

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** NWABSD Board of Education Members                      **DATE:** August, 28, 2026  
**NUMBER:** Worksession #  
**FR:** Office of the Superintendent                      **SUBJECT:** Curriculum & Instruction

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Aeriale N. Johnson, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, reports on the following:

### **Assessment**

Tracy Bell has returned to the C&I Department as the Data and Assessment Specialist. She is serving as the District Testing Coordinator and helping sites build sustainable Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) released the Alaska System of Academic Readiness (AK STAR) and Alaska Science Assessment results from the 2025-2026 school year to the district on July 29. AK STAR is administered to students in grades 3–9 for ELA and mathematics, while the Alaska Science Assessment is administered in grades 5, 8, and 10. The scores will be publicly released on the DEED Assessment Results webpage on September 3. The district has until October 2 to disseminate student results to families. A report will be presented during the September Board meeting after the results are publicly released.

Last spring's NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) growth and achievement and mCLASS Early Literacy results are the supporting documents.

### **Curriculum**

The C&I Department was recently able to use grant funding to make two purchases that will support student growth and achievement. The selections were made after careful review of student data and site requests.

Licenses for DreamBox Math, a blended learning program that is aligned with Alaska State Standards, were purchased to provide students in grades K-5 with individualized, targeted support in math skills. Regular use of the program is positively correlated with significant student achievement gains. DreamBox meets federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence standards.

Each site's Follett library software license has been renewed and new scanners have been purchased. This will enable sites to get their libraries up and running again so that students have access to high quality texts and accurate library usage data can be maintained. An extra duty contract is being issued at each site to facilitate library set-up. Over half a century of research indicates that students with access to well-maintained and up-to-date libraries consistently perform better academically, including scoring higher on standardized assessments. This library refresh is a tremendous opportunity for our students.

## **Instruction**

The C&I Department is committed to maintaining high expectations of instructional staff and empowering them to meet them. In a recent survey, teachers overwhelmingly expressed a desire for support in strengthening their instructional practices. A summary of survey results is included in the supporting documents. Investing in educators' (certified and classified) instructional expertise as culturally sustaining and responsive practitioners is the top priority of the C&I Department this school year. This will include supporting principals' growth as instructional leaders, teachers' capacity to implement adopted curriculum and make instructional decisions, and instructional paraprofessionals' ability to provide support to small groups and individual students. Through sustained, practical support, the C&I Department will work alongside instructional staff to empower them to meet high expectations for teaching and learning.

C&I is thrilled to welcome a new homeschool teacher, Marisol Valdes, to the department. She will be providing instruction and support to homeschool students and their families.

## **Professional Development**

Professional development is the engine that drives teacher excellence and student achievement. The C&I Department is committed to building sustainable systems of professional development to include districtwide inservices, districtwide and site-based professional learning communities, and classroom-embedded support.

In July and early August, the C&I Department facilitated inservices for site administrators, new hires, and all staff.

Principals and assistant principals participated in sessions with each director, Melissa Linton from the Danielson Group (teacher evaluation), and Susan Isaacs from Safe and Civil Schools (schoolwide behavior support and classroom management).

New hires learned from Susan Isaacs, Superintendent Walker, Assistant Superintendent Alexander, and Directors from the HR, Administrative Services, and C&I Departments.

At all-hire inservice, teachers received an inspirational welcome from Superintendent Walker and an introduction to the 2026–2027 Curriculum Guide, completed mandatory training, and participated in sessions focused on Creative Curriculum (Pre-K), culturally responsive read-alouds (elementary), and Courseware (secondary).

The C&I Department has published two guides to support educators, the *2026-2027 NWABSD MTSS Guide* and the *2026-2027 NWABSD Curriculum Guide*. The former has been presented to administrators for feedback and will be released to all staff at September inservice. The latter was presented to staff at beginning-of-the-year inservice. The department is now developing a multigrade teaching guide to provide practical instructional support for elementary and secondary educators teaching multiple grade levels or courses.