

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION



BOARD OF EDUCATION

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DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

BUSINESS OFFICE

Budget updates and work continues out ALIO upgrade.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Boarding Home program and NCLB compliance work continues.

SPECIAL EDUCATION & PARENTS AS TEACHERS

Assessing program and insuring our documentation is accurate.

INSTRUCTION

Work progresses on several topics: materials, testing and student records.

MAINTENANCE DEPT.

Summer projects wrap up and work enters final stage at New Stuyahok

TECHNOLOGY

The high school I-I program is up and running and preparations for this year's upgrades are underway.



school is in full swing and our focus is on collaboration and student achievement...

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Jack Foster, Superintendent



Aleknagik teacher, Luann Bates, works with Aleknagik primary students.

School Starts

The 2008-2009 school year started on August 20, 2008. All of our sites are having a great start. We are starting on time and all of the teachers are present. We have projected 641 students enrolled during this count period and we are within ten of that count at the present time.

The new, official, twenty-day student count period this year is from September 29, 2008 to October 24, 2008.

Our funding comes from the number of enrolled students during this twenty-day count period.

AASB Quality Schools: Community Engagement Education Program

Susan Gaffney is the new community engagement education program coordinator for Southwest. Her team will be working with our four schools sometime in October.



New Manokotak staff member, Lida Storch, works with elementary students.

Great Collaboration Meetings are in Progress Across the District!

Our focus for the 2008-2009 school year will be on collaboration, formative assessment and progress monitoring. We started collaboration meetings the very first day of school with site administrators. We have established a time each week to hold our collaborative leadership team meetings with site administrators to discuss formative assessment and progress monitoring.

Collaborative leadership team meetings at the district office are happening on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays the leadership team meeting includes the principals and lead teachers of our smaller K-8 sites and on Thursdays, the principals of our larger K-12 sites. The meetings with the principals and lead teach-



Morning Collaborative Leadership Team meeting with principals via distance delivery.

ers are being held by distance delivery and have been very successful to date.

These collaborative leadership team meetings start at 8:00 and ending at 8:20 unless it is agreed by the group to extend the period of time on a certain day. While it is important to meet to enhance communication, we are attempting to do it in a way that least impacts the daily routines of the sites.

The level of teamwork being displayed this fall among our Southwest Region Schools staff is helping to ensure that each child is getting the best education possible.

Collaboration meetings are also being held at sites to allow staff to spend focused time on issues surrounding assessment, student achievement and progress monitoring.

The meetings being held both at sites and with our leadership team are an integral part of our district improvement plan, which you will find in your packet.

Site Reports to the Board

This year as part of our ongoing efforts to improve communication, principals will be making reports to the board on a monthly basis. Each site will be submitting a written report highlighting activities at the site, and each month three sites will make an oral presentation to the board via distance delivery. The schedule for these reports is as follows:

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER
TOG,KNW,KMO	KGK, WKK, CLP	KEK, TWA, TOG
NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
KNW, KMO	KGK, WKK, CLP	KEK, TWA, TOG
FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
KNW, KMO	KGK, WKK, CLP	KEK, TWA, TOG
MAY		
KNW, KMO, KGK		

New School in New Stuyahok

We are very pleased with the progress of the new school. It was just a little over year ago that we broke ground for the new school.



Ground-breaking a year ago...

Rick is very pleased with Unit Construction Company on the progress they have made. We have several of the community members that have been working on the project since it started.



The new school a week ago...

We also have new teachers housing being built at the same time and this will be done in October.



New teacher housing is nearly complete as well...

Site Visits: Great Start!

I have been very impressed with what I am seeing in the classrooms so early in the year.



New staff member, Terry Rolfsema, industrial arts teacher in New Stuyahok with students in the old New Stuyahok school shop.

The schools are clean and each one of the classrooms is organized into an educational setting that each teacher wants in their individual classroom. It is wonderful to see happy students with smiles on their faces and teachers that are enjoying working with the students.



Manokotak aide, Grace Gamechuck, working with students this fall.

I am starting my fourth year visiting each of the sites and each of the classrooms. This is by far the best start we have had in recent years.



BUSINESS OFFICE

Lee Ann Andrew, Director of Administrative Services

Budget

Due to rising energy costs, staff turnover, approaches to accounting, increased staff expenses, decreasing enrollment and revenues our budget this year is going to be very tight. The budget built last spring requires the use of the remainder of the unreserved fund balance.

