

October 2023

Yukon-Koyukuk School District Staff Connections

It is with heartfelt condolences we announce the passing of Wilmer Beetus.

Superintendent Kerry Boyd



Wilmer Beetus, a member of the Yukon Koyukuk School District Regional School Board for the past eight years, served as the Vice Chairman for the last three years. He was recently elected to serve three more years on the Regional School Board. In addition to his work with the District, Wilmer Beetus was the First Chief and Mayor of Hughes. He was an advocate for education serving all the students in our communities. He was well known across Alaska as a progressive leader. He was soft spoken, but his voice was heard for miles.

We will celebrate his legacy and not mourn him. He was a real gift to us all and held in high regard by everyone.



YKSD Regional School Board Recognition

Carla Saunders, Board Secretary

The Yukon-Koyukuk Regional School Board recognizes excellence in staff and students at each meeting. Congratulation! We hope that you will continue to strive to meet your goals and continue to be an excellent role model for your peers.

Staff Winners



Ladean Ambrose
Special Education Aide
Andrew K. Demoski School
Nulato



Erika Jones
Teacher
Raven Homeschool
Anchorage

Staff Nominees

Andrew Bellamy ~ High School Teacher, Johnny Oldman School, Hughes

Julia Brenchley ~ Teacher, Raven Homeschool, Wasilla

Paul Caumaran ~ Principal Aide, Allakaket School

Joe Griek ~ Teacher, Raven Homeschool, Fairbanks

Dee Washburn ~ Pre-K Teacher and Reading Interventionist, Minto School

YKSD Regional School Board Recognition

Carla Saunders, Board Secretary

The following students have been recognized for their outstanding achievements this school year.

Student Winners



MacKenzie Rustad
Grade 6
Johnny Oldman School
Hughes



Warren Charlie
Grade 9
Minto School



Oran Brown
Grade 12
Raven Homeschool
Delta



Sela Nickel
Grade 2
Raven Homeschool
Fairbanks

Student Nominees

Saphira Dewilde ~ Grade 5, Allakaket School

Serenna Dommek ~ Grade 10, Raven Homeschool (Anchorage)

Prestin Garner ~ Grade 10, Raven Homeschool (Wasilla)

Malya Stickman ~ Kindergarten, Andrew K. Demoski School (Nulato)



Teaching & Learning Department

Patty White,
Assistant Superintendent

Literacy and Math Focus

The district will continue our focus on literacy this year in all grade levels and all subjects. Reading with and to your child for 20 minutes a day will help foster the love of reading. The district is exploring new Language Arts curriculum and hopes to have a new program in place by next fall that aligns with the Science of Reading.

Last year, we added a new instructional goal focused on Mathematics Mastery. Our goal is that every student will master foundational math skills by sixth grade. We have hired a second Math Specialist, Chuck Backe, and along with Simon Huff, they will help support this goal. Through the Math and Computer Science for Students (MACSS) Grant, the math specialists will travel to sites to help support our teachers and students with math instruction, math centers and hands-on cultural math activities.



New Curriculum



Elementary and Secondary curriculum committees last spring chose new Science curriculum for grades K-5 and new Social Studies curriculum for grades 6-12. The Elementary committee selected Into Science by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and the secondary committee selected McGraw Hill Social Studies textbooks. All curriculum comes with online components and textbooks.



Teaching & Learning Department

Patty White,
Assistant Superintendent

Professional Development

The teachers and principals have been learning about John Hattie's research on what practices and programs provide the strongest effect on student learning. Part of our professional development is to talk to the students and ask what makes a student a good learner. A lot of the answers we received from students focused on being a good student (raises hand, sits quietly, follows directions, gets good grades, etc.). These are all good things but here is what the research says about what makes someone a good learner.

A good learner is someone who:

- Sets challenging goals
- Tries again if they fail the first time
- Asks questions
- Sees mistakes as a chance to grow
- Doesn't give up when learning is hard
- Seeks feedback



Parent Teacher Conferences

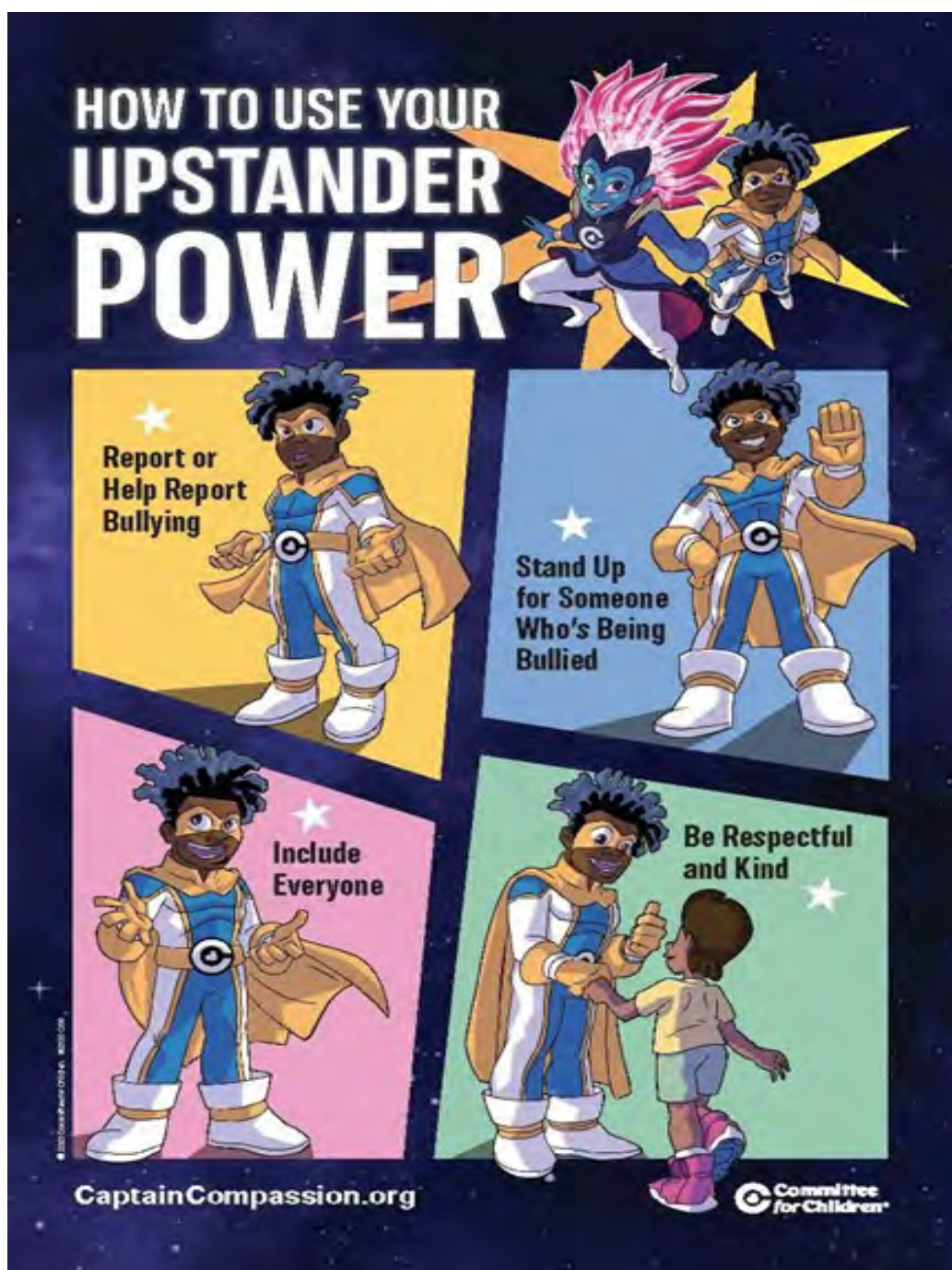
Parent/Teacher Conferences: November 1, students will be released after lunch so teachers can meet with parents to review student progress and first quarter report cards. Parents, be sure to sign up to meet with your child's teacher during Parent/Teacher conferences. Call the school to schedule your time with the teachers. If you are unable to meet on that day, please call the school to schedule another date and time. We would like to have 100% of our parents meet with the teachers this quarter to review students' progress.



