



REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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a new year begins, one full of promise...

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE Jack Foster, Superintendent



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

BUSINESS OFFICE

Focus on ARRA funds and new procedures for payroll.

INSTRUCTION

Fall inservice activities went well and we are looking ahead to projects and curriculum work.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Sorting through ARRA requirements and getting Migrant Education and Boarding Home programs rolling for the year.

SPECIAL EDUCATION & PARENTS AS TEACHERS

A focus on training for staff and procedures for the new year.

TECHNOLOGY

Planning for a roll out of laptops for in-school use for middle school students in our smaller sites and on numerous ongoing projects.

MAINTENANCE

Inspections and Housing work.

Fall Inservice

This year's fall staff inservice was one of the best staff development opportunities that I have experienced in my education career of twenty-four years. Please take a look at our inservice brochure with all of the presentations that were available for staff to participate in. Staff received training on a wide range of topics.

Inservice began with a Leadership In-service from August 5th to the 7th, New Teacher In-service was held from August 7th through the 8th and All Staff attended staff development activities from August 10th until the 12th. A Special Education Classified Aide workshop was held on the 13th. It was a full two weeks of training, full of great activities.



Manokotak Assistant Principal, Dana Bartman and students make a presentation to staff on the role of student involvement and student government.



Meet our new staff (from left to right):

Audra Finkenbinder (KEK), Robin Jones (TOG), Evelyn Kleinke (TOG), Lindsey Cassidy (TOG), Sandra Macklin (KGK), Jeff Goodrich (TOG), Carol Thompson (KNW), Jeremy Millard (TOG), Vicky Hamm (KGK), Andrew Smith (TOG), Lori Spalsbury (KNW), Jeannie Schiaffo (WKK), Ben Griese (KNW), Jennifer Gilbertson (KMO), Kathy Parsons (KMO), Nick Gilbertson (KMO), Ryan Christner (WKK)

2009-2010 AYP

Three of our schools made AYP. Manokotak, Ekwok and Clark's Point have been removed from the list of schools needing improvement. Note: It may only take one or two students not making adequate progress to keep a school from making AYP and several of our schools were extremely close to making it. We had a lot of sick students during the test period. We are looking forward to good gains again this year.

2008-2009 AYP PRELIMINARY DATA FOR SOUTHWEST REGION SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	PARTICIPATION	LANGUAGE ARTS	MATHEMATICS	OTHER INDICATOR
ALEKNAGIK SCHOOL	Yes	No - 30%	No - 22%	Yes
"CHIEF" IVAN BLUNKA SCHOOL	Yes	No - 27%	No - 27%	Yes
CLARKS POINT SCHOOL	Yes	Yes - 57%	Yes - 43%	Yes
KOLIGANEK SCHOOL	Yes	No - 48%	Yes - 48%	Yes
MANOKOTAK 'NUNANIQ' SCHOOL	Yes	Yes - 44% (SH)	Yes - 48% (SH)	Yes
TOGIAK SCHOOL	Yes	No - 38%	No - 37%	Yes
TWIN HILLS	Yes	No - 14%	Yes - 43%	Yes
WILLIAM "SONNY" NELSON SCHOOL	Yes	Yes - 50%	Yes - 42%	Yes





BUSINESS OFFICE

Lee Ann Andrew, Director of Administrative Services

Staffing

I am proud to announce the business office is fully staffed this year with the same staff since January.

ALIO

We are also 100% on the new software program, however are still working out bugs in the payroll portion of it. By the end of August's payroll we will have most of those worked out.

ARRA Funds

We will still be watching what we spend and have to realize that the stimulus money is only temporary. If last year was any indication on tightening our belts, I am totally confident the staff can do what ever it takes.

Changes in Procedure

In your packet, you will find the memo that was sent out that explains the changes to how the classified staff will get paid. We will also be requiring time sheets for everyone which will be an adjustment. With the different calendars and the new software system this will be the best way to insure we are paying people correctly.

Audit

Our FY09 audit will take place September 14th to the 18th. I wanted to make sure I would be able to get the reports they need so I gave myself as much time as possible.

Fuel Purchase

We were able to work out the pricing for the fuel with Crowley. The cost was from \$2.8099 to 2.9126. We have not received Twin Hills or Aleknagik yet and the price is based on the Platts index on the day they loaded their barge. We will still have about 83,000 gallons of fuel through out the district at the \$5.361 price so our savings will

not be totally realized this year. We are required to expense the fuel using it in the order we receive it.

