

MEMORANDUM

TO: NWABSD Board of Education Members **DATE:** June 22nd and 23rd, 2026

FR: Office of the Superintendent **SUBJECT:** Student Services

Perrian Windhausen, Director of Student Services reports on the following:

Data and Assessment:

- Attendance Summary by Grade – End of Month
- Elementary scheduling training for secretaries.
- Process Registrations- remover users from PowerSchool
- Records requests processed
- Transfers, for end of the year, end of term, change PowerSchool permissions
- Secretary meeting – closeout, cumulative file process and store, transcripts
- APEX: Grades recorded in PowerSchool
- Teacher training with PowerSchool Gradebook issues
- PowerSchool Grade Audit – all stored grades, verification and accuracy of credits, GPAs, credit types
- Security permissions as needed for specific users.
- Working with sites on grade store, all blank grades in.
- Principals – working with to clean up grade entry on students
- Professional Development – PS Training for with specialist
- Assist sites with storing grades Progress Reports
- Website update – Student Enrollment Forms.
- Security Permissions for next year scheduling
- Monday Secretary meeting/training. – Gmail security from records requests, Monday attendance, transcripts, Elem. Scheduling and close out.
- reports
- Student records requests
- Civil rights data collection report
- Restraint and seclusion State reporting to DEED
- Summer OASIS reporting
- Data collection for financial audit
- Preparations for WIDA score distribution in the Fall
- Data Dashboard preparation for Fall
- Compliance with testing observations forms completed with Principals during principal's check-out.

Counselors:

Graduation Checks

Each school within the Northwest Arctic Borough School District has reported on the number of upcoming graduates for Spring Graduation. The estimated number of students expected to graduate is 94. Credit checks have been completed on each student to ensure that the correct number of credits has been obtained for their Spring 2026 Graduation. Specific assistance has been given to struggling students.

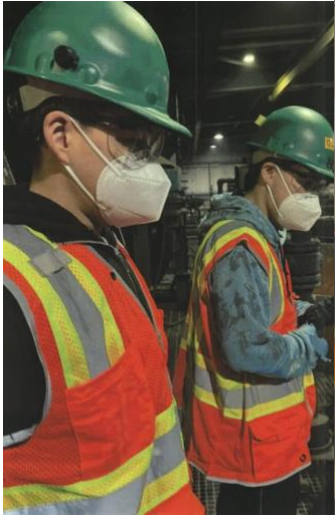
Red Dog Mine

Thirty-five high school students in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District were selected to attend Red Dog Mine during the months of February and March. During their 4 days at Red Dog Mine, they were involved in several activities including:

- A Presentation on “Preparing to be Successful & History of NANA,”
- Mine a Pie Experiments,
- The Mill Tour,
- A Fire Bay Tour,
- A Tour of the Warehouse,
- The Shop Tour,
- The Assay Lab Tour,
- Interviews & Mock Interviewing Skills,
- A Clinic Tour, and
- Job Shadowing Opportunities.









Counseling Presentations

Specific presentations are conducted with school counselors each month at various schools. Since August 2025 until the end of March 2026, our school counselors have conducted approximately 1,039 individual classroom presentations. Recent topics delivered at schools have included:

- Erin & Bree's Law
- Respecting Yourself
- FAFSA Applications
- Character Building
- Senior Scholarship Information
- Making Good Choices
- Healthy Eating
- Managing Stress
- Identifying Risky Situations

Counseling Presentations 2025-2026

	Total
Ambler	92
Buckland	97
Deering	41
Kiana	36
Kivalina	30
Kobuk	61
JNE	375
Kotzebue	51
Noatak	69
Noorvik	100
Selawik	159
Shungnak	56
	1,214

Counseling Sessions

Each day at schools, individual students seek out counseling supports from our School Counselors. Since the beginning of the school year, 1,717 students throughout the Northwest Arctic Borough School District have sought out individual assistance through one of our school counselors.

Counseling Sessions 2025 - 2026

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	total
	244	261	214	247	167	195	243	146	163	125	2005

UA Scholars

During the 2025-2026, the University of Alaska at Anchorage, provided scholarship awards to students in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District. A total of 18 students from our school district qualified for the \$15,000 scholarship award.

Alaska Performance Scholarships (APS)

Senior students with a GPA of 2.5 and above have been monitored through the 2025-2026 school to ensure their continued eligibility for the Alaska Performance Scholar. Students have been busy qualifying for Level 1 (\$28,000), Level 2 (\$21,000), and Level 3 (\$14,000) for the APS. Final information will be reported on Summer OASIS.

Scholarships

Students attending school in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District have received the following scholarship:

- Lion's Club of Kotzebue Scholarship
- Aqqaluk Trust Scholarship
- Kotzebue Electric Scholarship
- Nanook Pledge at UAF
- ANSEP University Success Scholarship
- SUNY – Stony Brook Scholarship
- UC – Riverside Scholarship
- UA Scholars Scholarship
- Alaska Performance Scholarship
- Selawik Administrative Scholarship
- June Nelson Memorial Scholarship
- Alaska Christian College Scholarship
- Maniilaq Scholarship
- Bethel University (B.U.) Scholarship

EmpowerU

Students have been busy this school year completing their daily lessons through their enrollment in our Empower U course. This course is an online program used to support student self-regulation and mental health well-being. Currently, we have had 356 students complete the Teacher-Led K-12 Tier 1 portion of this program. Approximately, 43 high school students have completed the High School Tier 2 level and obtained a ½ credit towards their graduation requirements for "Academic

Resiliency.” Then 22 educators within our Borough have completed the on-line “Educator Resiliency” course.

When surveying our students,

- 94% stated they would recommend the EmpowerU course to a friend,
- 88% found EmpowerU helpful for their own mental health well-being,
- 88% of students rated “instructor relationship” as important and
- 85 % of our students made progress towards their academic and behavioral goals during this current school year.

School Climate and Connectedness Surveys (SCCS) 2026

Students in Grades 3-12, staff members and families throughout the Northwest Arctic Borough School District actively participated in this year’s School Climate and Connectedness Surveys for the 2026 school year.

