oz. and 20 1/4 inches long.

Congratulations Cristina, Todd & Kailey!

## State & Federal Programs

### Grants

#### Title II A Grant

The grant department recently received a Title II A Professional Development grant that will provide some excellent professional development for new teachers, and for teachers who are not highly during FY 11. Stay tuned for more professional development opportunities that will be coming your way...

#### Literacy in School Libraries Grant

As many of you already know, we were recently awarded with a U.S. DOE School Library grant. This, too, is a one year grant program that will be implemented during FY 11. Through this grant, a library aide will be hired for each school site. The purpose

of the project is to 1) acquire up-to-date school library media resources; 2) acquire and use advanced technology; 3) facilitate Internet links and other resource-sharing networks; 4) provide training for library aides; and, 5) provide students with access to school libraries during non-school hours. Our district Media Coordinator will be sharing more information about this project....

#### Accreditation

A huge thank you to our site Principals for getting their annual accreditation report submitted. This year, Raven Correspondence School is due for its accreditation response team visit and evaluation. We will be focusing on revising

their accreditation document this fall. Stay tuned for further information regarding this process.

#### Career and Technical Education (CTE)

This fall, we will host a Welding Academy in Nulato for 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Applications have been sent out to the sites. Please encourage your high school students to apply. This is a wonderful opportunity for them to learn a trade, receive college credit and earn their 10-hour OSHA basic safety card. Please remember that applications need to be emailed or faxed directly to the Federal Programs department.

Submitted by  
Gina Hrinko



The State & Federal Programs department is proud to introduce Rachel Reilly. Rachel graduated from Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, MI in the spring with a degree in English and a secondary education certificate. "I'm excited to be working for/with you in the 'fun department' (Federal Programs) and I always love company, so come visit me!"

## Library Notes

I am pleased to be your new Library Media Coordinator, and look forward to getting your libraries back in business.

Currently, I am researching book and library software system vendors and will choose the ones that will best serve our needs. A part-time aide will be hired for each site so that your libraries can be more effectively run. The aides will also provide some instruc-

tion to K-3 students in beginning library skills. Our grant provides for books, electronic media, training for aides, and a computer for each library.

Our goal is that all students will utilize what our libraries have to offer, whether it is for academic or recreational purposes. We also want our library spaces to be welcoming as students and staff enjoy discovery

and learning.

A student interest survey is being collected to help with stocking the shelves. A staff survey may go out later, but suggestions are welcome at any time from staff or students.

Submitted by  
Rosalie White





## Counselor's Corner



*Ms. Esmailka's grade 4/5 students participating in a bullying-related yarn activity.*

The guidance office at Jimmy Huntington School has had a fabulous fall start! During the month of September, K-6 students received their first developmental guidance lessons addressing school bullying and empathy skills training. Students learned typical bullying behaviors, how

to respond, and how each one of us can help protect one another and JHS from the many consequences of bullying. This included active participation in role-plays where students volunteered to play the parts of "victim, bully, and bystander," learning how to respond to, and deter school bullies.

Also, during the month of September the guidance office hosted Ms. Wanda Lord from TCC

providing a joint presentation and activity night (grades 3-5) focusing on the effects of tobacco and alcohol use. Students engaged in a number of activities and circle-talk learning how their bodies and families are influenced when using these substances. In addition, JHS has hosted two fall school dances for elementary and Jr./Sr. students!

Submitted by  
Travis Sutton

## Area-Wide Student Council

On October 5<sup>th</sup> we held our first Area Wide Student Council (AWSC) meeting over video conference. A total of five sites participated, gave great ideas, and shared the good things happening at each of their sites. Some of the happenings are basketball fundraisers, community vs. student games, dinner theater, plays, booster clubs, Halloween planning, dinners, game nights, and other events. One of the ideas were to start a "Help Your Neighbor Club" where students do random acts of kindness within the

community such as help an elder or shovel snow. The vision of the AWSC is to represent the students at each school site, as well as all YKSD students, provides leadership for the YKSD student government, and be a positive example for members of the student body. AWSC leads in celebrating the achievements of students and accomplishments of others who contribute to school climate and developmental ecology. At least one student from each site has been nominated and we would like for them to

participate, share/give ideas. We are also looking for advisors/adults to help students implement their ideas locally.