Counselor Corner

Kela Gillihan,
Counselor

October was National Bully Prevention Month! Your counselors worked with all students throughout the month on preventing bullying type behavior and being an upstander. When and where to report bullying and how to help friends who may be experiencing bullying.



Counselor Corner *continued*

Kela Gillihan, Counselor

Red Ribbon Week was October 23-27, but we celebrated it the whole month! Join the Counseling Department in creating awareness about being drug free with our word search puzzle!



RED RIBBON WORD SEARCH

P E T R M N C O M M I T M E N T P R E V E N T I O N E C O T
 K E V J X D S F L E E S C V O C R R H S Z T N K D S E V B A
 T Q S F N U R T U R I N G O Z A H O X D M A D A B R Z Z P F
 O G Z T S L A U G I F X V H M A J E E W B V D P T M M U C A
 H G L Y R S D X G Q D P Q O E M Z K D I F E N V D I V B W M
 F G V K Y Q Y Y I F A U Z M G A U L P U B R H L P F Y E K I
 T V F L P V L E Y O R W Y L M C L N R J C E S E N T I C J L
 E B W C B S B E I F D E A W I X X T I S O A Q O Q W C K W Y
 D Z R Y T B Q M U G R P E R Z V O S H T V E T A R V V G I P
 X Z E M T Z M F I G J U Q Y E G E X O Y I B Z I S F H L O P
 N C F C R J S R L Z W N T Z O N M D P E C E A C O O M V O B
 M R H F R U S N K Q A Q Y Y H U E A R W R H S Y I N Q K A N
 I X V B F U E D S I J C J T Y B T S A U X L O A H F R L I F
 N T Z C W I C E N A T I O N A L H H S Y G Q A I V W Q U C P
 D E H I N J Y A F M U N E R I M M J G C T F J U C J J M A F
 R A K I N D N E S S A K X V I M C L L D Q D R O R E O U M N
 R E D R I B B O N W E E K L N B C B Q A G L T E V M S M P U
 X E X C M F W O X X F A X S F C A H P W F B M V E F Q T A D
 M K K N E F G J U H E V L E A D E R S H I P E V Y N C N I I
 G Y W W J U Q P R B Z H V H C X M L A M J R T U E C F L G T
 Y D Z W V K R P U L U Z K F W S R I E E I Z Y Z K A P G N J
 G Q P T V Q S Q G S U P P O R T R T X B W N J C L L P A V O
 U M Y F A H X J V F I R W K S Q Q F V P R L D T I H G X F H
 V A G H R J P A R E N T S O F U H B F D Y A X F U U A M M M
 E D T N E K N C D J G T G F J M L D T J D R T V U M U B H K
 I P O T E N T I A L G F S A C L N G X E T K O I E L R L Z V
 C D R D P Z E Y U N Z M R V R J E M U M Z Y S H O A N P R S
 O X G F J B N T P G R A S S R O O T S Y V P Z M H N O E W Y
 R C F Q X C Y R C T E U E N R I Q U E C A M A R E N A R S R
 U V Q K T B F V H N L X S W R F I N N G M C B K R W E P N S

KINDNESS
 MIND
 MINDFULNESS
 RED RIBBON WEEK
 LIVE DRUG FREE
 NFP
 HEALTHY CHOICES

AWARENESS
 CELEBRATION
 DEA
 COMMITMENT
 ENRIQUE
 CAMARENA
 CAMPAIGN

COMMUNITIES
 EDUCATION
 FAMILY
 GRASSROOTS
 NATIONAL
 PARENTS
 PREVENTION

SUPPORT
 LEADERSHIP
 NURTURING
 POTENTIAL
 DRUG FREE YOUTH



Area-Wide Student Council

Kela Gillihan, Counselor

We are entering our 15th year with the district wide student council. Each year we keep growing and students are interested in more leadership opportunities. Student representatives give site reports each month on what has been taking place at each school and in each community. Students also have the opportunity to speak with board members, attend leadership conferences, and plan district wide events and school challenges.



FY24 AWSC Members

Allakaket- Tristan Linus, Gabe Nollner, Hazel Strassburg & Isaiah McCafferty

Hughes- Dymond Sam, Holly Tritt, Ethan Bellamy & Clayton Bergman

Huslia- Mia Wright

Kaltag- Dorothy Henry & Jonah Semaken

Koyukuk- Sasha Dayton, Carter Dayton, Haylee Huntington & Rayme Lolnitz

Minto- Ben Swider

Nulato- Thomas Patsy & Valicia Kruger

Ruby- Sidney McCarty & Remington Wiehl

Rampart- Genevieve Johnson, Darian Woods & Ariyah Woods

Tanana- Nolan Roslansky, Natasha Edwardsen & Delaney Edwin

Facilities & Maintenance Department

Gale Bourne, Facilities & Maintenance Director

Annual Asbestos Notification

SERRC has completed a comprehensive asbestos inspection and management plan for the Yukon Koyukuk School District. This report is available for your inspection during normal school hours (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) at the District Office and on line at <http://yksd.schoolwires.net/>.

As a result of the inspection performed by SERRC, asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) were identified and their condition assessed. The areas noted have been encapsulated, or removed by the District. A long range plan for handling the materials has been developed.

An ongoing operations and maintenance program which includes periodic surveillance and re-inspections has been implemented by the District and will remain in effect until all ACBM has been removed from District facilities. Please direct any concerns to Gale Bourne, Director of Facilities, at (907) 374-9404.



State & Federal Programs

Scott MacManus, Director

Greetings to the district. My name is Scott MacManus, and I am the new Director of State and Federal Programs for YKSD. As I have just started, I wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself and share a bit about my background, and the projects that I will be working on. I am excited to be a part of the YKSD professional community, working with some of the finest professional staff in education, and the exciting projects the district is working on.

I grew up north of here on the Kobuk River in the Northwest Arctic. The experience of growing up and attending school in the village has shaped my perspective of rural education in profound ways. Following graduation, I enlisted in the Army and did an overseas tour of duty in the Military Police Corps. I came away from my time in the Army with a deep love of country, having learned many valuable life lessons, including the importance of teamwork, resilience, and adaptability.

After the Service, I followed in the footsteps of my parents, both rural Alaskan educators, and attended UAF. Following graduation, I taught high school in western and interior Alaska, did some contracting, and among other things was a fisherman, riverboat pilot and dog musher. I have managed educational programs at the University and school district levels, bringing the perspective of every level of education...from aide to Superintendent, to the table. Over the past 35 years, I have worked for several districts, including YKSD in Ruby. I am honored now to be back in YKSD leading the special projects team here.