SCCS	2026 Family Responses	2026 Grade 3-5 Student Responses	2026 Grade 6-12 Student Responses	2026 Staff Responses
Ambler	8 / 22.2 %	13 / 92.8 %	23 / 88.5 %	11 / 100 %
Buckland	1 / 0.7 %	43 / 81.1 %	73 / 70 %	20 / 100 %
Deering	20 / 83.3 %	16 / 100 %	29 / 100 %	11 / 100 %
June Nelson	33 / 36.7 %	129 / 88.4 %	N/A	36 / 100 %
Kiana	17 / 70.8 %	20 / 100%	41 / 91.1%	16 / 100 %
Kivalina	42 / 100 %	19 / 95 %	53/ 57.6 %	14/ 100%
Kobuk	1 / 9.1 %	11 /100%	17 / 100 %	7/ 100 %
KMHS	13 / 17.6 %	N/A	195 / 80 %	27 / 87.1 %
Noatak	8 / 14 %	38 / 100 %	41 / 52.6 %	14 / 100 %
Noorvik	30 / 27.5 %	53 / 93 %	96 / 87.3 %	20 / 100 %
Selawik	7 / 8.0 %	48 / 85.7 %	87 / 67.4 %	28 / 100 %
Shungnak	7 / 25.9 %	15 / 75%	13 / 38.2%	6 / 85.7 %
Totals	187	378	695	210

03/16/2026 - 1,470 surveys completed

For our school district, we had:

- **26.2 % of our parent surveys completed**
- **91.1 % of our Student Surveys for Grades 3-5 completed,**
- **76.5 % of our Student Surveys for Grades 6-12 completed, and**
- **99.7 % of our Staff Members have completed a survey.**

Special Education

- Disproportionality Report completed with Sped team for DEED
- Data collection for summer OASIS continues
- All specialist signed on for Fy 27 (Speech Path, Interpreting services, Vision Specialist, School Psych's, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist, Physical therapist...)
- End of year compliance reporting with eight indicators including IEP compliance and credit audits and part C (0-3y.o.) to B (3-21 y.o). transitioning to school age services.
- DLM testing state audit processed
- Sped data collection for financial audit
- Continue to try to hire special ed teachers for several sites.

Early Learning and Family (ELF):

- Enrollment remains steady this past quarter with 25 families receiving services along with several referrals to be processed. We continue to work closely with providers at Maniilaq Health Center on the Well-Child and referral process and have our annual spring visit to grand rounds scheduled to connect with providers.
- Two of our Speech Pathologists continue to provide screenings, evaluation and speech therapy with enrolled families. SLP services are in person and virtually as well between quarterly on-site visits. Physical therapy has been traveling in the region with us as well.
- ELF is collaborating to develop more early childhood providers in the region by working closely with the Grow Our Own Program at ATC, Nikaitchuat and Maniilaq Workforce development. We are exploring ways to recruit, support, and encourage people interested in obtaining a degree in Early Childhood and emphasize all of the possible ways to use that degree in Kotzebue and the region.
- Working closely with Special education team to transition our ELF children into school based services.
- Nauyaq continues to be creative in serving families as they travel to or through Kotzebue for tournaments or medical travel.
- Nauyaq has also been trained in lactation support through the Kodiak Kindness Program.

State Narrative Information:

Our staffing at the ELF Offices has been solid and we continue to collaborate with each other regularly on referrals, transitions, evaluations, and home visits. We are fortunate to contract and overlap with the School District's Speech & Language Pathologists and

Physical Therapist. ELF maintains the database, processes TCM and eligibility documentation, expedites referrals, coordinates therapy visits, and collaborates with local agencies and to ensure families receive timely services and transitions. Tracey Schaeffer, has many roles as the ELF Co-Coordinator, supporting families as an OT, evaluations, facilitating transitions, and managing the Grant and the budgets and collaborating with physicians, school staff, and community. Not to mention all her activism for early childhood work in the region. Finally, we have Zoey Miner, a young mom and community member, who opens Saturday BabyGym. Our staff participated in the Regional Job Fair. We discussed EC careers with high school students and young adults.

Collaboration with Medical staff has improved. The Maniilaq Pediatric Case Manager recently started sharing appointment times with new/hovering referrals flying into Kotzebue. The outcome has allowed us to make face to face meetings, explain ELF services, complete evaluations and offer support. Importantly, we are able make personal connections, provide interdisciplinary evaluations as well as save our program travel dollars. Families are met in their natural environments at home, toddler time, baby gym, group home, schools and community events or even on the ice fishing. Infant headphones were distributed to parents during regional basketball tournaments and ASQ's were offered as part of our Child Find. Tracey traveled to Deering, Point Hope, Noorvik, Noatak, Selawik, Buckland, Kivalina, Kiana and Ambler. Nauyaq traveled to Kobuk, Selawik and Noorvik. Nauyuaq also traveled with MHC Social Medicine and offered Developmental Screenings and provided community game nights. She also co-facilitated a Indigenous Parenting class with Maniilaq and OCS. Parenting class is taught using the cultural values handed down from Elders.

Well child visits in the region are up 20% over last year already

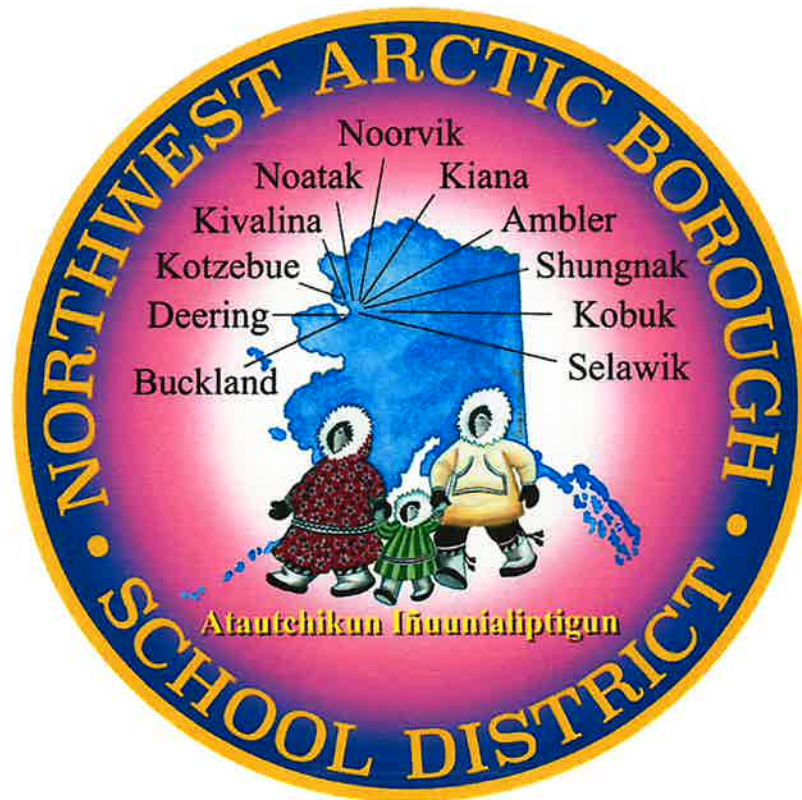
We provided early childhood training with Maniilaq Work Force Development and Public Health Nursing. (Topics included: Grow Our Own Teachers, typical child development, Playgroups, Infant Mental Health and Safety, along with self-care and educational opportunities in ILP, Childcare Centers, and In-Home Providers.