The basic principles of the programs will be to:

- increase the school climate
- connect students to adults
- connect the community to the school
- Leadership

At our next meeting the AWSC will determine its President, Vice President, and Secretary.

Below is the schedule of meetings for the remainder of the school year.

Tuesday, October 5  
@ 2:00pm  
Wednesday, October 27  
@ 3:00pm  
Thursday, December 2  
@ 2:00pm  
Thursday, January 13  
@ 2:00pm  
Thursday, March 3  
@ 2:00pm  
Friday, April 8  
@ 3:00pm  
Thursday, May 5  
@ 2:00pm

Submitted by  
Andrea Durny



For the 2010-2011 school we are pleased to announce that YKSD is continuing our partnership with Future Educators of Alaska. To date Ruby, Kaltag, and Minto are the YKSD schools enrolled into the program. The clubs meet once a week for an hour. This month each club is working together with their advisor to plan activities for a Halloween Carnival, supplies and prizes for this activity are paid for by FEA. Members of FEA will also have the opportunity to attend the regional gathering in Fairbanks with other partner school districts; tentative dates are set during the Tanana Chiefs Conference 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Education Summit November 17 & 18, 2010. The second regional gathering will be held in Juneau in April 2011. For additional information about FEA please visit <http://www.futureteachersalaska.org/>. If you are interested in starting a club at your site please contact Andrea Durny.

Get ready for some



**Basketball Action!** This year during Alaska Federation of Native will be the first ever basketball tournament for Fairbanks brought to you by YKSD and Doyon Limited. All funds raised from this event will benefit YKSD Schools and we are currently looking for volunteers to help with door admission, 50/50 tickets, and hall monitors. There are a total of 20 teams, in a Men's, Women's, and a Huff-n-Puff Division. The tournament will take place at North Pole Middle School October 21-23, Thursday 4pm-10pm, Friday 4pm-11-m, and Saturday all day. FNSB transit system has also extended its hours for the duration of the tournament on their Green Line for anyone needing additional transportation. If you will be in town during these dates and would like to volunteer, please contact Andrea Durny. On behalf of YKSD stu-

dents, Thank You. Brackets and teams will be up soon at [www.yksd.com](http://www.yksd.com)

### Phlight Club

Will take place in Minto November 19-22, 2010 and is open to students in grades 8-12. The students of YKSD are continuing their efforts to make their schools and villages places where all youth feel connected, respected, and successful. Come to Minto, in November, and reconnect with old friends, and make some new ones while you work to make the world a better place for yourself, your families, and your friends. Applications will be emailed and at [www.yksd.com](http://www.yksd.com) the middle of October.

### Boarding Home Program Update

We believe every child has the ability to achieve learning success while attending school and throughout their lives. Our students are the main focus of everything we do. Currently we have students boarding at several of our schools of choice from as far as Michigan. If you know of any students who would benefit from attending YKSD, the Boarding Home Program is a good way to

go. A good majority of our students are returning home to live with family members and participate in all the great things happening. The last day to apply for the BH program is October 29, 2010. Information can be found at [www.yksd.com](http://www.yksd.com), or by contacting Andrea Durny.

### Point Guard College

Seven students from Minto, Nulato, and Kaltag participated in Point Guard College September 24-26, 2010. This opportunity was open to YKSD students and students were chosen by their Principals based on performance in the classroom, and interest in basketball. YKSD was one of three school districts to send students. The students and chaperone who attended said it was both fun and challenging. Funds for this opportunity were provided by JOM Funding, thank you Gina. Information on PGC can be found at <http://www.pointguardcollege.com>

## Welcome to the YKSD Staff



**Whitney Adams**—I am from a small town in Middle Georgia. I received my Bachelors in Psychology and Masters in School Counseling from Valdosta State University. This is my first year working as an official school counselor. I chose to come to rural Alaska because I have spent the majority of my life in Georgia and was ready for a change of scenery. I love exploring new places and meeting new people. The experience so far has been indescribable. The best part of my job is getting to travel from village to village. It's interesting to see the similarities and differences among the people. Both the staff and students are so diverse and different in each place. They all have something unique to offer. I am looking forward to my first ever winter in snow but am excited to be spending Christmas and New Years at home in Georgia with friends and family.