Togiak School Grant

The Togiak school grant is getting closer to being closed. The art committee selected Havens Studio to do a mural this summer and a contractor that built customized display cases. As soon as the art money is finalized we can close that grant and request the money we have spent but have had to wait until the grant closes for reimbursement.



New staff orientation activity on a beautiful sunny evening at Aleknagik.



CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

David Piazza, Director of Instructional Programs

Curriculum (Deb Endicott)

The Seattle Summer Institute 2009 hosted by SRA (Open Court Reading) was a huge success. Our new Elementary teachers and Elementary SPED teachers all met in Seattle and attended two days of instruction on how to use the reading program. Other sessions that were attend included Direct Instruction, Response to Intervention (RTI), and Leadership that covered in-depth information for successful implementation and planning for professional development.

The Southwest Region School's 2009 Fall Staff Inservice started right away with the Leadership team meeting at the District Office August 5th and 6th. Along with the District office personnel we heard from John Sedor, SWRS Legal Counsel about the Basic of Documentation. Dr. Gary Whiteley, Director of Alaska Administrator Coaching Project, returned again this year to assist the Leadership team with implementation of collaborative meetings. He also covered a session about using data to direct the instruction. Both sessions were very powerful. On the last day of the Leadership in-service, George Venetis provided additional training for school administrators using the Responsible Thinking Process (RTP) process in their schools. A BBQ was a great way to build a team effort

The New Staff in-service began on August 7th. We have 17 new teachers this year. The District Office personnel provided explanations and training to new staff members with one of the favorites being the Survive and Thrive in Rural Alaska session. George Venetis provided the initial training for the Responsible Thinking Process again this year. For the third year in a row, we had excellent weather for

the boat trip to Aleknagik. It's no small feat to organize the boats, drivers, food, life jackets and people. Having sunshine sure makes it easier.

On August 10th, the entire staff came into Dillingham and we kicked off the year with our all staff training. Dillingham School let us utilize their elementary school facilities. We had to juggle around the construction crew and their work. With a few room changes due to the roof construction noise, and an alternate exit route, we were good to go. Patty Luckhurst provided the excellent meals for all of our staff. We had three days packed full of training. The Special Education teachers had in-depth training held in the District Office Board Room while other staff attended a variety of break-out sessions. Most of the pull-out sessions were taught by our own staff on topics requested by other staff members. A big BBQ hosted by the leadership team one night was a hit and it was reported that Jack was very thankful that the dunk tank was filled with WARM water this year.

K-8 school teachers were able to receive a whole day of training on using the Reading Renaissance - Accelerated Reading (AR) program at each site. As we develop our Response to Intervention strategies, AR can be utilized as an integral part of our reading program. Along with Open Court, Reader's Journey and Edge our reading/language arts program is very strong. Technology in the classroom continued with additional One to One training for the High school staff. Teachers received training on programs available to them and how to integrate technology into the curriculum and into their classrooms. Two Apple trainers returned to our in-service to provide the training.

Our in-service concluded with the "voice of the students." Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School Assistant Principal, Dana Bartman and three students came and talked about the importance of student voice through active participation in their own learning. Each student shared about their personal goals and about one teacher who made a difference with them. Teachers Kirk Kofford, Brian Tesch and a former teacher were named by these students as teachers who have made significant changes in their lives. It was a very moving experience for all of us.

On Thursday, Special Education Para-professional from all sites came into the district office for specialized training by Lee Webster. Lee and two other service providers gave demonstrations and training on the different responsibilities of the SPED para-professionals. This is a new format for SWRSD and it was a great success. It was attended by 14 para-professionals. One of the biggest challenges when we host all staff in-service is housing here in Dillingham. Having the Aides come in utilizing the back-haul from taking teachers out to the sites proved worthwhile.

Electronic surveys will be going out to the staff for their input. Results will be studied by the Leadership Team so that we continue to provide the necessary support, training and services to all of the staff.

Counseling/State-wide Assessments (Steve Ito)

During the Principals/Lead Teachers inservice we reviewed the school year 2009-10 statewide EED assessment calendar, protocols and Associate Test Coordinator responsibilities. During the New Hire inservice we reviewed the school year 2009 -10 statewide EED assessment calendar and protocols and presented 'Survive and Thrive' component composed of tips and experienced based hints for success in rural Alaska. During the All staff inservice we provided two breakout sessions involving the State of Alaska Department of Children's Services, presented by Esther Floresta and Deb Hallmark including pertinent services provided by OCS.

