

Responses to Parent, Community, & Tribal Council Feedback

Southwest Region School District (SWRSD) values feedback from parents, community members, and tribal organizations. Earlier this year, surveys were sent to parents and Tribal Councils and public meetings were held to get feedback about educational programs and opportunities for student participation in those programs. The district collects all the information and provides responses to questions, concerns, and comments as they come up. Below are the district responses.

Question 1 - Does the consolidation of migrant funds with Title IA funds include opening Migrant Family Nights to all students?

For schools that are eligible to consolidate migrant funds with Title IA funds, that decision is up to the migrant parents at each school.

Question 2 - Is there a plan for a greater immersion program for Yup'ik language?

Currently, there are no plans for a larger immersion program.

Question 3 - Why isn't there any allocated funds in Title IA for student travel this year?

The allocation for student travel in Title IA is designed to provide transportation for identified homeless students to their school of origin if it is reasonable. Currently, there are no students that have been identified as homeless.

Question 4 - At what grade would a student be retained if they are below in reading?

The Alaska Reads Act is a state law that outlines the requirements for when a parent will be contacted about potential retention of students. [Third grade](#) students who are not proficient by the end of the year might be retained unless the parent/guardian agrees to ensure that their student receives 20 hours of reading instruction over the summer prior to entering the 4th grade.

Question 5 - Is there a course for teaching students about taxes, credit, bills, mortgages, and other life skills beyond high school? And is there a book for that class?

Yes, the course is called financial literacy, and there is an adopted book for that class.

Question 6 - What is the difference in funding between schools designated as CSI 5% and schools designated as ATSI?

ATSI 5% schools have been identified based on the index score of the entire school so the Alaska Department of Education provides more funding for CSI 5% schools than schools with other designations. An ATSI school is identified based on an index score for a specific subgroup and is provided less funding to address the identified needs than CSI 5% schools.

Question 7 - What subgroup was identified as needing additional support at Manokotak Nunaniq School through the ATSI designation?

The economically disadvantaged subgroup.

Question 8 - What was the reason for moving to a new math and social studies curriculum?

Alaska statute requires school districts to review curriculum at a minimum of every seven years. A district review team of multiple stakeholders reviewed the math and social studies curricula based on the seven-year cycle. The previous K-5 math curriculum, which was GoMath, was no longer being published so a change was needed. For social studies, the review team determined that the new curriculum would better meet the needs of our students.

Question 9 - How does a school get designated for School Improvement?

The Alaska Department of Education has a process to identify schools that need Comprehensive Intervention and Support (CSI) based on an index score. Any school that scores below the lowest 5% threshold of the index score is identified as CSI school. Any school that has a subgroup of students that score below the lowest 5% threshold of index score are considered an Additional Targeted Intervention and Support (ATSI) school.

Question 10 - Why is the overall Title IA budget \$114,000 less than last year?

Title IA allocations are different each year and are based off the appropriation provided by the federal government. This year's amount just happened to be less than last year's amount.

Question 11 - Why can't all students participate in Migrant Education Family Nights?

The federal law states that migrant education funds must be targeted to migrant students. However, there are some schools that meet specific requirements to consolidate their migrant funds with their Title IA funds. This requirement has to be met annually.

Question 12 - What is the \$5 million from Impact Aid used for?

There isn't a specific item it supports, it simply goes to support all costs. It supports everything from wages and benefits to energy costs.

Question 13 - Why was there only one week of summer school?

The district only had the resources to provide week-long summer school opportunities at each of our communities. The district recognizes that this doesn't work for all students and is looking at other models of implementation in the future.

Question 14 - What supports are available to 6-12 grade students that are struggling to read?

The district is working on providing additional supports for 6-12 grade students. Currently there is an online intervention program called Exact Path that builds an individualized plan to support reading based on MAP scores.

Question 15 - What is a "School Improvement Designation"?

The Alaska Department of Education is required to provide an Index Score for every school in the state. These Index Scores are determined every year. The Index Score ranges from 0 to 100, with 100 being the highest score. If the index score of a school falls below the lowest 5% threshold on the index scale, then the school is designated as a Comprehensive Support & Interventions (CSI). If a specific subgroup in a school has an index score below the lowest 5% threshold, then the school is designated as an Additional Targeted Support & Interventions (ATSI) school. Examples of subgroups are: ethnicities, economically disadvantaged, English learners, students with disabilities, etc.

Question 16 - What data determines a school index score?

There are several indicators used to determine the index score and each indicator is worth a weighted portion of the 100 points possible. These indicators include:

- 25% of points - Reading and math proficiency on the AK STAR assessment
- 40% of points - Reading and math growth on the AK STAR assessment
- 2.5% of points - Percentage of 3rd grade students proficient in English Language Arts on the AK STAR assessment
- 2.5% of points - Percentage of English language learners that met or exceed growth target on the ACCESS for ELL assessment
- 7.5% of points - 4 year Graduation Rate
- 2.5% of points - 5 year Graduation Rate
- 10% of points - Chronic absenteeism (percentage of students that miss more than 18 days in a year)

To get information about the Index Score of your school to go: <https://education.alaska.gov/compass/>

Question 17 - Is it possible to have a Reading Specialist this year or in the future?

It has been very difficult to recruit a teacher with a reading specialist endorsement. Additionally, the district's funding compared to costs has left the district with less money to fund such positions.

Question 18 - Where does the funding for the Bristol Bay Regional Career & Technical Education program come from?

BBEDC contributes a significant amount of money to the program each year. BBNC has provided significant support in funding and to seek funding to support programs. BBF has also jointly applied for competitive grants to support the program. Zach Stenson, BBRCTE Director and the staff seek out various competitive grants each year. LPSD, DCSD, SWRSD, and BBBSD also provide financial and in-kind support for the program.

Question 19 - It is difficult for many families to meet the qualifications for the migrant program. Can those requirements change?

The regulations for the Migrant Program are determined at the Federal level. Please contact the legislators that represent Alaska in the US Congress to express your concern.

Question 20 - There are courses that are being taught online by teachers and/or have long-term substitutes in the classes. When will permanent teachers be in our schools to teach our kids?

As of the date on this document (February 17, 2025), nine additional teachers are in various schools around the district providing in-person instruction.

Question 21 - How will we know if our reading curriculum is working for our students?

The district has created a District Reading Intervention Plan to be implemented in our K-5 classrooms that includes regular checks on student progress. Instruction and supports are adjusted based on those periodic checks. Then the growth levels and proficiency levels are compared from the beginning of the year and to the end of the year. School and district teams are consistently reviewing data and revising instructional plans to meet the needs of students.

Comments are on the next page....

Comment 1- Very happy that the district has a Yup'ik Studies Coordinator. Language is one of the protective factors for children. Ensuring that children are learning their native language is important and will be helpful for children.

Comment 2 – The weeklong dance course that was led by Aaron and Margie Frost was really incredible and the students were very excited to show what they learned.

Comment 3 – To be successful in our teaching, remember the foundations of our culture and where we came from. Our work is a gift and we should use it with respect.

Comment 4 - Encouraged that the district held a meeting in the community. I would encourage the district to go to the communities and get input more often from parents and community members.

How do you provide feedback...

There are a number of opportunities for parents to provide comments or ask questions including but not limited to the following:

- Public comment section of SWRSD School Board meetings
- Public comment section at local CSC meetings
- Complete questionnaire's or feedback forms
- Participate in the Parent Advisory Committee
- Contact your local principal
- Provide comment by email at feedback@swrsd.org

You can access educational program resources at www.swrsd.org under the Parent Information tab.