First and foremost, the purpose of our department is to provide resources to our teachers and their students. We are here to support our schools every step of the way. If teachers or principals need assistance with planning, funding, or ideas for implementation, they should feel free to ask.

Our primary responsibility is to manage our federal Title programs, which are “formula” grants that we design to address the needs of economically disadvantaged students. These programs provide supplemental resources, such as tutoring, after-school programs, and specialized instructional materials, that help students overcome the barriers that may otherwise hinder their academic success. YKSD’s Title programs provide resources that invest in the future of these students, giving them the tools and support they need to thrive academically. Our programs not only help these students develop their English language proficiency but also celebrate and embrace their own cultural diversity and traditions, fostering an inclusive and enriching learning environment for all.

Our department also works on “Special Projects”...seeking “competitive” grants and implementing programs or projects that support the district’s Strategic Plan, such as A-Star, or Project Employ. One of the assignments I’m most excited about is the elder biographies project, which will help to preserve and honor the life stories of our elders in our river schools in their own words. This important project will become an archive, sharing the experiences and traditions of our community leaders, capturing key parts their lives, sharing not only their wisdom, but also the life lessons learned in a way that can be used to teach our young students not only cultural literacy, but will also help in the transmission of traditions. Not only will the biographies project strengthen the sense of community in each of our villages but will also instill respect and appreciation for tradition and the different perspectives of our elders among our students.

A-Star is another one of the innovative grants that YKSD has just been notified that we received and are starting on, and that will directly help us to address the teacher shortage in our remote schools while providing exceptional academic (and economic) opportunities to our students and para-pros. The A-Star project encourages and supports students and current staff to become fully certified teachers, ensuring that our students have teachers who are committed and well-prepared for living in the bush and working with our students.

Each of these projects support the goals of our Strategic Plan, and can only happen through the efforts of an effective team like ours, bringing together a diverse set of expertise, in a culture of collaboration, creativity, and innovation. We will work together to leverage the unique skills of our team, to identify the complex problems of teaching each of our students, and generate innovative solutions to achieve those goals. It is exciting to be a part of that, and I am looking forward to meeting that challenge.



ESTEEM Grant

Andrea Nield, State and Federal Programs Assistant Director

This is a parent choice grant meaning parents have choice in their child's learning opportunities. We are currently in the process of bidding out services in the area of

1. Cultural/Native Language
2. College and Career Readiness
3. Extended Learning Opportunities
4. Resilience

For all course offerings please visit <https://esteem.yksd.com/>. Parents will need to sign up their student for each course. Below are the summer activities provided by esteem. We will be gearing up for fall activities.

Team Camp June 2023

Minto boys and girls attended via serviced agreement with Minto Tribe. Nulato Girls attended team camp via service agreement with YKSD. Minto Lady Lakers were champions of their division. It was a great experience hanging with players from all around Alaska. 62 teams! Up at 7:00 AM, in bed by 1:00 AM. They played 9 games against teams they have never seen before and really grew as a team. They met a lot of friends. This was offered by a direct service agreement with the tribes through the ESTEEM grant. We need the parents/coaches/tribes to organize and get it done.



Nulato Lady Wolves at Team Camp



Team Camp



Minto Lady Lakers- Champions of their division



Minto Lakers

ESTEEM Grant continued

Andrea Nield, State and Federal Programs Assistant Director

Summer Academy



Denaalo' Ts'eelaanh Summer Academy: Students will receive instruction in math and reading, learn from elders, cultural lessons, leadership skills, basketball skills, baseball skills and much more. Denaalo' Ts'eelaanh is a Denaakk'e term that means We Are Skilled With Our Hands. Our Native peoples come from a long line of creative, hard-working and inspiring individuals who had many skills that required using their minds, emotions and hands. The gathering is designed to be a collaborative effort to help students build on skills that are essential for success & growth (academic and practical life skills). Partners include the PHLIGHT Club supported by the AN ELDER; students were housed at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks dorms.



ESTEEM Grant continued

Andrea Nield, State and Federal
Programs Assistant Director

Phlight Club July 2023



ESTEEM Grant continued

Andrea Nield, State and Federal
Programs Assistant Director

Indigenous Hoops League

Through ESTEEM YKSD did a service agreement with Minto Tribe who was able to bring two boys team in two divisions. Divisions are separated by grade level. Indigenous Hoops League is a national platform created for Native American Basketball teams to showcase their talents. The event includes team scavenger hunt, native American motivational speakers and athletes, as well as interact with Native American tribal members peers from across Indian country.



YKSD 14th Annual Fun Run

Andrea Nield,
Assistant Director

The Fun Run took place on September 23rd. All students in grades K-12 are welcome to participate. Each site mapped out their route prior to the race and kept the times. Students who participated were given a t-shirt. 218 students participated districtwide, here are the results of the top 3 runners in each category. This was a family and community event.



Grades K-2 - 1/2 Mile				
	Location	Grade	Runner Name	Time
1	Nulato	2	Mathias Sommer	2:02
2	Nulato	2	Connor Demoski	2:08
3	Nulato	1	Malakai Moses	2:30

Grades 3-7 - 1 Mile				
	Location	Grade	Runner Name	Time
1	Minto	6	Traeton Titus	7:21
2	Minto	4	Johnathon Alexander	7:23
3	Hughes	6	MacKenzie Rustad	7:24

Grade 8-12 - 3.1 Miles				
	Location	Grade	Runner Name	Time
1	Minto	9	Warren Charlie	20:25
2	Kaltag	11	Roger Henry	20:43
3	Nulato	9	Cola Sipary	20:45



Hughes



Tanana



Ruby



Kaltag

YKSD Home Away Program

Formerly known as the Boarding Home Program. The program is intended to assist families with housing costs, of students in grades 8-12 who transfer into or within YKSD schools and are not living with their biological parents or legal guardian but are living with their extended family. The application for the FY23 school year closed on October 2.

Andrea Nield,
Assistant Director



Middle School Basketball

Andrea Nield, State and Federal Programs Assistant Director

Middle School Basketball season is under way in YKSD. The season runs October 2-November 11, 2023. Any questions please see your local school principal. Below are some tourneys we have teams participating in.

- ♦ October 12-14, Galena & Delta
- ♦ October 19-21, Nulato & Tok
- ♦ November 2-4, Northway
- ♦ November 9-11, Huslia & Nenana

Volunteers are needed to assist with refereeing, cleanup, score keeping, clock, and concessions.

Students need to participate in practices, have good grades and attendance.

High School Basketball

Andrea Nield, State and Federal Programs Assistant Director

High School basketball season begins November 29, 2023.

Currently seeking coaches for Allakaket boys, Nulato boys, Huslia girls, Huslia boys

*Students need a current physical to participate

* For a full schedule please see your local principal.

*Students need to have a GPA of 2.0 or better to participate as well as 90% attendance in school and at practice.

To the left are some tournaments in the interior that have been scheduled. This is not the full schedule of tournaments.