Student Records/PowerSchool Support (Nate Preston)

Over the summer, a new PowerSchool server was installed and the system was updated to the latest version of PowerSchool Premier. Student schedules have been entered and we are continuing to enroll new students as that information becomes available.

The Department of Education has also provided a second server that will be part of their pilot UNITY project. This Zone Integration Server utilizes the School Interoperability Framework (SIF) to collect student demographic information and link it directly to the state's main database. In theory, this should make the district's Fall and Summer OASIS reporting automatic.

We are preparing for the student count period (Foundation Count/Fall OASIS) that runs from September 28 to October 23rd this year.

eRate

The District received the Funding Commitment Decision Letter for the majority of services in late July. This is the earliest that this has been received in the past 12 years of E-Rate funding. Typically we are still waiting for our application to be reviewed at this time of year. So at this point we know that our Internet, Distance Delivery bandwidth, and Phone services have been approved. We are still waiting to see if the Distance Delivery equipment will be partially funded this year. As you recall, we were unsuccessful at our attempts to appeal the decision that denied funding for the equipment last year and we paid those charges in full.

*Discussion of Response to Intervention (RTI) led by
New Stuyahok Principal, Bob Thompson.*





FEDERAL & STATE PROGRAMS

Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director

Title I-A, Regular vs. Title I-A, ARRA

The school year is back in full swing, which includes a new year of No Child Left Behind funding and regulations. The No Child Left Behind application was received by the state in early June, 2009 which includes the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA a.k.a stimulus) application. The ARRA Title I-A grant requires assurances to be signed before that funding source is released and records must be kept separate of the Title I-A Regular grant. The allocations for the No Child Left Behind grants have not been released as of yet.

Migrant Education

Four migrant education recruiters have been hired in order to gather accurate numbers of migrant students across the district. The migrant education recruiters and coordinator are attending migrant education training in Anchorage occurring from August 16th through August 18th. Migrant education recruiting will occur during the



Teachers Max Sanchez and Melissa Smith follow along during a session.

Manokotak Principal, Herman Gerving discussing data with Audra Finkenbinder, Lead Teacher at Ekwook.



months of August through October in order for the results to be submitted to the state by November 15th.

Boarding Home

There have been several applications for students within Southwest Region School District to take advantage of the state boarding home program. As a reminder, students attending K-8 schools are eligible to attend one of the district's K-12 schools as a boarding student, providing that the parents of the student secure a boarding home for the student. The boarding home parents receive financial assistance to help with the costs associated with housing a boarding student.

Other

Other items that the district will be working on the district improvement plan, the district report card, highly qualified status of certified and classified staff, sending out various parent notifications regarding No Child Left Behind, and working with Koliganek, New Stuyahok, Togiak, and Twin Hills on improvement plans and supplemental education services programs.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

Lee Webster, Director of Special Education

New Year Begins

In my second year as director of Special Education at Southwest, the emphasis will be on training both certified and classified special education instructional assistants. The hope is that we can generate long-term specialists, such as for speech and language, among the classified staff so that we better focus our training efforts. The certified staff will continue to receive relevant training in special education procedures and practices.

All special education staff are required to receive 6-hours of training in related special education procedures and practices every year. At the all-district in-service this week I worked with all the special education staff, and 14 of our special education instructional aides who received all-day training at the district office. We discussed some of the most critical parts of working with special education students. The importance of confidentiality was discussed at length. In ad-

dition, they were introduced and trained in using "Language for Learning", an expressive language program. The hope is that some of the aides will use the program not only to help our identified language impaired students, but be able to use the program with our youngest students identified as LEP (limited English proficient).

As of today, we are serving seventy-eight students identified with disabilities. This continues to match the 12% proportion of national population of identified students. In addition, we have several students who we are carefully monitoring to determine if they are disabled or several delayed. Last year we evaluated eight pre-schoolers. Only one student tested with severe signs of disability. The others had minor developmental delays that did not require special services. We expect these numbers will increase slightly as we develop more comprehensive child find procedures.



Michelle Stromer-Schneider, special education teacher at Togiak, shared her experiences with progress monitoring during the district inservice. Michelle has seen how valuable monitoring students' response to the instruction is to her. She's found that they really look forward to seeing their graphs that show how far they've progressed.

Mark Snell, special education teacher at Togiak, shared his experience developing transition plans for his high school students. Mark will be helping other teachers in the district create effective career portfolio for students that will help them have smooth transitions after high school.



EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Steve Noonkesser, Technology Coordinator

Fall Inservice

This fall's inservice was a productive one. We were able to have visitors from the Apple Professional Staff Development team with us again this year. Robin Johnson, from Nome, and Sally Eberhart of Anchorage joined us to do presentations for staff on a variety of topics, including productivity software, classroom management in a 1-1 learning environment, and project-based learning.

Sessions were also led by our own staff. Sam Bourgeois, our teacher of the year, presented ideas for teaching in a laptop environment, Rick Rau presented ideas on project-based learning in a technology rich environment, Les Parks, Corey Evans, Shannon Clouse, and Steve Noonkesser also presented on a range of topics.

We are excited about the possibilities a new year brings and are looking forward to helping staff move ahead farther toward technology integration across the curriculum.

Planning for a New Year

As we look ahead to the new year, we are working on a number of large projects, laptops for our junior high students at our smaller sites, piloting a new email system for middle and high school students, work on a new policy proposal

for cell phone use, and a number of curriculum related projects.

AIMS Web and Data Access

Corey is preparing for this year's first round of AIMS Web and ACFA testing.

Southwest Region Schools,
Teacher of the Year: Sam Bourgeois





Facilities & Maintenance

Rick Dallmann, Maintenance Director

Inspections

Fire alarms, sprinkler systems, kitchen hood systems and extinguisher inspections have been completed at all sites.

Water system inspections have been completed at Togiak. Manokotak, Aleknagik and Ekwok water systems have been chlorinated, all compliance sampling has also been completed.

Housing

The Togiak and Manokotak projects are progressing ahead of schedule at this time. All the plumbing and electrical rough ins are completed.

Sheet-rock and painting is started. We may finish ahead of schedule and could have the new units available sometime in October.

Fuel Delivery

Fuel has been delivered to all sites except for Aleknagik and it is scheduled for sometime in September

New Manokotak teacher housing nears completion.



Lighting Upgrades

We have been working with the Alaska Building Science Network on retrofitting lighting upgrades at Ekwok (replaced old gym lighting) we are currently working with them to do upgrades to Twin Hills and Clarks Point.

Grants Applications

- **Ekwok Bulk Fuel Facility**
(Alaska Energy Authority)
- **Twin Hills Bulk Fuel Facility**
(Alaska Energy Authority)
- **Koliganek Bulk Fuel Facility**
(Alaska Energy Authority)
- **Koliganek Replacement School**
(State of Alaska)



Togiak school murals are finished and are beautiful!



Aleknagik School

Jeff Ambrosier, Lead Teacher

Test Week Success

August means blueberries, silvers, moose, and the start of another school year. New to Aleknagik are two teachers. Jeannie Schiaffo is from Idaho and will be teaching special education as well as some general ed. Ryan Christner is from Oregon and will be teaching the K-2 class. Feel free to stop in and introduce yourselves to the new teachers and their families.

This year we will be focusing on improving math scores as well as working on getting more parents involved in the school. For math we will be incorporating study island which is a website that a student can work on math and reading and is grade specific. Students can do lessons as well as

play reading and math games. Progress is monitored so you can keep track of GLE's and standards that are covered. We are continuing to use ACFA (Alaska Computerized Formative Assessment) to evaluate student progress in math and reading as well as AIMSweb. AIMSweb is a progress monitoring test that is given 3 times a year to monitor the progress that each student makes in reading and math. Students who score low can be given interventions and strategies in small groups to increase achievement.

We currently have several activities planned with some of the community members involving berry picking, blackfish traps, smelting, and building sleds. If you have a talent that you would like to share please stop by and talk to us at the school.



William 'Sonny' Nelson School

Audra Finkenbinder, Lead Teacher

It is going to be a great year!

It is with great pleasure that I am able to report that William "Sonny" Nelson School made AYP for the second year in a row! A huge "CONGRATULATIONS" goes out to the students and teachers for their hard work, dedication and success.

Melissa and I have just wrapped up inservice and will be preparing our classrooms for the start of the school year. The first day of school is August 17, 2009 and we are looking forward to a fun and exciting year!

I am new to the District this year and am elated to be here. Everyone has been so kind and helpful; I feel at home and am looking forward to a wonderful year!



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School

Herman Gerving, Principal

Thoughts as a new year begins...

Manokotak Nunaniq School is celebrating our success in making Adequate Yearly Progress for the second consecutive year! The positive results of our extensive collective efforts are incredibly gratifying.

We welcome three new staff members and are excited to incorporate their expertise and enthusiasm into our team.