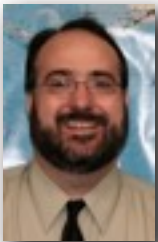
While we are still working on exact amounts for items like electricity, fuel and other annual costs we are sure that salaries are covered. Given the increases in expenses and decreases in revenue a revised budget needs to be discussed and approved.

Financial Software

Our ALIO project is moving forward with October 1 being the goal for starting the accounts payable part of the program.

Safety Meetings

We will be enforcing monthly safety meetings and semi annual inspections this year in hopes of getting the \$15,000 possible savings off our insurance because of the Loss Control Program we are participating in.



CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

David Piazza, Director of Instructional Programs

Curriculum (Deb Endicott)

During the first month, we've been filling-in-the-blanks for teachers. Creating orders for the books, workbooks or teacher resources they need. Not all sites adopted the Open Court Program when SWRSD brought in new curriculum. We continue to fill in the gaps for teachers or classrooms just coming onboard. We need to supply the classroom with Open Court and/or Saxon Math student textbooks, workbooks and teacher resource materials.

A site visit to Twin Hills focusing on classroom management and teaching strategies/ techniques took place.

The Alaskan Humanities Forum in Juneau introduced a new resource for the Alaskan His-

tory Course. This is an Alaskan Standard Based Curriculum web based semester course that was made possible through a grant from the US Department of Education.

PowerPoint presentations to go along with the Open Court Reading DVD Teacher Resource Library have been created to assist teachers and instructional aides with skills using the program. The future goal is to put this on on-line using the District's content management system, "Moodle," where teachers and aids can access the training as needed.

Textbook Inventory is an ongoing process. We are establishing a database on what textbooks teachers are using at the sites. Being able to track quantities at each site will help us in

re-ordering cost. Instead of ordering new textbooks every year we should be able to move from one site to another based on the current student counts. As we are going through this process, we are updating, changing the current courses descriptions being taught and documenting the curriculum being used. The publisher for our new Middle School/High School Language Arts resources held a webinar on using the program that was attended by ALL Sites. We also initiated an on-line teacher resource for the Reader' Journey program users.

We continue to help principals, teachers and aides when they contact us with questions. Our goal is to turn their question into answers that day as much as possible.

The State EED: Curriculum Department is currently looking at additional ways to support teaching to the Standards and GLE's. They are focusing on 6th Grade Math.

Science is the next curriculum area for the district to review. Science teachers have been contacted and we will begin the process soon to determine the curricular strengths and weakness in our current K-12 program.

Counseling/Assessments (Steve Ito)

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Training has been scheduled for September 29th. Armed services personnel are coming from Anchorage to train K-12 Counselors on test administration. The New Alaska Career Information System (AKCIS) application has been completed for the school year. Alternate Assessment training for district mentors happening the end of September. High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) exams to K-12 sites. Fall retakes happening October 14-16. Kindergarten Developmental Profile (Brigance) being completed. Data Interaction for Student Interaction (DIASA) program up and running. Principals seem to be gleaning valuable information from it.

Student Records/PowerSchool Support (Nate Preston)

The student enrollment changes seem to be slowing down as we get past the first few weeks of school. The class lists are being cleaned up to allow the correct record keeping for attendance. Most of the middle school and high school teachers have started to use the web-based gradebook that is built into this new version of PowerSchool. This should allow better monitoring of student grades throughout the term and decrease the data entry time at the end of the quarter.

The 20-day count period for Foundation Formula computation has been set for September 29th to October 24th.

Data transfers of student information has been completed for the AIMSweb Benchmark Assessments taking place the week of September 15t-19, 2008.



New Stuyahok high school math teacher, Liz Teixeira, with her students.

eRate

Since the last board meeting we have not received any further communication with the Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) team. Our last indication was that this review process would conclude in early September. However, it is normal for our application to not be approved until well after the start of the school year. We have received our approval as last as December in the past.



Teacher, Rhona Shavings, with Manokotak 'Nunaniq' students.