January 3	Minto @ Delta
January 4-6	Northway Tournament
January 18-20	Tri Valley Tournament
January 25-27	Nulato YKSD Shootout
February 1-3	NIT
February 8-10	Tok Tournament
February 16-17	Minto Tournament
February 23-24	Huslia Tournament
February 29-March 2	Minto @ Galena
March 7-9	Regionals at UAF Patty Center hosted by Ft. Yukon
March 13-16	1A State Tournament in ANC

Dancing with the Spirit

Andrea Nield, State and Federal Programs Assistant Director

A weeklong music camp with two staff who teach singing, guitar, fiddle, ukulele, culture, and language with the help of elders. A student concert and community dance will be held at the week's end. We are waiting for schedule from Dancing with the Spirit



Andrea Nield, Assistant Director



College Prep Training

Coach Dyson is a lifelong Alaskan, six-time state champion coach, five-time region champion coach, and has the longest winning streak in the history of Alaska basketball, 147 consecutive in-state wins! Coach Dyson has a 97% winning Record over his eight years coaching. He takes the game of basketball and uses it to connect to the next generation and develop winning life skills.

- Oct 2-6 Hughes
- Oct 9-13 Kaltag
- Oct 16-20 Huslia
- Oct 23-27 Nulato
- Oct 30- Nov 3 Allakaket
- Nov 6-10 Ruby
- Nov 13-17 Rampart
- Nov 27-Dec 1 Koyukuk/ Minto
- Dec 4-8 Tanana



Andrea Nield, Assistant Director

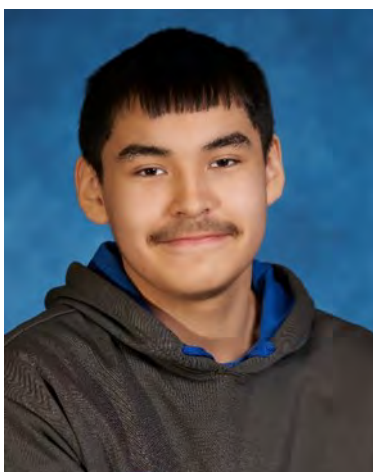


Picture Day & Photo school

This year YKSD has hired Stephen Nye Media to do professional school photos. Individual school packets will be sent to your school within two weeks of picture date that contains an 8x10 and also wallet size pictures. You can also get a digital copy upon request. Steven will also be available to do family photos and Sr pictures. Below are the scheduled picture dates for first semester. This opportunity is brought to you by the ESTEEM grant. Please sign up your student on the esteem website.

Tuesday & Wednesday of each week 11am-3pm

- Oct 2-6 Hughes
- Oct 9-13 Kaltag
- Oct 16-20 Huslia
- Oct 23-27 Nulato
- Oct 30- Nov 3 Allakaket
- Nov 6-10 Ruby
- Nov 13-17 Rampart
- Nov 27-Dec 1 Koyukuk/ Minto
- Dec 4-8 Tanana



Denaakkenaage' Hunek, Denakenaga' Khunek: Native Language News

Holly Wofford, Native Language Teacher

Language Classes

Denaakk'e Classes for 2022-2023

We've had 17 different teachers K-12th sign up for Native Language classes this school year. Altogether there are four Upper, six Central – KR, three Central – YR, & four Lower dialect classes. With Upper Elementary and Secondary classes starting to show interest there's a wider range of grade levels taking Native Language classes, which means the program is growing!

Classwork Update

We started the year a little differently by beginning in **Unit 9 – Leek Eent'aanee? (Do You Have a Dog?)** which is our dog and color unit, and are currently working in **Unit 10 – Saanh Ggaagge Hodee? (Where Is the Summer Bird?)**. Usually within a school year, by keeping a steady pace, we can make it to **Unit 8 – Gen neen'aanh?** our animal unit. Starting where we left off last year gives the students exposure to our Dog/Color & Bird units before revisiting Units 1–8.

Overall, the students are doing a great job working through the units and are catching on quickly. I've been spending a lot of time putting emphasis on the vocabulary/phrases which allows students enough time to learn the words before starting any lessons and activities. Onsite co-teachers have been doing an amazing job with vocabulary practice in-between classes, and it shows when their students come on prepared and familiar with the vocab. **Hoozoohh!!**

Independent Native Language Classes

Huslia and Minto sites have had successful onsite Native Language classes; with a Denaakk'e Central (KR) class being taught by Annette Moses in Huslia, and the Benhti Kukt'ana Kenaga' Language being taught by Bertina Titus in Minto. There has also been a newly added Secondary Cultural/Language class started in Nulato. See updates below:

Ts'aateyhdenaadekk'onh Denh

Annette Moses in (Huslia):

Does year-round instruction and incorporates Native Language into her daily classroom routine with her students.

Menok'oget

Bertina Titus in (Minto) says:

"Things are going very well, students are pretty much reviewing a lot of things from the workbook, and I've started them on a few different things pertaining to the month we are in. I'm very encouraged by how fast they are learning."

Noolaagh Doh

Tristan Madros in (Nulato) says:

"Our culture class here in Nulato is doing great! The kids are doing good bead-ing/sewing. They have been making slipper tops, earrings, and now have interest in making fur hats and/or fur mitts. We are also doing Native Language and have covered body parts, feelings, and are currently starting colors. I plan to start incorporating some traditional singing and dancing soon."



Native Language News continued

Holly Wofford, Native
Language Teacher

Language Supplies

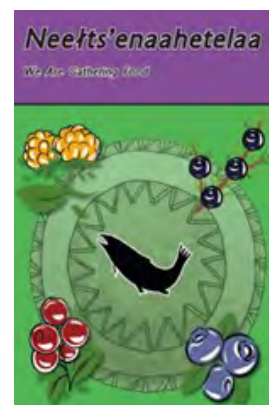
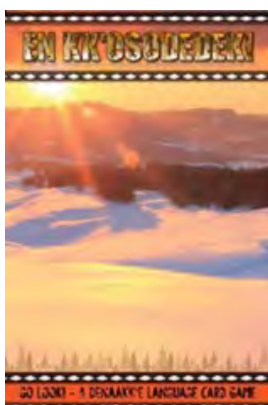
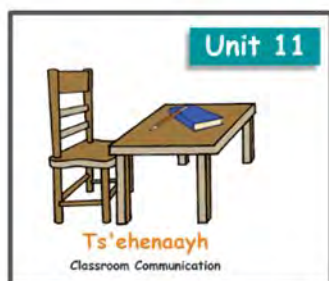
Headphones with built in microphones were shipped out to school sites. Students using their headphones during Native Language assessments helps us to hear their answers/pronunciation with no background noise. If you notice one needing to be replaced, please reach out to either Roxanne Stickman or me.

Cultural Activities:

There have been successful afterschool sewing/beading programs at a few of our sites this past year. Afterschool sewing/beading programs are a great way to get students engaged in cultural activities. If you're interested in doing a project with your students, please let us know so that we can work on getting supplies sent out to you.

Curriculum News:

The expansion for our Native Language workbook is in its final editing stages for printing, and both new card games Go Look! & We Are Gathering Food are close to going into the printing stage as well and should be shipped out soon.