We experienced many challenges and delays revalidating our Medicaid Provider application for Targeted Case Management (TCM) but it finally is done. Thanks to all who helped resolve the issues with TCM.

Youth Leaders:

See attached below, End of Year Youth Leader report 2025-26

Youth Leaders



**Northwest Arctic Borough School District
End of Year Report
2025-2026**



**YOUTH LEADERS
AT
NWABSD
2025-2026**



Purpose

The purpose of Youth Leaders is to empower all students at all social and grade levels to lead the way in making healthy and safe choices to improve their lives and the lives of future generations.



The purpose of Youth Leaders is to empower all students at all social and grade levels to lead the way in making healthy and safe choices to improve their lives and the lives of future generations. Yet, over the course of the years the program has done so much more. It has created a gateway for the youngest leaders in the region to journey to a *qargi*, where they learn the universal lessons of leadership from a uniquely Inupiaq lens. It has become a teaching and learning space emphasizing leadership through community-directed and interpersonally approached perspectives that are grounded in the rich traditional knowledge of the Inupiaq people. Inupiaq knowledge and Inupiaq cultural spirits are intertwined phenomena, both of which are grounded in the Inupiaq values. The survival of these values is imperative to the survival of the knowledge and the cultural spirit. In accordance with the belief that every Inupiaq individual is responsible to all Inupiaq people for the survival of the Inupiaq values, all Youth Leaders have learned of and internalized these values as the core foundation of their leadership style: Knowledge of Language, Sharing, Respect for Others, Cooperation, Respect for Elders, Love for Children, Hard Work, Knowledge of Family Tree, Avoidance of Conflict, Respect for Nature, Spirituality, Humor, Family Roles, Hunter Success, Domestic Skills, Humility, Responsibility to Tribe.

The Northwest Arctic Borough Youth Leader Program has successfully undertaken to develop the region's next generation of leaders fully versed in the Inupiaq knowledge and ultimately committed to leading in view of the Inupiaq Values. This undertaking has been enabled and empowered through a grant by Tek.

Statewide Elders and Youth Conference and AFN

10/13/2025 to 10/18/2025, Dena'ina Center - Anchorage

The AFN Conference Theme was “Standing Strong, Standing United”; and the Statewide Elders and Youth Conference appropriately provided an opportunity for the NANA Youth to spend time with the NANA Elders. Both conferences are principal forums for the Alaska Native Communities, and they focus on strengthening the Alaska Native voices, in particular as it pertains to public policy and government.

2025 Statewide Elders & Youth Conference Hosted by the First Alaskans Institute – Northwest Region Schedule				
	Sunday, October 12	Monday, October 13	Tuesday, October 14	Wednesday, October 15
8:00am		Registration Opens - 1st Floor	Registration Opens	Registration Opens
9:30am - 12:00pm <i>Dena'ina Center Main Ballroom</i>		Conference Begins Opening Protocol FAI Welcome Conference Overview Elder or Youth Keynote Plenary Dialogue Special Guest Introductions Regional Councils - Tubaghtong 4, 7nd Floor (6) 1am Select 2025 Elder and Youth Representatives Aashiq to go over Representative responsibilities	Conference Begins Opening Protocol FAI Welcome Conference Overview Elder or Youth Keynote Plenary Dialogue Special Guest Introductions	Conference Begins Plenary Dialogue Plenary Presentation House Descriptions & Instructions Women's, Men's, LGBTQIA+ Houses
12:00pm - 1:00pm		Lunch Talks with Elders & Youth We will have box lunches in the same room as our regional caucus	Lunch & Learn @ Dena'ina ATI Hosting Language Learning Dialogue Box lunches provided as we talk about language learning	Plenary Reconnect Dance Group Closing Ceremonies
1:00pm	Registration Opens - 1st Floor	Plenary Session Kiana Opt-In Dancers @ 1pm	Plenary Session Dance Group	Lunch w/ NANA, Aqqahuk Trust/ Akama' Teck
1:10pm - 3:00pm	Warning of the Lands Go Pegala People	Workshop 1 (Aqqahuk Trust Beginner Inupiaq) Come learn Inupiaq with us! We will cover basics, and you will learn how to introduce yourself in Inupiaq as you practice with our Elders.	Workshop 3 (Aqqahuk Trust Intermediate Inupiaq) Come learn Inupiaq with us! We will cover how word parts come together, and play a matching game as you practice Inupiaq with our Elders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer Opportunities - Internships - Taco Bar - Ice Breakers - Scholarship Application Readiness - NANA History: Past to Present - Introducing NANA Works - Robert's Rule 101
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Elder & Aashiq on Stage to talk about theme @ 3pm Kiana Opt-In Dancers @ 4pm	Workshop 2 (Skin Sewing/NYO Hat Making) Come learn how to skin sew from our Elders by making your own leather NYO hat. Skin sewing is a vital skill to survival in the Arctic. Closing for the day	Workshop 4 (Donut Making with NANA) Learn how to make dough and donuts with us! Our communities gather around food, and this is one of our favorites. Closing for the day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing NANA Works - Robert's Rule 101 (We will start after the Conference is over, Location TBD)
5:00pm	Dinner - on your own	Dinner - on your own	Dinner - on your own	Dinner - on your own
7:00pm Optional		Natives Got Talent & Chis'ian Performances Dena'ina Center	Teen Dance @ 8:10pm Alaska Native Heritage Center	
As we get more details and updates, we will make updates to the schedule.				
There are many workshops going on Monday and Tuesday afternoon. The workshops highlighted are ones that are being lead by the Aqqahuk Trust and NANA. Please feel free to attend any workshop you choose. For NW Youth Leaders, make sure you are in your groups. Once we get the workshop descriptions, we will share the with you all.				

A total of 12 youth leaders, chaperoned by 5 Youth Leader advisors, represented their villages and towns situated in Northwest Arctic Borough, in Anchorage.