Media Center (Shannon Clouse)

Shannon has been busy filling and sending teacher requests for curriculum materials out to their individual sites. Teachers have been requesting materials such as books, DVD's, and VHS movies to help supplement what they are teaching in the classroom. The cataloging of new materials that support our curriculum into the Media Center continues as well. Since additional shelves were built in the Media Center the Media Center needs a lot of organizing to make it a manageable space.

Battle of the Books have been sent out to sites that indicated that they would be participating in the program last spring, the sites that are

new to the program and still waiting for their books to get to them. Seven out of eight of the sites participating in Battle of the Books this year: seven teams at the 3/4 grade level, seven at the 5/6 grade level, six at the 7/8 grade level and two teams at the High School level.

Sites are getting ready to have either their second or third Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) motivational activity. Togiak School has had their third activity in which they were read a book by an adult and then decorated their classroom door according to the books theme.

The first edition of the SWRS News will be published at the end of September.

HIGHLIGHT: EKWOK

AFTERSCHOOL ACTIVITIES & CLUBS BEGIN

Students who have all their work done for the week and have exhibited good citizenship, Friday afternoons are eligible to participate in clubs. The students have the options of joining the Craft, Camera, Apple or Physical Activities Clubs.





FEDERAL & STATE PROGRAMS

Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director

State Programs

Currently there are 13 boarding home students within the district. It is likely that there will be a few more boarding home students within the district as soon as all of the applications are received. There are boarding home families in each of our villages that have high schools.

The district improvement plan was submitted to EED for review, revisions are anticipated when feedback is provided by the state. The school improvement process for schools at level 2 or higher of school improvement is in the initial stages of planning. There is an audio conference for district personnel and principals regarding the school improvement process on September 15th.

NCLB/Title Allocations

The NCLB narratives and budget are being reviewed and revised based upon the checklist that was received by EED. The recruiting of mi-

grant education students is in full swing. There are five recruiters that have the task of finding qualifying students. The parent notifications that are required by NCLB are were determined and mailed to parents the week of September 15th.

Assessment

The first benchmark assessment using AIMSweb will occur during the week of September 15th. This fall benchmark is one of three benchmarks that will occur during the year (winter and spring) in order to identify students "at-risk" for academic achievement. Principals at each site will discuss the results with their staff during the weekly collaboration meeting to determine appropriate instructional strategies to assist those students reach the academic goals set forth. District office personnel will work closely with the principals and staff to facilitate the process. District office personnel created and sent all the necessary assessment materials to each site.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Lee Webster, Director of Special Education

Special Education Numbers

We have established in the last few weeks that the number of students requiring special education services in SWRSD is 97. This represents 15% of the total school population. This is statistically high since typical identification of disabilities runs between 10-12% of the general

population. Our Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, School Psychologists and the Special Education teachers will be closely monitoring eligibility criteria to assure that we are identifying students who genuinely have disabilities that require Special Education services in order to make progress in their

educational program. The Aimsweb testing will be very useful in helping classroom teachers identify instructional strategies to help students before they are referred for Special Education.

Traveling Staff

We have been working on setting a workroom in the district office convenient for our traveling staff. They had never had a room to complete their site reports and it was already been a great benefit. We are housing all the assessment and evaluation resources we have available to them in this workroom.

Site Visits

I have had the opportunity to visit New Stuyahok, Koliganek, and Aleknagik in the last few weeks. It is always very helpful to be on site to see how students' services are being implemented. I have been impressed with the extent of the efforts being made at the schools for some of our most disabled students. What an awesome challenge it is to provide the most basic of therapies to these students. This will be an area to which I will devote dedicated time.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Nate Preston, Student Support/Activities Specialist