Native Language News continued

Holly Wofford, Native
Language Teacher

Cultural Activities

This year Andrew K. Demoski school brought back culture week to their school. In the 1990's Nulato staff and community members would host a River Week. River Week was one whole week dedicated to traditional/cultural activities for the entire school and community members to participate in. Elders and community members would be invited, and their presence was welcomed. During these activities students would rotate through planned excursions and projects. They would end River Week with a field trip which entailed walking the Nulato River from the new road to the mouth of the river with fishing and a picnic to conclude the week.

It was something every student enjoyed and seeing pictures of the students participating in Nulato's culture week this year was exciting! It's beautiful to see our teachers and principals getting involved with the community and encouraging cultural activities for their students.

2023 Nulato Culture Week Pictures



Processing Fish



Processing Moosehead



Drum Making

Wednesday Story Hour

Holly Wofford, Native
Language Teacher

We have been consistently having Native Language story hour every Wednesday which started last school year. Several classes opt to sign on and the students seem to enjoy this time dedicated to different forms of storytelling. We are currently watching ***Spirit of the Wind (1979)*** the true-life story of George Attla in segments. George Attla is a famous musher from Huslia, AK who overcame a serious childhood illness/injury and became one of the world's most well-known champion sled dog racers.

Students are encouraged to draw as they're listening during Story Hour & Upper grade levels have been given a Q/A worksheet to answer questions during the full-length film.



Native Language News continued

Holly Wofford, Native
Language Teacher

New Staff!

Please help us welcome Tristan Madros as the new YKSD Cultural Teacher. Tristan is based in Nulato and brings a wealth of knowledge to our district. He is not only skilled in beading/sewing, subsistence lifestyle, Native Singing/Dancing he is also a language learner and is currently teaching a secondary class onsite in Nulato and will be making other site visits during the school year.

Tristan is the son of Cora & Franklin Madros Jr. of Kaltag, AK and Martina Ekada of Nulato, AK. He has been an avid learner of traditional songs and Denaakk'e for as long as he can remember; he started singing at a young age with his late grandpa, Franklin Madros Sr., who was a strong speaker and the lead singer in our region. Tristan continues to carry on his legacy by practicing what he learned from his grandfather and is a well-known lead singer and a strong traditional/culture bearer who practices what he knows daily. Tristan is always open to sharing his knowledge, especially with our youth, which is so important to keeping our way of life alive.



*Tristan at Culture Camp
in Kaiyuh*

**Welcome Tristan Madros of Ggaal Doh/Noolaagh Doh
our new Cultural Teacher based in Nulato, AK!**

CTE Career Explorers in YKSD

Patty Woody, CTE
Assistant Director

This school year, as part of our CTE (Career & Technical Education) program, YKSD is offering a Career Explorers program to grades 6-12. This program aligns with YKSD's goal to have students explore career opportunities and to have a definite career plan and portfolio by the time of graduation.

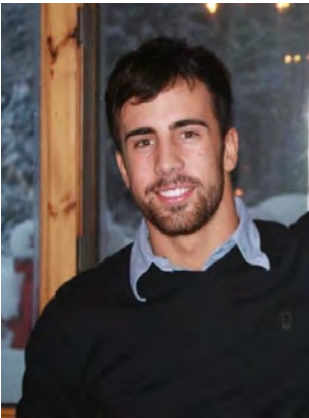
Career Explorers is being delivered by three staff members. Jeff Walters is visiting each site at least once this year to deliver information on current YKSD CTE opportunities (we have some great ones!), post-graduation opportunities, and related AKCIS (Alaska Career Information System) lessons. He's also assisting high school students with resume and cover letter preparations. Ja'net Bergman is also traveling to sites to cover topics such as life skills, financial literacy, and independent living. Meanwhile Melissa Good is delivering AKCIS to each school each month via distance delivery.

In addition to the above lessons, Career Explorers will be working in-depth with many juniors and seniors at two Camps this year. In November, the first Camp will be held in Nulato for select students in grades 11 & 12 from Nulato, Kaltag, Rampart, Koyukuk, and Minto. In April a second Camp will be held in Tanana for select 11th and 12th graders from Tanana, Allakaket, Ruby, Huslia, and Hughes. These camps will be held in conjunction with UAF; UAF instructors will be present. Participating students may earn one UAF credit as they further explore careers, prepare resumes, practice interview skills, and more. Tanana Chiefs Conference is also assisting.

Career Explorers is also planning an in-depth, individualized capstone program in Fairbanks for select graduating seniors in May. The Career Explorers program is actively up and running! Jeff has already visited Kaltag, Nulato, and Rampart. Ja'net has been coordinating lessons and travel, as well as applications for Alaska EXCEL and in-district camps. Melissa is already delivering AKCIS and other career lessons to several sites. We're excited for the work we're doing to help students explore many opportunities for both this year AND for life beyond high school!

The Business Office Welcomes New Staff!

Dylan Bourne ~ Food Service Specialist



Hello Yukon-Koyukuk School District Family,

I am thrilled to introduce myself as the new Food Service Specialist for our district. My name is Dylan Bourne, and I will be working in close collaboration with the various teams across our schools.

I was born and raised in the picturesque landscapes of Fairbanks, Alaska. I've always had a deep appreciation for family and am proud to be a devoted husband and father. Outside of my professional duties, I often spend time with my wife and daughter, immersed in a captivating book or engrossed in a good podcast or video.

Fairbanks is dear to me, but I also have a profound respect for the surrounding rural areas that our schools are home to. As I undertake this role, I am committed to ensuring that the well-being of our staff and students remains a top priority. Drawing inspiration from the values I share with my family, I believe that every student deserves the best nourishment to aid their overall growth. As I embark on this journey with all of you, I look forward to the opportunity to learn, share insights, and collaborate.

If you see me around, please don't hesitate to stop by and say hello. If you have any food recommendations, and if you have any favorites, please share them with me!

Melissa Davis ~ Payroll & Benefits Specialist

Hi all,

I have been with YKSD for just over a year now and love being part of the team here. I am excited to be the new payroll person! I am local to the Fairbanks area and Alaska is my favorite place to be, I love all things outdoors and always welcome book recommendations. Kindly, Melissa Davis



News from AK Grad

Richard Wilkin,
AK Grad Teacher



We would like to **welcome Launa Madros**, our new Administrative Assistant, to the AK Grad team. Launa grew up in North Pole but has lived down in the States and recently moved back to Alaska. She attended college at the UAF Community and Technical College and received her AAS in applied accounting. She brings with her experience working in the banking industry. Most recently, she spent time raising her four children and enjoying her time with them. We are excited to have her on the AK Grad team



Allakaket School

John Brady,
Principal/Teacher



Our first staff get together before school started was a fun Papa Murphy's Pizza bash.



First day of the 2023-24 Allakaket school year. Our morning meeting "Round Table" style.



Ms. Karry Betson's class was very attentive and excited for the start of a new year.



Ms. Joby Doronila's classroom was all neat and inviting to the new learners.



Mr. Kurt Weber's class got off to a great start getting to know each other and listing some rules and expectations.

Allakaket School continued

John Brady,
Principal/Teacher



Mr. Paul Caumaran was our professional drone operator for the annual Fun Run



Beautiful day and fun times at the Fun Run September 2023.



Ms. Lavonne Moses is our teacher's aide that also serves as our teacher substitute. Thank you!



Mrs. Rebecca Linus serves us great healthy food twice daily. Thank you so much!