As they learned more about their Inupiat heritage and ways of life, they shared new experiences, strengthened friendships and kinship ties, and formed deep bonds with one another. Ariigaa!

From the dance floor to the Anchorage skyline, the Northwest Arctic Youth Leaders captured every moment and fully enjoyed their time in Anchorage.



The conference created a much-needed opportunity for NANA youth and elders to spend quality time together. Through these moments, Youth Leaders learned more about their heritage and the Inupiat values passed down by their elders, while recognizing their responsibility to protect these teachings and carry them forward to the next generation.



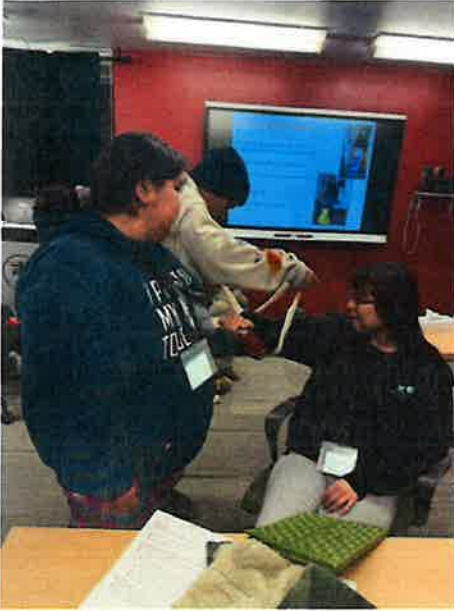
Wilderness First Aid Train

10/22/2025 to 10/24/2025, ATC - Kotzebue

This course was hosted by Wilderness Emergency Medical Education (WEME) based out of Palmer, Alaska. Accidents happen. People get hurt, sick, or lost. The temperature drops, the wind picks up, and it starts to rain or snow. Would you know what to do? The Youth Leaders do!

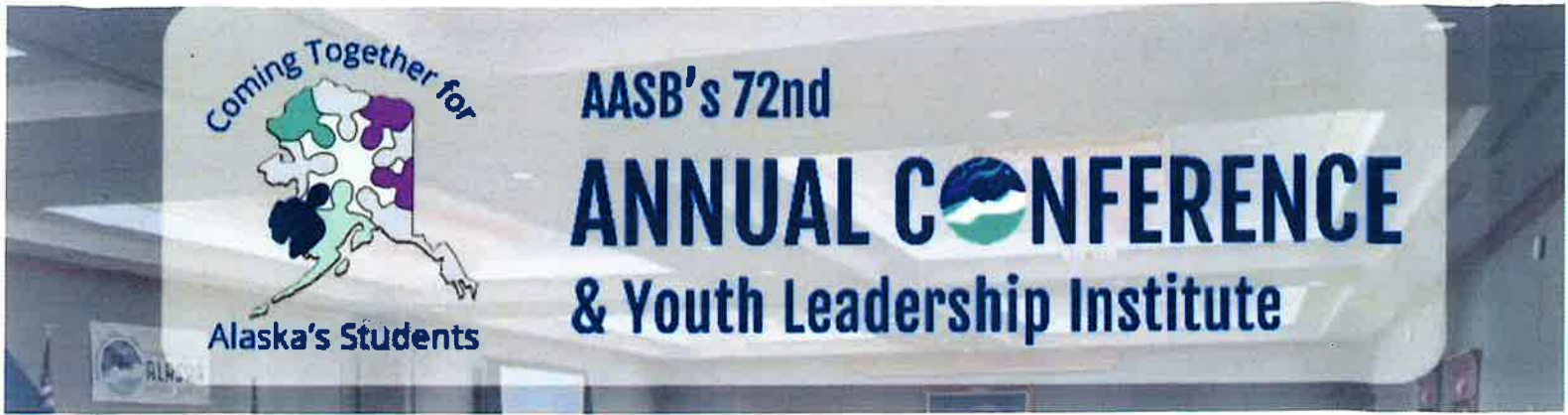
A total of 37 youth leaders represented their villages and towns of Ambler, Buckland, Noorvik, Selawik, Noatak, Kivalina, and Kotzebue, at ATC.

All Youth Leaders were especially excited and appreciative at the prospect of one day helping their community with this knowledge!





GET / HTTP/1.1
Host: 24.237.185.14:9100
User-Agent: curl/7.64.1
Accept: */*



Youth Leadership Institute

11/13/2025 to 11/16/2025, Dena'ina Center - Anchorage

The AASB Conference centered on the theme “*Coming Together for Alaska’s Students.*” As Alaska’s largest gathering of district-level education leaders and board members, AASB and its Youth Leadership Institute create an important platform for students to share their voices with the state’s educational decision-makers.



Coming Together for
Alaska's Students

AASB's 72nd

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

& Youth Leadership Institute

This November, we're excited to host our Annual Conference at a **new venue** — the Dena'ina Convention Center in Anchorage! As Alaska's largest gathering of school board members and district leaders, this event offers unparalleled opportunities to connect, learn, and lead.

This year's program includes expert keynote speakers, roundtables, 11-sized district forums, shared meals, and over 15 breakout sessions on timely education topics. Plus, the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) returns, bringing high school students together to build leadership skills and inspire change in their schools and communities.



**Friday
Keynote Speaker**

Jeff Utecht
Jeff Utecht Consulting

Jeff Utecht, global education leader and innovator, will explore the intersection of education and technology, highlighting Generational Leadership & Understanding. With experience supporting over 75,000 educators worldwide, he inspires schools to reimagine learning for the next generation.



**Saturday
Keynote Speaker**

Benjamin Mallott
**President, Alaska
Federation of Natives**

Ben Mallott serves as President of the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), a role he assumed in 2024 after serving as Vice President of External Affairs. He previously worked for U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski as a Legislative Assistant on issues impacting Alaska Natives and rural communities.

Breakfast starts at 7:00 am each day.