**Eddie Hornsby**—I am from Goshen, Ohio, 25 miles northeast of Cincinnati. I graduated from Oral Roberts University, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Science Education (Minor in Biology) and Xavier University with a Masters of Education in School Counseling. I student taught in a suburban middle school, as well as in a Creek and Cherokee Nation high school in Oklahoma. My first two years of full-time middle and high school science teaching were in two private Christian schools, one in

North Stonington, CT, and the other in Ft. Worth, TX. I taught high school Biology, Earth Science, and Physical Science for 7 years near my hometown in a rural district called Clermont Northeastern outside of Cincinnati, and another 7 years in an urban high school in Cincinnati, mainly teaching Earth and Physical Science at Mt. Healthy High School.

I found out that my program was being eliminated at Mt. Healthy due to budget cuts last Spring semester. I decided to broaden my job search beyond Ohio, including my wife's home state of Colorado and others in the west. When I saw that there were potential job openings in both science and school counseling in Alaska, I did not hesitate to apply. We've always wanted to visit here, and see the wonder and beauty that is the landscape and the people of Alaska. When I was offered a contract to come up here to work on the "greatest mission of my life," I could not say no. Both my wife and I were for it, and are so grateful to be here to serve the YKSD communities.

The best experiences for me so far have been THE PEOPLE. Sure, I love photography, and have taken so many pictures of the scenery. But Larissa (my wife) and I have been welcomed with open arms by many in Nulato, and I have met many in the other villages that I serve (Ruby, Kaltag and Koyuk)

kuk) that are glad that I have come, and that I care so much for their young people. My favorite event was attending a wedding in Nulato (which I found is an entire community event, and not just invitation only like in the Lower 48). I was literally "blown away" when, after the wedding party was served in the reception line, all the elders were asked to come up to be served. The respect the Athabascan people have for their elders is like nothing else I've ever seen. What is amazing even more is the heart that the elders have for their young people, and their desire for them to be successful and respect their culture and traditions for in the future.

I am married to my wife of just over 11 years, Larissa. We have no children except for those that we have or continue to work with in education and, for Larissa, in day care and now Head Start settings. I once coached middle school football and high school baseball, and enjoy watching Cincinnati Reds games. Larissa is an avid reader, and enjoys historical fiction most. We both enjoy spending time with family in Ohio, Michigan, Nebraska, and Colorado when we get the chance. We also enjoy traveling, and have been to West Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky, Pikes Peak and Rocky Mountain National Park (Colorado), Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument, and Custer



## More from our New Staff....

State Park (South Dakota), and Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming).



**Doug Dysart**—I am from St. Louis, Missouri, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in History and in Philosophy from Oklahoma State University, as well as a M.A. in History from Saint Louis University. I like the challenge of teaching in rural Alaska and riding around on a 4 wheeler over the local roads.

**Vic Lewin**—I was born in Southern Idaho and raised in McCall Idaho. I now have some property in North-Eastern Washington and some horses in Central Montana. I began my teaching career @ Val-livue Jr. Hi. In Caldwell Idaho 31 years ago. Seven periods a day, 30 students a period of 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade math. In my spare time I coached football, boys & girls basketball, volleyball, track, and baseball. I then moved to Northern Idaho where I taught 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade math, science, and P.E. for 4 years. In the middle of that time period I taught one year of high

school science in Home-dale Idaho. I moved to Alaska 19 years ago and worked for the Lower Yukon School District as a teacher and principal for 15 years. The previous 2 years I was the residential principal @ Mt. Edgecumbe High School. I moved to Nulato because I prefer living and working in a rural environment. My favorite experience thus far @ Andrew K Demoski School has been seeing the growth and improvement in our school.