Many of our staff were active over the summer months in our efforts to continue our trend of improvement. Herman Gerving represented Manokotak Nunaniq School and SWRSD at the Summer Leadership Academy in Anchorage, while Dana Bartman participated in the Rural Alaska Principal Preparation Academy. Kirk Kofford and Dana Bartman worked with over thirty students during the summer programs at Manokotak and Igushik, exploring science and reinforcing reading skills. Whitney Christianson attended the Summer Arts Institute in Juneau.

Lida Storch presented a sectional at the SWRSD District-wide Inservice with Nancy

Sharp's assistance, encouraging other teachers to utilize Yup'ik Math in their classrooms.

High school students Theron Paul, Tiarna Bartman-Fischler, and Nellie Alakayak did an astounding job of representing our student body by facilitating a presentation at the district-wide inservice in Dillingham on August 12. Never done before, the goal was to include student voices and perspectives amidst the intensive preparation for the upcoming school year.

Theron, Tiarna, and Nellie described teachers that were meaningful to them, explained why they were excited about the upcoming year, and shared their ambition. They helped lead the staff through two activities designed to inspire, encourage, and motivate.

We are incredibly grateful and proud of their participation and performance and should their experience indicate what we have to look forward to, then we're certain to have yet another great year! The sky is the limit and we continue to aim high!



Manokotak 'Nunaniq' School makes AYP for the second year in a row!



Togiak School

David Morris, Principal



We are looking forward to an awesome school year in Togiak! We have a great group of new teachers joining us this year and we are all very excited to have the voices of our young people filling the halls.

Two incredible murals have been completed in the school this summer. One is of our mascot bursting through the gym wall which leaves no doubt that it is "The Home of the Huskies". In addition, there is a spectacular 35 ft mural in the hall leading to our gymnasium, which honors local traditions and elders.

The mural features traditional fishing, and elders Annie Blue and Evon Togiak. The artists, James and Andi Havens, did a wonderful job. On behalf of our entire school community we would like to thank the art committee for their efforts in making these fine additions to our school a reality.





'Chief' Ivan Blunka School

Bob Thompson, Principal

At the time of writing this report Chief Ivan Blunka School is bustling with activity just a few days before school starts. Classrooms are beginning to look like classrooms with desks and chairs in ordered rows, and the excitement is building with kids in the community as a new school year begins.

Greenhouse Grant

We are especially pleased and congratulate staff members Minty Ruthford and Kyle Casper upon being awarded two grants for a major project to build a solar greenhouse at our school. Hidden Valley Ranch donated \$15,000 to the project and the Rasmussen Foundation contributed an additional \$22,500 for the purchase, installation, and operation of a solar greenhouse large enough to produce vegetables and small fruits for the village. The staff and students at Chief Ivan Blunka School are anticipating this to be an integral part of our school program for years to come.

*Minty Ruthford, kindergarten teacher,
recipient of \$37,500
for a solar greenhouse.*



Community Activities

Several special activities are happening in New Stuyahok as we near the start of moose season. The blueberries have been superb and most residents are reporting gallons of berries picked. A fundraiser for Search and Rescue was a success with a band from Bethel coming to town to provide the entertainment. ASSIST training, sponsored by the tribal association, was provided to nearly 30 community members this month as well.

New Playgrounds

A lot of work was done on the school over the summer to complete work on the new building. Everything is up and running and the excitement about the new building is pushing momentum towards a very good school year. Two new playgrounds and an outdoor basketball court were added this summer, and students have already been busy trying out all the new equipment.

*Carissa Hodson, 4th grade teacher,
getting help setting up her classroom
by Rebecca Hodson, 7th grade.*





Clarks Point School

Doug Bushey, Principal

A new year and a focus on technology integration to meet our goals...

The school year began with our Secretary Betty Gardiner attending training in Anchorage with Walter to assist with the school lunch program and record keeping. Mr. and Mrs. Bushey attended the Leadership and Teacher Inservice activities last week. Curtis Abalama assisted the Maintenance Department by delivery items to New Stuyahok and bringing items back to Clarks Point from the old school. A big thanks to Curtis for his willingness to help out with his skiff.

The school is focusing on integrating technology into the curriculum. Each student has been assigned a computer in order to facilitate this goal. The staff is in the process of building computer workstations for students. The staff and faculty are looking forward to a new school year and helping with student success.



New Stuyahok Principal, Bob Thompson and Twin Hills Principal/Teacher, Esther Ilutsik participate in leadership activities.