Thursday, November 13: Pre-Conference Sessions (8:30 am - 4:30 pm)

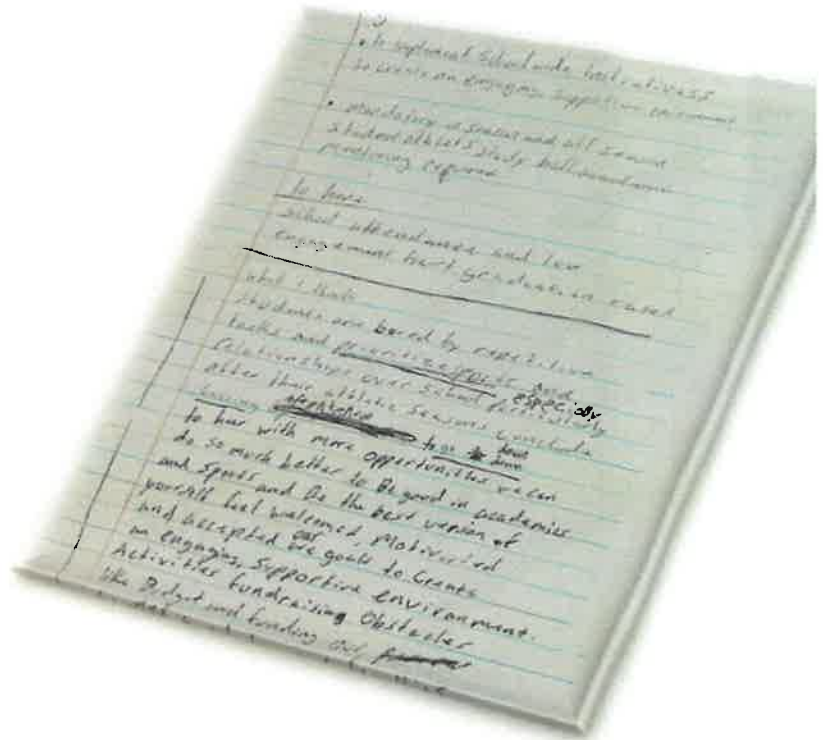
- **Ready, Set, Govern!** New School Board Member Training
- **Experienced Board Member Academy:** Finance Essentials for School Boards
- **Resolutions Committee Meeting:** Make sure your district has a voice to review and shape resolutions that will guide AASB's advocacy and priorities for the coming year.
- **Youth Leadership Institute:** Day 1 (goes through Sunday)

Lunch on your own: 12:00 - 1:30 pm

For more information, visit www.aasb.org

A total of 5 youth leaders, chaperoned by 4 Youth Leader advisors, represented various Northwest arctic villages and towns, in Anchorage.

Reflecting on her experience at the AASB Conference and Youth Leadership Institute, Youth Leader Sylvia Oviok put her thoughts into words and later shared them with her peers at YLI and during a Zoom meeting with Youth Leaders and advisors.



Youth Leaders showcased donated items from school districts across the state, which were auctioned to raise funds for the June Nelson Memorial Scholarship.



Dwight, Youth Leader from Deering, helping the NWABSD Board Members with their meal at lunch time!

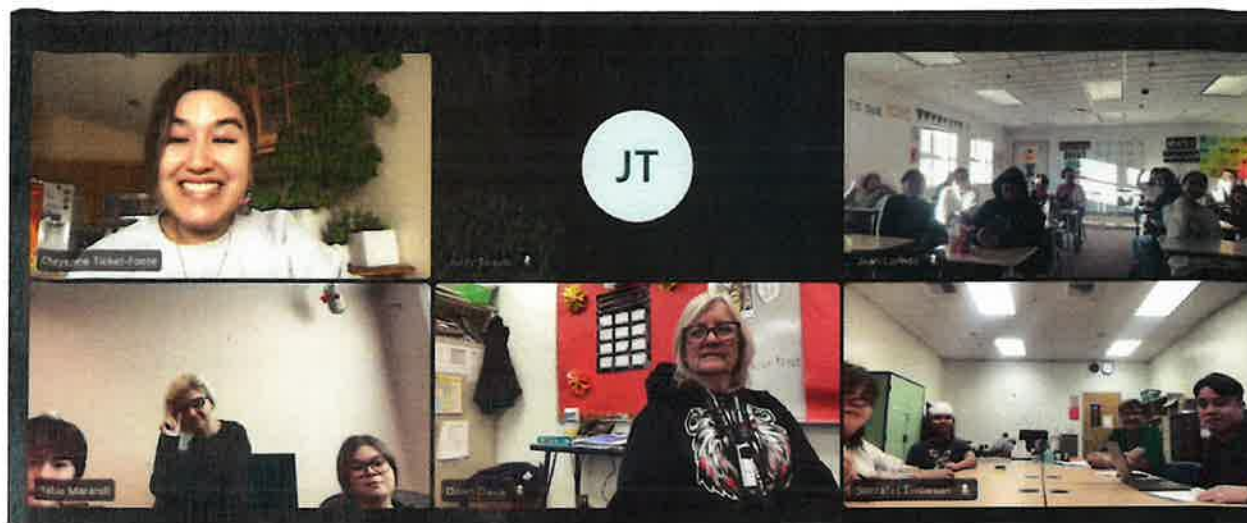


Youth Leaders in Action!

Our Youth Leaders just love to take care of their communities!



The Youth Leaders, their advisors, and Cheyenne, the Youth Leader Coordinator, meet via Teams each month!



Ongoing Youth Leader Engagement

Youth Leaders, their advisors, and **Cheyenne Ticket-Foote, Youth Leader Coordinator**, meet monthly via Teams to share updates, build skills, plan events, and stay connected across villages.

These consistent virtual meetings help maintain momentum, provide leadership development opportunities, and strengthen relationships across the district.

Youth Leaders Survey

This report summarizes the findings of a survey conducted with Youth Leaders about how they perceive and respond to bullying during the 2025–26 school year. The survey was designed to capture Youth Leaders' observations, actions, and support needs so that schools and community leaders can better support young people who intervene or are affected by bullying.

Youth Leaders in grades 7 through 12 across 11 villages were invited to participate, and responses were received from Youth Leaders representing seven villages. Data collection took place in April 2026 and was administered using a mix of online and paper questionnaires to make participation accessible. The survey contained 14 items, combining multiple-choice questions that measured frequency and types of observed behaviors with open-ended prompts that allowed respondents to describe specific experiences and suggest supports.