**Dawn Pomrening**— I have a wonderful family, consisting of my husband Todd and my three sons, Gregory, Christopher, and Zacary. Todd, Zac, and I moved to Hughes, Alaska from Athens, Wisconsin. I am a 2009 graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire with a degree in Broadfield Social Studies/ Secondary Education. I chose to work for YKSD because I not only wanted an adventure but I wanted to do something with my life. I know it's corny but I wanted to make a difference in someone's life. My favorite experience at Johnny Oldman School so

far is just the day to day getting to know my students. I am looking forward to a long career in the Yukon Koyukuk School District.



**Scotty Starr**—I was adopted at a young age by a family in Lubbock, Texas. I grew up most of my years in the DFW area but have lived in East and South Texas. I earned a Bachelor of Science in Sociology and am certified in Special Education and K-8. I began teaching a life skills class in Texas for severely handicapped high school students. I did that for 3 years with same class before I decided to move to Alaska to teach Special Education.

I love living on a river system to subsistence, hunt, fish, trap, etc. This keeps me busy, in shape and mentally alert and helps fight off the blues and fat in the winter. My favorite experience so far is that I've gotten to complete 1/2 of the Iditarod on snow machine in my 5 winters here. I've done Galena to Nome and plan on completing Galena to Wasilla this spring, hopefully! I really love Ruby and hope to retire here

one day, there is NO WAY I can go back to the city!



**Camille Varin**—I am a first year teacher from McCarthy, AK. After getting a BA in Italian, Social Linguistics, and English Lit from New York University, I took seven years off to live and work in McCarthy. Last year I received my teaching certificate after subbing and completing my student teaching in Anchorage. I chose to work for YKSD because I wanted to be further north, and because I like living in small communities. A great example of this is last weekend: Casino Night fundraiser; so much fun, and such a wonderful and welcoming community. I feel really lucky to have the awesome, respectful and intelligent students that I have.

**Mark Snell**—Our new elementary and Special Education teacher in Minto.

**Alan Swenson**—Our new Special Education teacher in Nulato.

# WELCOME

The first ever YKSD Sunflower Garden provided much delight to staff and visitors. The flowers (Dahlias, Marigolds, and more) and vegetables (peas, potatoes, tomatoes, zucchini, etc.) created a soothing entry to our district office. Harvest time is over, but plans are already underway for next year's garden. Ideas are welcome at any time.



"The Business Office is pleased to introduce Carrol LeFevour, who has very capably taken up the reins in Accounts Payable. Carrol has a Bachelor's degree in Finance and is currently working on her BA. She joins Johnathan Sommer who is our Payroll Specialist and Charity Watt, our Accounting Tech II and RCS accountant."



There are two new faces in the Maintenance and Facilities Department:

Ralph Coleman comes to us years of experience to help meet district-wide maintenance and carpentry needs.

Mike Williams will be taking care of the District Office janitorial needs, purchasing, monthly site reports and SERRC Work Orders.



## September Teacher Academy

YKSD was recently awarded the Title IIA 'High Performing Teachers by Design' grant project.

The HPTD initiative is off to a great start. Our first activity was the September Teacher Academy where we had teachers participating

from both YKSD and Yukon Flats School District. This grant project pulls together the tools and resources new teachers need to improve their overall content knowledge and pedagogical skills. The project will implement on-going professional development activities

that will equip participants with a strong foundation for providing instruction in ways that lead to high levels of student achievement.

Submitted by  
Gina Hrinko



## Accelerated Second Language Acquisition Workshop

August 23 - 25, 2010  
Accelerated Second Language Acquisition with Dr. Stephen Grey-morning. This method of teaching uses is proving effective in teaching,

especially with our shortened classes. The method challenges students to learn the language through pictures and problem solving.

Full sentences are taught, for example: Leek yeh huneetsÖen ledö. The dog is sitting behind the house.