We also have Mr. Rolland Linus that serves as our school custodian and does a great job keeping our school so clean. Mr. Clint Bergman is our maintenance person and is always busy repairing things in our school and doing preventative maintenance.

Thanks so much to all that make Allakaket School such a great place to work and educate our children.

Andrew K. Demoski School

James Ortiz, Principal

It's a great day to be a Nulato Wolf here at Andrew K. Demoski! There are so many activities and learning opportunities for the students so far this year, with so many more on the horizon. Here are some pictures from our recent Culture Camp. Students learned how to skin a moose head, make fry bread, jar fish, make fish patties, make a drum, and make jam. They also participated in several games.



Ella B. Vernetti School

Michael Lane,
Principal & Teacher

A Big, Big Thank You to the Koyukuk Community!

We may be one of the smaller communities, but boy do we go big to start the school year. Our parents, families, staff, and community members all came together to make the start of the 2023-2024 school year run as smooth as the river we share a name with. Students in all grade levels were given State and District assessments and diagnostics to assist teachers in pinpointing a precise learning plan for each child. Enrollment at Ella B. Vernetti is increasing almost weekly while tardies and absences have been rare. In fact, we've had several streaks with consecutive days of perfect attendance. As with most children, lunch and recess seem to be the most talked about subjects on our campus and for good reasons. Our breakfast and lunch programs are enjoyed by all students and run like clockwork, while recess is an absolute blast on our new playground. Constructed by a crew led by our new principal, the playground gives our students a chance to take play to another level including giving them a physical foundation to learn new skills and talents.



We are so proud of our Raiders!

Raider Shoutouts

Thanks a million!

Percy Lolnitz for his help building the new Playground.

Gale Bourne Maintenance and play ground guidance.

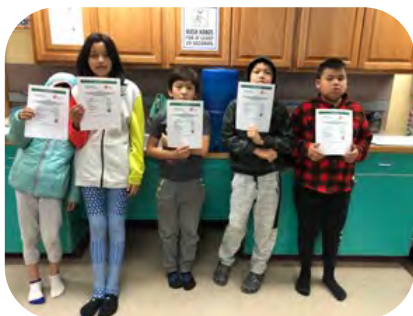
Matt and Ryan for working in the rain to complete the playground.

Kristi Burns for the new Bluetooth earbuds for the Raider Readers.

Victoria Deacon for her guidance with the New Amplify Testing.

Denise Carroll EBV for cooking daily.

Keegan Tomaszewski Hearing and Vision.



Jimmy Huntington School

Casey Weter, Principal

7th graders have been learning to cook. We have sold some goodies to raise money for things they want for the classroom like a bean bag chair, a rug, a lava lamp, etc. They also made 60 muffins for everyone when the welders showed off the cooktops they had made. Our 7th grade Teacher is Deb Eberle!

Career and Technical Education at JHS

We held two welding camps this fall; the students build rockets stoves then Anthony Cavan returned and built a four-wheeler cart. We also hosted an electrical camp with Len Coursey and students learned the basics of the electrician's trade.



Activities at JHS

We hosted our first STREAM night and had a large participation from parents and students. They enjoyed the spaghetti dinner and activities that we offered.

We hosted Chad Dyson and the College Prep Hoops this week and all the students participated during school and after school.

Jr High Basketball is well under way. Our 6-8th grade students have traveled to Galena and Nulato and they plan on attending the Northway tournament in a couple weeks.

Presenting our latest orthomosaic of the town's riverbank erosion, captured using the Mavic 3E drone. Jan, Falon, and I braved over 1.5 hours of flight time, snapping nearly 3,000 images. Thanks to WebODM, these shots were meticulously stitched together after 8 intensive hours, resulting in this breathtaking visual.

Kudos to our students for mastering not just the technology but also the resilience required in drone operations—a skill valuable in industries like:



Geospatial Mapping



Infrastructure Surveying



Environmental Conservation



Urban Planning

Handling a drone amidst persistent gnats is no easy feat, but it's a testament to your dedication and potential. Your future in drone-operated careers looks bright! ✨

Our High School & Middle School Teacher is Steve Swatling.

Johnny Oldman School

Andrew Bellamy, Teacher

As the leaves turn yellow and our eyes turn towards the upcoming first snow of the season, the students of Johnny Oldman School have been staying focused on their school work. As a school, we have already crushed our testing goals with 67% of the students testing at or above grade level. We will be raising the bar even higher, now, and we know the students will answer the call!

In Mr. Bellamy's class, students have explored theme and purpose in ELA class, identifying the various ways that informational text can be presented (argument, essay, poetry, etc.) In Biology class we ran an experiment to rank a flower's needs, keeping one in darkness, one without water, and one with everything it needs. Alaska History has brought with it a trove of information as students have researched various cultural regions within the state and presented their findings to the class. And if you ask any student about what they've learned in Personal Finance, they will tell you: Debt is bad!

In Ms. Hayes' class, the students work diligently every day. They've examined plant cells through microscopes, investigated the impact of weather on our environment, and are consistently improving their math skills using the acronym "Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally." They enjoy learning and honing their proficiency in their native language. Furthermore, they are delving into expository texts and excelling at extracting essential information. They are truly "HEROES" on their learning journey heading towards success.

Last but not least, Mrs. Bellamy's classroom has been the home of insect exploration, with the students creating their own bugs out of art supplies (head, thorax, and abdomen). They also have focused on our school motto, "A Family of Learning", with the students drawing self-portraits of themselves. Finally, the students are learning about the positive effects of composting while also identifying food waste as we have begun processing breakfast and lunch leftovers in our Lomi composter machine. We've already collected four buckets of soil from it this month!



Kaltag School

Vicki Infrerra
Principal/Teacher

The 14th annual Fun Run was held on September 28th. They were encouraged to train daily by exercising. A route was mapped out to the airport for each group. Grades K-2 ran a half mile, grades 3-7 ran a mile and the high school students' route was 3.1 miles. The race was recreated the following Thursday because of better attendance. Students wore their tee shirts and had a lot of fun! Once the students returned to their classrooms, they all enjoyed healthy snacks!

Class Update

Our morning Meetings are very successful, we share positive quotes and thoughts of the day. We also review Athabaskan vowels each morning.

Mr. McKinnon's class in Composition has been writing long essays. Students are growing stronger day by day in their writing skills. Mr. And Mrs. McKinnon were long terms substitute teachers. We were so grateful to have had them here in Kaltag.

Our new Teachers, Mr. And Ms. Crosby, arrived on October 17th. They have four children and are teaching High School and Middle School.



Native Language News

A native language song was learned by the K-3 class and sang at a morning meeting. Our students enjoy their Wednesday Native Language classes on the VTC!

Thank you to the YKSD Superintendent, YKSD Board Members and Staff for all the love and support to the McGinty's during a tragic time in Kaltag. Kaltag School has a big hole in its heart. We will always miss you Calvin McGinty -"Goo".



Minto School

Jason Lachica, Principal

The school year is off to an exciting start here in Minto. Our new staff members are off and running thanks to the help of our Minto veteran faculty and staff. The staff and community came together before school and did a fantastic job of getting things ready for the first day. Since school started, our team has done a great job taking care of our students, including Mrs. Francine, Ms. Katrina, Ms. Kia, Ms. Briana, Ms. Lori, Ms. Brenda, Mr. AJ and Mr. JR. It takes a great team to get it done. The new staff includes Ms. Dana Romano, Mr. Ronin Romano, Mr. Zachary Dube and Mr. Jason Lachica.