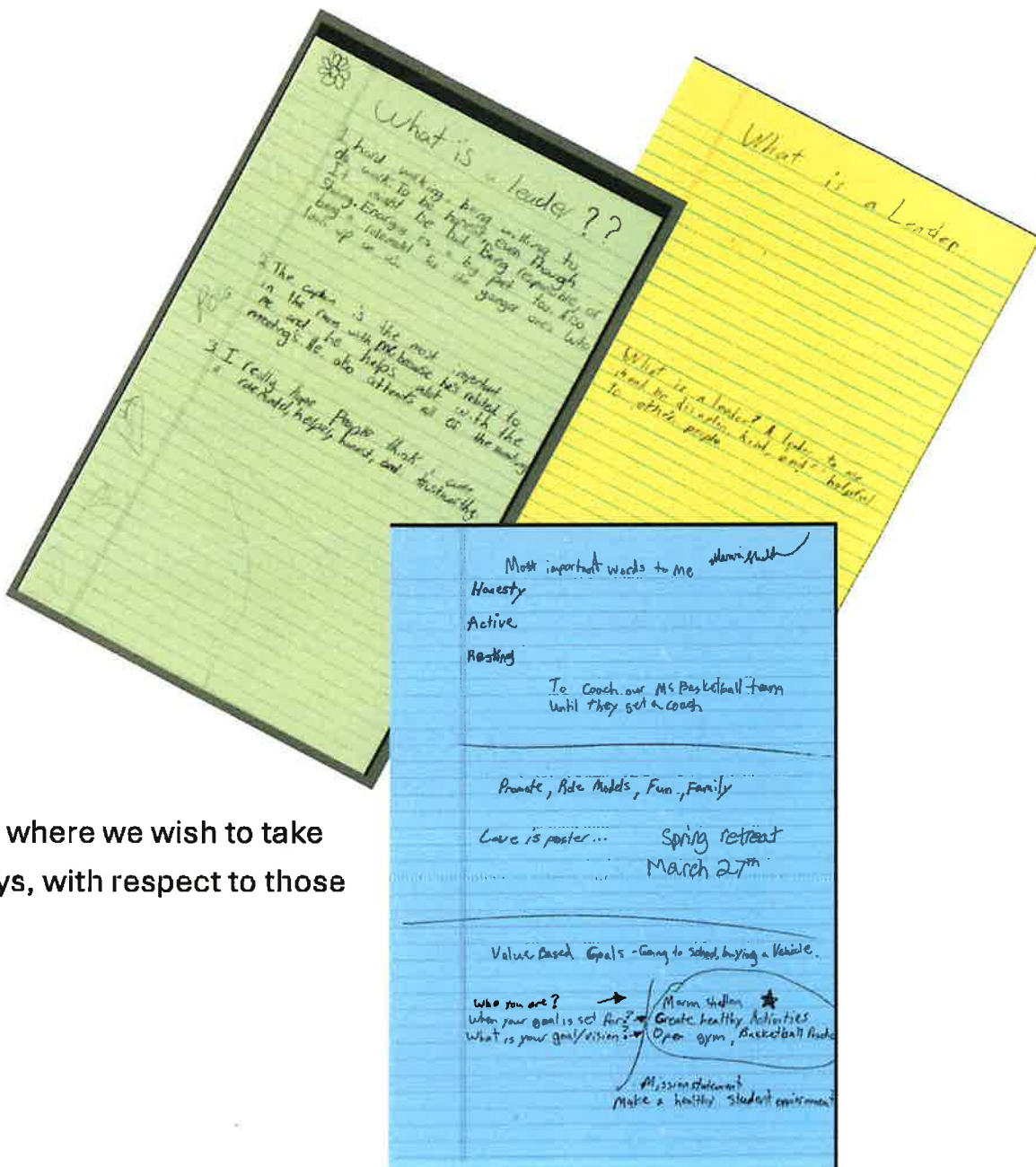
Overall, Youth Leaders reported that bullying and aggressive behaviors such as yelling, name-calling, and the use of hostile language were more commonly observed in the larger communities and less frequent in the smaller ones. Where incidents were more frequent, respondents described seeing repetitive patterns of peer aggression that sometimes escalated beyond verbal exchanges. Despite differences by community size, Youth Leaders across the sample consistently described themselves as active responders: many intervene directly to stop incidents, offer support to affected peers, or escalate issues to adults when they judge that help is needed.

A strong and recurring theme in the open-ended responses was the desire for clearer adult involvement and mediation. Youth Leaders expressed that they want trusted adults to be available to mediate conflicts, to follow up on reports, and to provide guidance on safe and effective ways to intervene. Several respondents requested practical training in conflict de-escalation and documentation so that they can act confidently and know when to involve teachers, counselors, or community mediators.



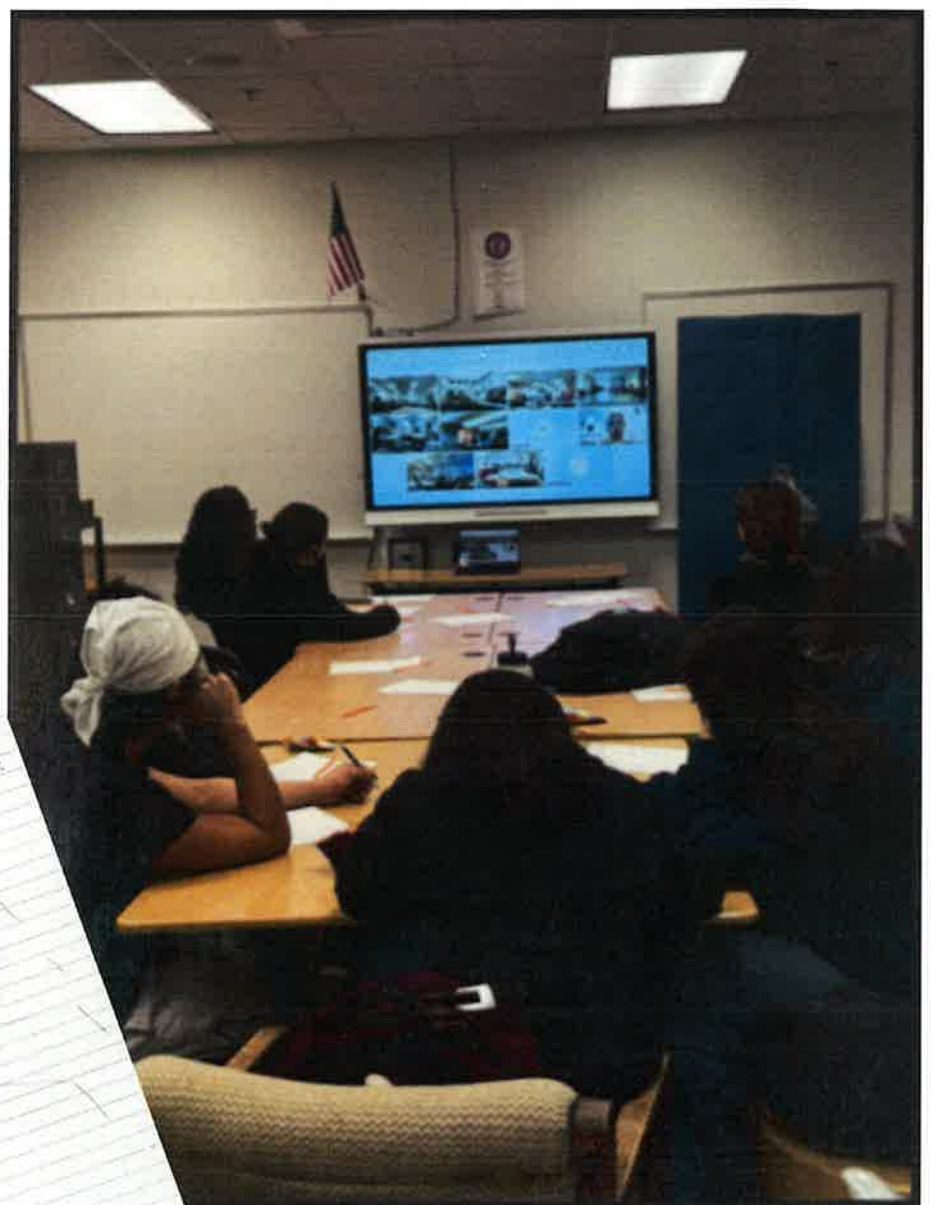
On Their Way from Youth Leaders of Today to Leaders of Tomorrow: A Remote Workshop in Vision for One's Life that Aligns to those Values, and Write a Mission to Direct One's Life's Journey in Alignment with those Values...

