



LPSD SHINING STARS, MAY, 2026



NAME	LOCATION	REASON	NOMINATOR, POSITION
Stephanie Barthelman	Newhalen	My children have both been so fortunate to have Ms. Barthelman as their kindergarten teacher. I am not quite sure how she does it, but she is able to get a group of squirrely five and six year olds to pay attention long enough to teach them the skills to read. Just recently I was reading to Ryan, and he automatically recognized a number of words, and could sound out many others. It is truly magic to watch the light go on in his mind (Ila was the same), and know the hours of excellent teaching it took to get a them there. Thank you, Stephanie! We have been so fortunate to have you in our children's' lives.	Bill Cornell, Parent
Sara Erickson	Chignik Lagoon	I am honored to nominate Sara, for her unwavering dedication and exceptional commitment. Over the past couple of years, she has remained a constant source of strength and positivity, even as challenges have tested our team in countless ways. Teaching in remote Alaska brings unique obstacles, yet Sara meets each one with resilience, grace, and a genuine smile. She consistently goes above and beyond for her students, ensuring they feel supported, valued, and inspired every single day. Her calm and steady presence creates a sense of stability that benefits both colleagues and students alike. No matter the circumstances, Sara approaches her work with professionalism, compassion, and determination. She is the kind of educator who not only meets expectations but quietly exceeds them in meaningful and lasting ways. Her willingness to step in, help others, and adapt to ever-changing conditions sets her apart. Sara's positivity is contagious, lifting the spirits of those around her even during the most demanding times. She truly embodies what it means to serve with heart, consistency, and excellence.	Julie Boggan, Teacher
Dennis, Alison, and Landon Fowler	Port Alsworth	Without being asked, the Fowler family worked together to assemble all the new pre-school furniture last fall. What a surprise and blessing that that all got done! In addition, Dennis and Alison have worked through several mysterious power outages this year since they work for Tanalian Electric Corporation as mechanic/engineer and office manager, respectively. Their tireless (okay, they got tired!) extra hours troubleshooting, fixing, testing, and communicating with families, businesses, and the school are very much appreciated! The last outage took the better part of 5 days to restore, and these two were relentless in their pursuit of restoration and great communication throughout the ordeal! The Fowler Family deserves Shining Stars for the commitment to service and excellence!	Nate Davis, Principal
Darcy Lorentzen	Port Alsworth	Darcy Lorentzen deserves a great shout-out for her nine (9) years of service on the PTA LSAC! During those nine years, she was a reliable and wise LSAC participant and eager servant to support students and teachers and staff at Tanalian School. In addition, she often surprises staff or students with delicious cinnamon rolls, scones, or other baked goods. She continues to help with shopping and menus for our PTA Lunch Bank and supports our Student Government and Booster Club. She helps in so many ways that we can't even count. Darcy Lorentzen is much appreciated and is a Shining Star for Tanalian School and the Lake & Pen School District.	Nate Davis, Principal
Leyla Alsworth	Port Alsworth	Leyla plays such an important part of our school program for being a chief supporter and go-to-gal of the Tanalian Booster Club. She manages almost all of our Booster Club meal fundraisers, linking arms and kitchens with our wonderful other volunteer chefs and servers from our Tanalian constituency. Amazing Leyla leads these amazing people to provide several meals-for-sale at school events. These fine folks buy all the materials and do all the cooking and serving, and then buy their own meals- all to support our Tanalian students. Leyla Alsworth is a Shining Star for the Tanalian Lynx and LPSD!	Nate Davis, Principal



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Ed Lester	Newhalen	Ed Lester works tirelessly to coordinate and plan events that bring our entire school district together. He brings a strong, positive presence to every interaction and consistently makes an effort to build meaningful connections with students. Each year, when we are being hosted at Newhalen, Ed arrives in the morning to prepare breakfast, and stays until the very end of the night. He motivates and challenges students to put in their best effort into anything they are doing. His dedication is evident in the long hours he puts in, while always maintaining a positive attitude. I nominate Ed Lester for the Shining Star award, because he is a role model whose committed to bring out the best in our communities.	Finn Hill, Student
Nathan McArthur	Palmer	Nate McArthur is a wizard when it comes to developing homeschool programs for students and their parents. He is efficient, intuitive, compassionate, encouraging, honest, motivating, and pleasant through every request, reset, repair, or requisition. A huge shining star to the guy that makes it happen outside brick and mortar and inside hearts and minds! Thanks for all your hard work, Nate. You are greatly appreciated!	Paulene Manning, Special Education Services Support
Kylie Rychnovsky	Newhalen	Kylie is one of the kindest and most thoughtful students I've had the pleasure of teaching. She is genuinely compassionate and cares deeply about her peers and teachers. In the classroom, she works very hard and consistently looks for ways to challenge herself and go beyond expectations. She chooses to stay after school for tutoring every day because she truly wants to push herself and grow. Kylie is not only an outstanding student, but also a great role model for other students in our school!	Sydney Boone Robertaccio, Teacher
Edwin Peterson	Levelock	Edwin has stepped in after the closing of Levelock and taken the primary teaching support position for the students who are homeschooling. He has been there for the past three years as an aide to me and his work with the students was invaluable. He has great care and rapport for all the students there.	Kathy Touring, Teacher
Edwin Peterson	Levelock	Edwin did a great job of providing a space for the students of Levelock to gather and learn. He was consistently available by phone and email to provide context and information on the students' progress. He was eligible to help finish the end-of-level exams for the distance courses. He was great to work with this year, and I wanted to publicly recognize his efforts. Thanks for all you did for the kids this year!	Nathan McArthur, Ed Tech/Homeschool
Tim McDermott	King Salmon	Thanks for always being the guy who saves the day and for sticking with LPSD and helping us survive the storms. I really appreciate your unique perspective and self-determination. Thanks for being you.	Nathan McArthur, Ed Tech/Homeschool
Nate Davis	Port Alsworth	It was great working with Big Nate in my new role as Homeschool coordinator. It probably was and will be a bumpy ride, but that is education, and he just rolls with it. Easygoing, always with a good perspective and a forward-thinking attitude. I heard him say today something along the lines of, "Give me your best scenario, and I'll try to say yes." And that really encapsulated how he handles leadership. Thanks for a great year.	Nathan McArthur, Ed Tech/Homeschool
Marjorie Waggoner	Districtwide	Thanks for all the SPED help over the years, especially with homeschool, and the BIG transition to Embrace; you were always on top of it and made things run smoothly. Glad we got to work together so much this year.	Nathan McArthur, Ed Tech/Homeschool