Mr. Lachica joins us from New Orleans, Louisiana and brings his coaching experience to the Minto staff. He has been welcomed by the community and supportive of the staff and making sure the school flows smoothly. He is excited to get the Alaska experience here in Minto! Mr. Dube is working with our Middle & High School Students and is passionate about foreign languages. With the assistance of Mr. Romano, his classroom is filled with high energy learning, and exciting lessons. Ms. Romano is working hard to make things interesting for the high school students. Her love for literature, language, and art has the high schoolers getting an exciting experience. The students are focused on literacy, but also take time to explore cultures and to work on art projects. Mr. Dube has collaborated with Ms. Romano and Mrs. Titus to include Native Language. Ms. Heather has done a great job working with our K-2 students. Ms. Heather and our “littles” study literacy, math, social studies, and science. Mrs. Wolfe works with our upper elementary students, who are enjoying using the UFLI program. They also work hard to develop the writing skills they will need throughout their school years. Mrs. Washburn has poured her heart into the students and is excited to see the growth in their literacy skills. Nothing gives Mrs. Washburn more excitement than seeing our young readers take off. The Minto Team is working hard and looking forward to a great year.

Mrs. Washburn's Pre-K Class

Mrs. Washburn's class is off to a great start. We come to school every day so we can learn through work and play. We are learning how to sort objects by size and color. We are learning our numbers 1 through 5 and how to count to 20. We know we are people and people are humans. We also know the parts of our body and that we have senses. Our favorite nursery rhyme is Head Shoulders Knees and Toes. We like to sing it really, really fast! We already know our basic colors and a few shapes. School is cool so we are cool because we come to school. Yes, we have homework... We read 20 minutes every night.

We are off and running!



Minto School continued

Jason Lachica, Principal

Ms. Heather's K-2 Class

Ms. Heather's K-2 students have had a busy school year so far! We have been visited by four Mystery Readers! It is always exciting to guess who might come in to read to us next! We also trained for and participated in the YKSD Fun Run. Congratulations to Avery Overbay for finishing first out of our class! We have been engaged in learning our letters and numbers and writing narrative stories. We have also been studying different regions and cultures of the United States while we work on comparing and contrasting skills. We had a blast helping Mr. Scott cut fish while working on math skills. We estimated and measured the fish and used those numbers to estimate and measure more fish. We also skipped counted to figure out how many fish were on the drying rack. Finally, we put the fish in order from smallest to longest. Congratulations to Emery Kanayurak and Altona McManus who were winners for the YKSD Week 1 Math Challenge. One of the highlights of the year so far has been our lunch concert with *Portugal. The Man*, which was amazing! We had so much fun clapping to the beat and singing along!



Mrs. Rose's 3-5 Class

We are on a roll this school year! We have established our routine and will hopefully make great improvements this year! So far, we have completed our benchmark testing for MAP, STAR and mClass. We are in the middle of our school construction, so we have been spending lots of time outside for recess and PE. We've had lots of visitors this year as well. First, we met our new school counselor, Mrs. Gillahan and Ms. Sally, and played a game. The band Portugal the Man gave us our own little lunch concert.



Next Alaska Trooper Kimura came to teach us about Firearm Safety Handling. And finally, we participated in the YKSD Fun Run and had a good time. The first finisher in our class gets a special treat! Congratulations to Johnathan Alexander for finishing in 7:28 minutes for his 1-mile run! Great Job!

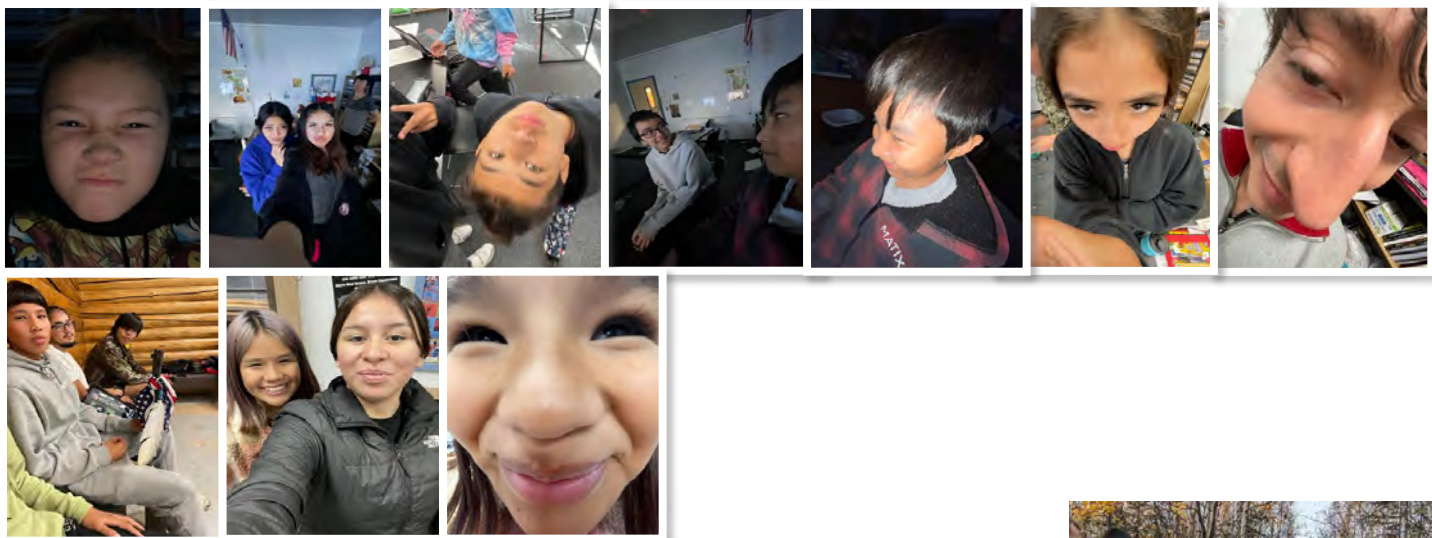


Minto School continued

Jason Lachica, Principal

Mr. Dube's Middle School Class

Progress is being made. We have been learning about Alaska's history, improving literacy rates among the students, improving math skills, and learning about taking care of the environment in middle school. I teach Spanish class to the high schoolers and at this point I am hearing multiple students say basic sentences. I am surprised and proud of how fast

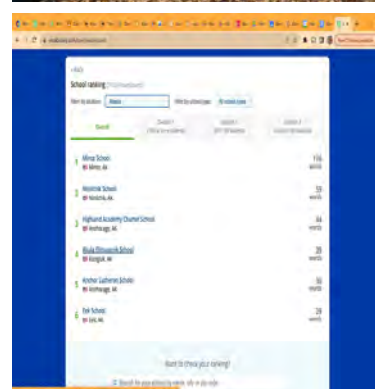


Ms. Romano's High School Class

In Ms. Romano's high school class, we learn many interesting things. In Alaska History, we are doing in-depth projects about the many indigenous cultures of Alaska and the subsequent waves of immigration into our state. On the math front, students are learning Algebra 1, geometry, and Algebra 2 with the help of Simon Huff, Scott Brucker, and Scott Washburn. We also play math games to keep our basic skills fresh. We completed a unit in English on the theme of appreciating the differences in people and wrote an essay about how differences can make us stronger people. We are reading interesting books during RTI time daily.