Activities Budget

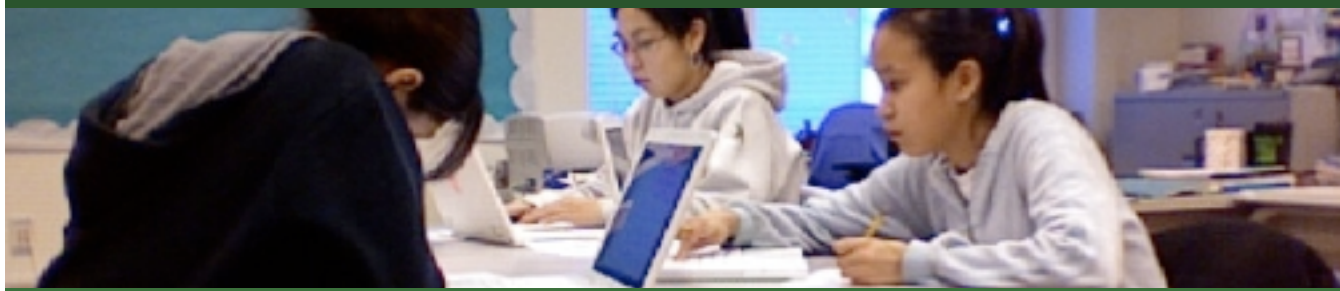
Principals and coaches met on September 4th and developed an activities schedule for the year. The District tournament for volleyball according to the rotation will be in Manokotak and the District 1A tournament for basketball will be held in New Stuyahok. Basketball will be the first tournament in the new school's gym. Togiak has the option to attending the 1A tournament if they wish being the only 2A school in the district. They automatically are the Districts 2A boys and girls champion. If Togiak attends the Districts 1A tournament provisions will be made to determine the 1A champion for regions. Last year SWRS District activities travel budget was \$87,570.12. The \$87,570 includes a \$20,000 transfer from the school board second semester and hold over from the year before. This year, we currently have an district-wide activities travel budget of \$55,000. The costs for travel to Region tournaments, Battle of the Books fees and Spelling Bee State tournament and fees have been calculated. Yet to be determined are costs of different

tournament dues and how many people will earn trips to State tournaments. Trips to State tournaments typically cost around \$1,000 per person. Further more there has been some discussion about the SWRS covering NYO and Band/Music. Before this year JOM moneys paid for NYO, but those funds are no longer available. It remains to be determined if SWRS will be able to cover this loss of funds.

Below is a table on the cost for flights for regions and the current known district costs. An updated budget needs to be created.

Activity	Projected Cost of Event	Budget Remaining
Starting Budget	—————>	\$55000
Cross-Country	\$5,450	\$49550
Volleyball	\$10,600	\$38950
Wrestling	\$9,000	\$29950
Basketball 1A	\$11,580	\$18370
Basketball 2A	\$15,340	\$3030
Battle of the Books & Spelling Bee	\$3,500*	-\$470
Native Youth Olympics	?	-\$3970

** includes State competition and fees*



EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Steve Noonkesser, Technology Coordinator

Video-conferencing

Site Administrators and district office personnel are now using our new video-conferencing system weekly to hold collaboration meetings. The new system is helping to further enhance communications between sites and district office. The system now includes desktop video capability as well, using Marratech software.

Assessment

Technology staff have been involved with preparations for AIMSWeb and ACFA assessments that are taking place this month across the district. Publishing activities and insuring staff have access to student achievement data has been a major project.

Web Site Improvements

The Administrative Handbook is now complete and online. This new electronic resource will allow site administrators to have instant access to all of the forms, regulations

and policies that the district uses on a regular basis. We believe this new tool will help ease some of the workload on our administrators.



New Stuyahok Visit

Technology staff visited the new school building site in New Stuyahok to see the progress on wiring and the technology systems in the building. All appears to be progressing well and we are excited about bringing the new school online. During this next month we will begin preparing computers and network equipment for installation at the site in December.

SWRS T4 Project

Schools have held parent nights and the laptops are out in student hands. Site server and laptop upgrades are planned between now and Christmas. Our Technology Specialist, Les Parks, is working on a new series of hard drive images for the planned upgrades to laptops.



DISTRICT NEWS

Remember to check your email for a note from Shannon, our Media Specialist, asking for submissions to SWRS NEWS, and read about our students' accomplishments, activities & catch the latest from our schools!



FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE

Rick Dallmann, Maintenance Director

NEW STUYAHOK UPDATE



New teacher housing is nearly complete!

PROJECTS ARE NEARING COMPLETION!

The new school is progressing on schedule. The permanent power is hooked up and electricians

are starting to energize the building. Systems are being put on-line and tested. The boiler system is on-line and functioning. Tile work is finished in the corridors, locker rooms and bathrooms. Sheet-rock hanging is completed and painters are moving into the gym and shop areas. Site grading and light pole installation are being done. The school furniture order has been placed and we are working on delivery logistics. The library book order has been placed. Shop equipment is being received. Technology items are being received. The new teacher housing is still on schedule and we expect to be completed by Nov. 1st.