Youth Leaders and Youth Leader advisor from Ambler tune in to the remote Youth Leader Training on how to explore, discover, and articulate our values, so that we may set forth with a vision in mind of where we wish to take our lives' journeys, with respect to those values.



Early in the 2025-2026 school year, each village arranged to accommodate their Youth Leaders and their Youth Leaders' advisor(s) with the space and the means to tune in to a full day workshop on Value-Based Vision and Mission writing for beginners. The workshop entailed a thorough examination of our values and the expression of those values through language. It then moved to learning to set goals, as well as turning goals into meaningful vision statements. Each vision statement had to incorporate those words that expressed the values of the statement's owner. Having written their vision statements, each learner was directed to move forward to writing a mission statement for themselves as they prepared to journey towards their vision statement.

Kotzebue Youth Leaders tune into the workshop on a shared large screen, alongside their advisors, from one of the rooms in their building.



Words that mean this:

- Honor
- Connection
- Belonging

My Goal is to go to college and be successful and FINE!!!

My 3 to 5 Words are...

Take a few minutes and write your 3 to 5 words...

See example to the right...

1. Honor
2. Nobility
3. Grace

These words represent ideas that speak to me and move me, ideas about which I can passionately and for which I could and would fight with all I have, then find more in me with which to fight! You don't need to explain your words as I have here only document them in written form.

Here are some artifacts from the day's workshop.

Setting A Goal or Writing a Vision that Aligns in Essence to Your 3 to 5 Words...

Now, that you know your 3 to 5 words, those words that speak to you and move you...those words that represent ideas about which you can get passionate and for which you can fight, set a goal that aligns in essence to your words and the ideas they represent!

Be Honest***

Throughout the day-long-workshop, Youth Leaders from across the region dialogued about their goals for themselves, for their schools, and for the region; they laughed, they got serious, and ultimately, they bonded over sharing their hopes and dreams, as young leaders in the making.

Artifacts from the Kotzebue Youth Leaders' notes taken during the workshop.

11/14/16 Youth Leaders, Kotzebue, Alaska

Attributes
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Trust
- Empathy
- Humility
- Accountability
- Courage

Trust is essential to good leadership because it inspires for many leaders to embrace change and connect with others.

A vision is a commitment to creating positive change today that will shape a better tomorrow.

Our goal is to inspire and recruit more students to become leaders by being a positive role model and actively encouraging others to get involved. We will build strong relationships, recognize students' strengths and invite them to participate in leadership activities. By doing this, we will help create a supportive and inclusive leadership team. This goal.

Notes

Being a Leader

- Someone who
- Someone responsible
- Role model and guide
- Honesty and integrity
- positive role model
- Someone who takes initiative
- Courage
- Hardworking
- Listener
- Example setter

Values

I get my values from my family

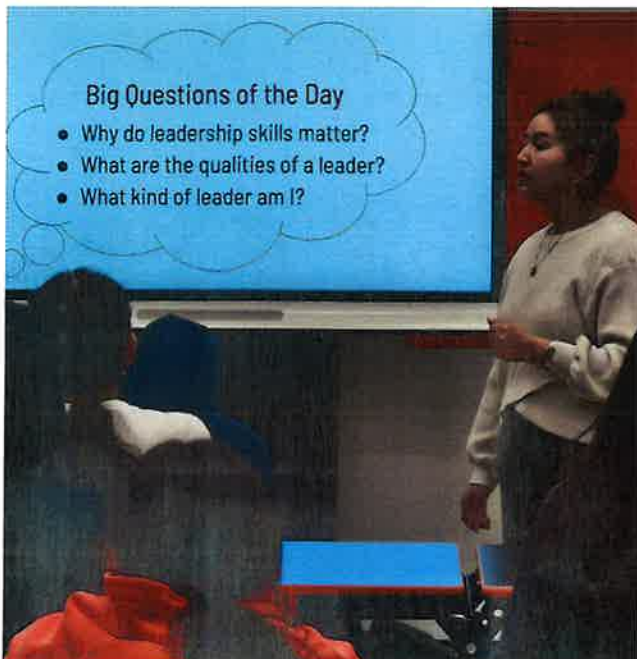
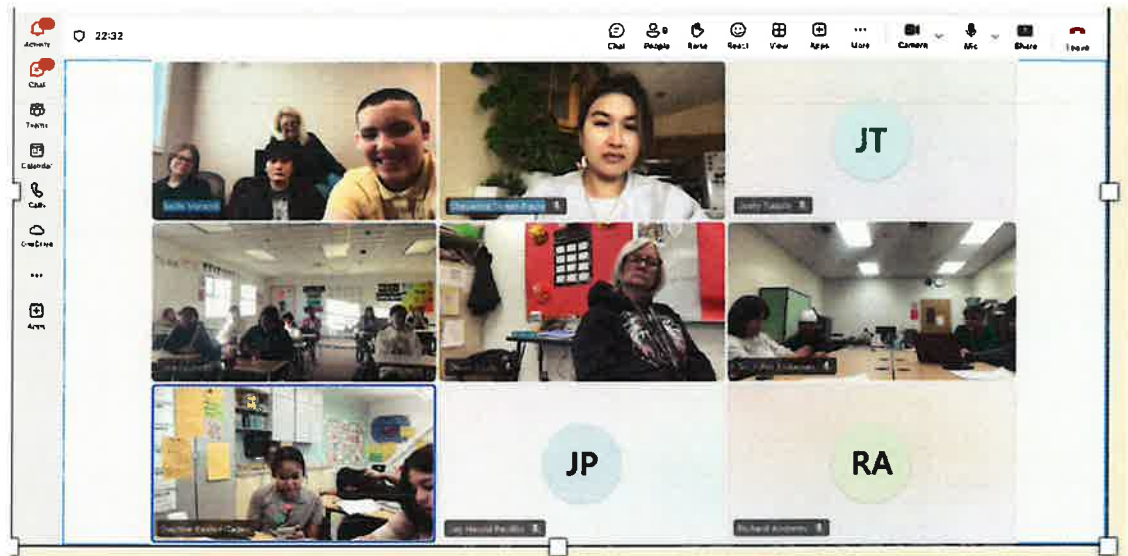
Bob Dylan, Cheburakov, Bear, The Road, Arthur