Submitted by  
Susan Paskvan





## Hughes Fall Culture Camp

Johnny  
Oldman  
School staff  
join the  
elders and  
students for  
Culture  
Camp in  
September





## Hands-on Learning in Huslia



**Students in Jr. High and High School dissect owl pellets and perform open heart surgery**

**Photos submitted by Peggy Bruno**

The 7th grade language arts class was dissecting owl pellets, creating a skeleton chart from remains, completing a scientific data log.

After a 2 week study on blood, heart, and circulatory system, the 11-12 grade health class was visited by the nurses from the clinic who explained blood pressure and used the classroom as a mini clinic to take blood pressures of all the students. One of the nurses modeled heart dissection on pig hearts.





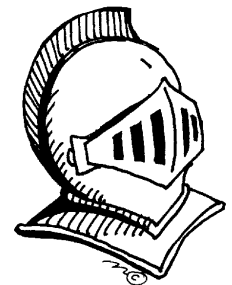
# Medieval Dinner Theater



Kerry and Susan join the court of King Butch



Father of Kahadjada



Queen of Sheba advances on the castle- stopped by the guard.



Kayleigh reads a book about knights that comes to life.

**The Manley Hot Springs community put their "act" together during this fund raising event for their Local Incentive Reading Program.**



King Solomon and Queen of Sheba



Students help pull names for raffle.



Mohammad's cave where he gets a vision from god.



Community members came dressed for the time period.



Chase and Tao fight the might dragon and win



Gladys Dart and Vera enjoy the food and show.



## A visit to Nulato



Gerald Patsey playing the Guitar with Berkman Esmailka



Gabe Pitka, with Kerry Boyd and the Grant Evaluators. Gabe gave an awesome speech and presented each of the evaluators with beaded sun catchers thanking them from all the students of YKSD.



### A Note from Evelyn Esmailka....

Hello everyone, I sure miss teaching this year in Kaltag. I am out on medical leave due to being diagnosed with breast cancer. I completed my first of 12 treatments and will have to relocate to Anchorage, closer to the doctors. Thank you for your continuing prayers and support.



Here is something of interest....Pete got his first moose on the Poorman Road here in Ruby a couple of weeks ago! He was grinning from ear to ear and could barely speak!

Submitted by Scotty Starr



## Koyukuk Students Thrive in Close Knit Community



# 2nd Quarter Staff Birthdays

Yukon-Koyukuk  
School District

## OCTOBER

10/2 Scotty Starr  
10/9 Kerry Boyd  
10/14 Monique Beetus  
10/18 Heidi Wright  
10/20 Marie Dayton & Vic Lewin  
10/21 Sophie Alexie  
10/22 Randi Shrider  
10/28 Jen McLean  
10/29 Andrea Berg

## NOVEMBER

11/7 Tami Rump  
11/8 Judy Madros & Rosalie White  
11/10 Pat Baser  
11/12 Sam Barney & Hazel Olson  
11/13 Olga Semakan  
11/14 JR Titus  
11/23 Katrina Frank  
11/24 Evelyn Esmailka

## DECEMBER

12/10 Dian Gurtler  
12/11 Joyce Billups  
12/14 Monique Beetus  
12/19 Nancy Mason  
12/20 Emilie Campbell  
12/26 Brandy Henderson

## October 10-16 is National School Lunch Recognition Week

I would like to thank Adrean Jimmie, Olga Semaken, Allyson McCarty and Rebecca Linus for their service to the children of Yukon-Koyukuk School District. They are your head cooks at Minto, Andrew K. Demoski, Merrelaine A. Kangas and Allakaket. These women spend their time preparing meals which contribute to the health and well-being of our children. So please take the time to thank these dedicated employees. The reality of school nutrition programs is too often ignored in favor of stereotypes and biased information. School lunches today follow federal guidelines and serve more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy than ever before. Our budgets are tight, but these individuals are preparing and serving balanced, nutritious meals in an age appropriate portion size that provide needed nutrients and promote healthy children. Thank you for jobs well done!

Submitted by  
Cheryl Brady