Manokotak

The four new teacher housing units are occupied! There are a few outside items to finish before winter.

Togiak

The old school Demolition/Re-mediation project is nearing completion. We have been excavating contaminated soils and weatherizing the remaining buildings in preparation for the transfer of property and buildings to the City of Togiak.



Cabinets are going into the new school in New Stuyahok.

All Sites

The State of Alaska received our grant applications September 2 2008

For the Koliganek School Replacement and the HVAC heating projects at Aleknagik, Clarks Point and Ekwok. It will be mid November before we know the results and where we place on the lists.

Grants

We are still waiting for results on the teacher housing grants applied for:

8 units at Manokotak

4 units at Togiak

We are doing preliminary work on the new teacher housing grants for Ekwok and Koliganek

3-4 units at Ekwok

5-6 units at Koliganek



Aleknagik School

Jeff Ambrosier, Lead Teacher

Off to Great Start!

School is flying by so far this year. Currently we have 36 students at Aleknagik. There are 10 students out for cross country. Mrs. Burke is working them hard and they are having fun getting ready for their upcoming meet..

In the classrooms...

In the classrooms, Mrs. Bates (k-2) is specifically working on two reading strands where a student identifies Literary Elements and devices as well as Restating and Summarizing. This is ac-



complished using a storyboard, where each grade level adds a more complicated piece to the overall collage of pictures and words. Mr. Ambrosier's math class created posters to cover the math strand of Mathematical operations. They used a mnemonic device to cover the order of operations. Mrs. Simms (reading) is specifically working towards Forming a General Understanding. They take turns reading aloud and then answering some questions as a group and some individually.

Outdoor Activities...

The students, teachers, and a couple of parents participated in a Friday afternoon berry picking activity. I can't be certain how many berries made it home but by the color of everyone's faces there must have been a lot of berries picked.



William 'Sonny' Nelson School

Stan Dancer, Lead Teacher



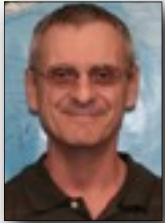
Back to School

Our Back-to-School Potluck on August 27th, was a huge success, with over sixty people in attendance. We honored our students and staff for their dedication and the hard work they did last year. We also let the audience know of our expectations for the upcoming year. The people could then visit with the teachers in their classrooms.

Student Activities & Clubs

Students picked berries last week, made a dye from the berries and painted a picture with it. Elementary Tutoring is going well, as is Learning Upgrade. These two programs continue to supplement the curriculum quite well.

Many thanks to the parents of our students who ensure the children are well rested, and get to school on time, and ready to learn.



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

Herman Gerving, Principal



Laptop information parent meeting



Students busy studying? :-)

Off and Moving...

School is rapidly moving along. We have reached the Mid-term of the first quarter and everything appears to be moving along smoothly. The staff is working very hard on giving the students direct instruction to the standards. We are preparing students with the information necessary for success on the tests next April.

New Teacher Housing

Manokotak is really happy to see the new housing completed. The addition of these apartments makes teachers in Manokotak more comfortable.

Athletics

Athletics have started, Volleyball and Wrestling will start soon. With the gym being open in the evening the school is very busy from morning to late evening.

Computers & Open House

Manokotak students have received their computers, and our staff has had an open house; so the students and staff and parents are busy getting to know each other.



Students that showed excellent growth on their standards-based assessments!



‘Chief’ Ivan Blunka School

Gene V. Anderson, Principal

A Positive Start

The Chief Ivan Blunka School school year began with some very positive things happening. We have initiated new programs and continued with existing programs to help our students improve their scores on the Standard Based Assessment tests. The students are working diligently to improve their education and gain more knowledge toward that end.

Cross Country Meet

We held a cross country meet here on Friday, September 5 with Koliganek and Togiak participating as well.

They all ran the infamous “gully” course and had a great time.

Staff Collaboration

We continue to hold three collaboration meetings per week, elementary, high school and all staff, to find better ways to help our students become successful members of society.

Student Council

Student council elections were held last week and we now have a functioning student council that will help us in our educational efforts.



Togiak School

H. David Wick, Principal

Hitting Our Stride...