As seen, we did some hands-on science with our resident outdoorsman/teacher, Scott Brucker. We peered into the lake's food web by dissecting some local fish. We learned that pike, the alpha-predator of our lake, are cannibals. Guess what we found inside a large pike? A medium-sized pike. Guess what we found inside the stomach of that half-digested medium pike? If you guessed small pike, you are correct!

Officer Kimura of the Alaska Highway Patrol visited our school and taught us the four laws of firearm safety. Students consistently practice Benhti every day with Bertina Titus. The middle school art class produced some wonderful Alaskan landscapes in the style of Georgia O'Keeffe, check those out! Lastly, Minto School is #1 in Alaska for the Vocabulary Bowl, so consider the educational gauntlet to be dropped (We are the GOAT). All of us at YKSD have Vocabulary.com now, so let's see if anyone can catch the Minto Lakers! The Vocabulary Bowl just launched, so it is a good time to begin.



Maundrey J. Sommer School

Jason Roslansky,
Principal

Greetings from Maundrey J. Sommer School in Tanana!

It's been an exciting start to the school year here at Maundrey J. Sommer School. With the changing leaves and crisp fall air, our students have been busy with a variety of engaging activities both in and out of the classroom. Let's dive into some of the highlights from the past few months!

14th Annual YKSD Fun Run

An exciting event was our participation in the 14th Annual YKSD Fun Run on September 27th. It was an exceptional moment for Maundrey J. Sommer School as we joined the race for the very first time. The main course took our students down Front Street, running parallel with the majestic Yukon River. It was a tremendous achievement for our school community, and we are incredibly proud of all the students who participated and completed the run. Well done, everyone!



Healing through Music: Mike Stevens and Marc Brown



On September 28th, we had the pleasure of welcoming "Healing through Music," a musical group featuring the renowned harmonica player, Mike Stevens, and guitarist Marc Brown from Huslia. They conducted a captivating musical instrument workshop with our students, introducing them to the magic of music. This hands-on experience allowed our students to explore the world of melody and rhythm in a unique way.

Later that day, Mike Stevens and Marc Brown treated our students to a memorable school assembly where they showcased their exceptional musical talents. The performance was both entertaining and educational, leaving our students inspired and with a newfound appreciation for the power of music to heal.

Happy Boy Visits Maundrey J. Sommer School

We are thrilled to announce that Happy Boy, the Goldpanner mascot, paid us a visit on October 5th to promote the upcoming "Battle of the Books." The event was a huge success, and our students had a blast engaging with this beloved mascot. It was a fantastic opportunity to ignite our students' passion for reading and literacy. We want to extend our gratitude to Happy Boy for making our day extra special! As we continue to embrace new experiences and educational opportunities, we look forward to a rewarding school year ahead.



Keep up the great work, Maundrey J. Sommer School students and staff! Together, we'll make this year one to remember.



Raven Homeschool

Sonia Padgett,
Administrative Assistant

Anchorage

Our school year has been a blur of meetings, activities, workshops and meeting new families! We kicked off the year with a Back-to-Homeschool party at Shockwave Trampoline Park, where over 80 students and parents joined us for an afternoon of high-flying action. Spanish Club, Mad Science Club, Lego League, Quilting Club, Drama Club, Reader's Theater, and more have all started weekly in-office activities for students to participate in. Some students joined our family liaison for an afternoon of intrigue during a field trip to Alaska Escape Rooms. Our students enjoyed a week of hands-on STEM activities with the YKSD CTE department for our High School STEM Creativity Camp. We're looking forward to another fun, successful school year with our new families and new employees!



Delta Junction

We enjoyed extracting honey with Mr. Dorshorst. Students made a Happy Grandparents Day craft. Our new Lego Club began meeting. We learned all about food security at the Alaska Flour Company, and tasted wonderful samples.



Eagle River

We are only at the beginning of October, but our office has already had enough fun and activities to fill an entire year! We kicked off our year with our back to school event Pizza in the Park. Held in the evening so more families could attend, we had pizza (of course) and cupcakes to eat, lots of activities to keep kids busy, and a school supply treasure hunt. Our recurring clubs started up in September, and we have something for everyone - Littles and Middles Book Clubs, Geography Club, Lego Club, Recess Club, Minecraft Club, Culinary Cook Off, Music Club, Little Learners, Outdoor Club, and of course our famous Science Workshops! The biggest hit so far this year was our Alaska Railroad train ride from Talkeetna to Hurricane Gulch and back. More than 100 students and parents enjoyed the scenic ride and kept busy with activities, visiting with friends, and of course watching the beautiful scenery. Our fabulous family liaison Molly has a lot more fun stuff up her sleeve for the upcoming school year!



Fairbanks

The first quarter at the Fairbanks Raven office has been busy, busy, busy! The office kicked off the year at Growden Park for a Back to Homeschool Event. We had an ice cream truck serving ice cream, and multiple games. At the office, we hosted a week-long Scholastic Bookfair. Opened to Raven families and the public, the office made \$7,273.66 in sales! We have a yearbook team this year consisting of five students. These girls are working with Shyler to produce the yearbook for families this year. For the rest of October, we will have school pictures and a Halloween party for the families.



Juneau

The first quarter of our school year has flown by and we're enjoying seeing so many of our families at our activities and events. In July, we enjoyed an ice cream social, tide pooling field trip, and Glacier Gardens field trip. August held more adventures with our Dino-mite Open House kicking off a lot of our regularly occurring clubs and activities like Morning Mug Parent Book Club, Adventures in Bookland Book Club, 5th-8th Girls' Gathering, Marvelous Mondays, Science Fridays, Lego Club, Pokemon Club, Chess Club, Popcorn & Pajama Movie Parties, Math Club for Middle School, and "Lunch Bunch" Show & Tell Story Time. In September, we got to see our high school students for the Intro to High School Workshop, Intro to Senior Year Workshop, and High School Creativity Camp. It was also wonderful to spend time with many of our families at our Fall Picnic at Sandy Beach. It has been a wonderful first quarter and we're looking forward to more fun to come during the second quarter.



Wasilla

Our back to school picnic at Wonderland Park was fun with families and students meeting and visiting. Students of all ages had something that they could do; although having one student "swim" in the large mud puddle was not on the radar! At the end of August and in September, the district sent instructors for a couple of amazing opportunities for our Raven parents and students. All of the parent feedback from the math camp was positive! Parents left feeling better equipped and more confident in teaching and helping their students as well as being reassured that "thinking outside of the box" was okay! Students left understanding that math could be fun and that they could do it! The STEM-based high school creativity camp was well attended. Students were at the Raven office for seven hours a day, over two days, learning how to use a Cricut machine and a 3D printer. They made some great things, and we are looking forward to more workshops like these in the future. Games Club, Book Club, ARTiculate, and Crafternoon are all well attended, with other clubs starting up at the end of the month.



Halloween Word Search



BOO
GAMES
HALLOWEEN
PARTY
SPOOKY
WITCH

CANDY
GHOSTS
MASK
PUMPKINS
TRICK

COSTUMES
GOBLIN
MUMMY
SKELETON
TREAT