Togiak School has been in operation for three weeks now, servicing students. It has been very busy so far getting everything up and running smoothly. I am pleased to report that the school has already hit its stride and we are off to a great start. The school held its annual Back to School Night last Thursday evening and treated 120 parents, students and staff to an evening of Yup'ik dancing, desserts, and parent teacher conferences. AYP was discussed with the parents and teachers handed out the SBA results from last Springs testing. Tenth grader, Evon Franklin was given public recognition for having

made the most improvement on his SBA test scores from Spring of 2007 to Spring of 2008.





Curriculum Mapping & Other Activities

The K-12 staff is continuing work on Curriculum Mapping activities with the Curriculum Mapping Cadre instructing new staff on mapping strategies. The school is also receiving training and instruction for the Renaissance Math programs we purchased with school improvement money last spring. The Togiak Alternative Program (TAP) is running smoothly and currently has an enrollment of 16 students, eight of which had previously been drop out students. The Responsible Thinking Process first semester class starts September 18th and to date 17 certified teachers district wide have signed up for the three credit course. I anticipate a great school year for Togiak School. Thanks for your continuing support for the educational programs that are benefiting all our students.



Twin Hills School

Rod Lindberg, Lead Teacher

Twin Hills is off to a good start. It took us a bit to get the students leveled properly but we now feel that our classes are set up to give each student the best chance for success. We've been collaborating with staff to determine what areas need to be targeted for improved performance. We are also collaborating with the other small sites to share ideas and different ways to teach to the GLEs. We will be administering the Aimsweb benchmark tests to further tweak the areas that need work. We have been working on Open Court, Saxon Math, Geography, Science and PE. Studies about other countries began with Canada and now we're moving onto Mexico. The older students are making paper mache globes with the continents and major oceans labeled. The atmosphere in all the classrooms is excellent. The younger kids are enthusiastic and really like being in school. We are also excited to be starting the Alaska Learning Lab program. Rod will be training in Anchorage for this after

school enrichment. Our parents seem to be very enthused. Deb Endicott paid us a visit to help us with both Open Court and Saxon curriculum and she was a valuable resource and we all benefited from her overnight stay at Twin Hills.

The staff is working well together and we are looking forward to a great 2008-2009 school year. Below are two first graders using their bodies to produce the letter "L" for our "Alpha-Bodies Project."





Koliganek School

Joel Lovesee, Principal

We started our year off with an open house to welcome back all of the students and to introduce our new faculty to the community. At the open house we explained our goals for the school year. We are striving for: an environment that will assist students in being more respectful toward adults and each other; teachers will be more unified for equal and fair discipline and procedures; and a school that will do everything in its power to see that all of its students graduate high school. To be successful in these endeavors the faculty has been having collaborative meetings every Wednesday where we align our curriculum to the GLE's and monitor the progress of our students.



We ended our second week with a full curricular integrated field trip for the entire high school. Students studied salmon spawning beds from four different locations up the Nushagak River. They will use this data throughout the semester in their ichthyology and algebra class. They will also use their observations and experiences for different computations in their language arts classes.



Cross country is also off to a great start with both our high school boys and girls teams each bringing home a 1st place at the New Stuyahok meet. It looks to be a very successful year for athletics, unfortunately we will not be having high school girls volleyball due to the low number of enrolled high school girls.



The first month of school has been very positive and successful and we look forward to what the rest of the year has in store.



Clarks Point School

Doug Bushey, Principal

On Monday evening August 18th, the school hosted an open house/potluck in order for the community members to meet the new principal and teacher. Approximately 30 plus people showed up to enjoy a great potluck dinner.

During the first two weeks of school the students have been given assessments in reading, writing, and math in order to become familiar with each students base line. The students have created goals along with their parents for the school year. On September 11 & 12 all students had parent/teacher conferences to assist with the creation of these educational goals.

On September 2nd the school principal met with the CSC Board for the first meeting of the school year. During this meeting the CSC Board

voted in support of sending all students and four staff members to the AFN Conference in October.

Student Council did research for their student store. This research consisted of gathering data from community members concerning items they would most likely purchase. From this survey the Student Council was able to decide the items needed for the Span Alaska order.

We have implemented a "literacy acceleration" program. This consists of a 45-minute block before school and after school. All students are invited to attend one or both blocks. We believe that this program will increase student achievement.



Fall is here and school is in full swing: looking south from Manokotak.