Youth Leaders' Spring Retreat 2025-2026: This Spring, Noorvik Hosts the Youth Leaders' Annual Spring Retreat

The Youth Leader Spring Retreat acts to reflect a year's lessons taught and a year's lessons learned; and on March 27th of 2026, the retreat reflecting on all these lessons was held in the Native Village of Noorvik. The preparations for the two daylong event, however, began early in the school year. Youth leaders and Youth Leader advisors from all over the region regularly gathered via Teams and discussed what they all hoped to get out of the event.

Different Youth Leader groups from different villages in the region gather to discuss the Spring Retreat, via Teams.



Big Questions of the Day

- Why do leadership skills matter?
- What are the qualities of a leader?
- What kind of leader am I?

A former Youth Leader, herself, Cheyenne Ticket Foote, the program's coordinator kicks the event off with a presentation on leadership and what it takes to lead. The presentation builds on the learnings of previous retreats in the year.



The Inupiaq dancers from Kiana treated their peers from across the district to music and dancing at their bests.

Listening to music and watching dancing can make anyone hungry!



Noorvik school's principal, serves brownies to a hungry group.

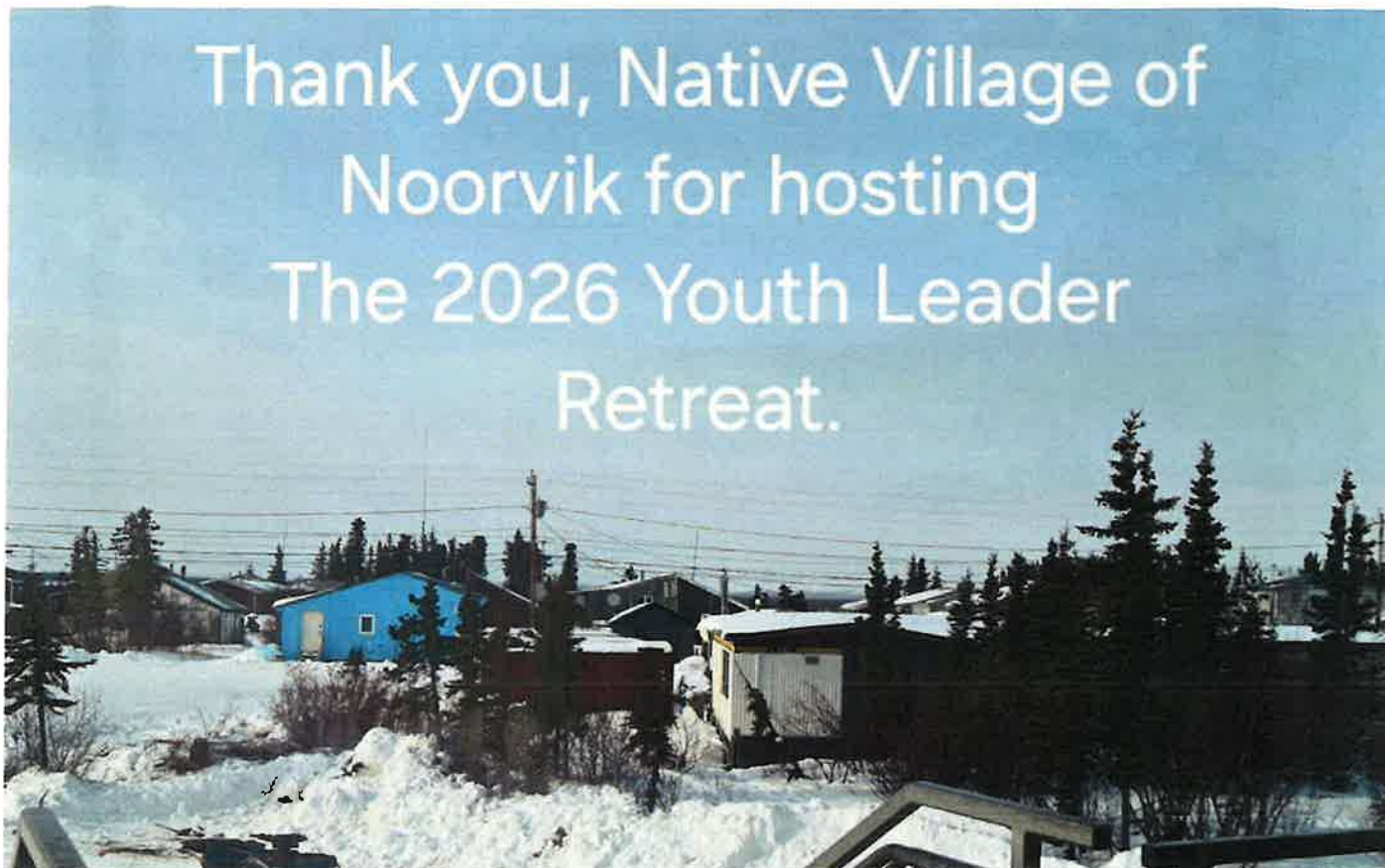
And then, there were games. A variety of games had been carefully chosen and organized as means to develop team building skills. Games addressing team building skills typically put players in positions where they need the help of their teammates. They address the capacity of the players to Trust and experience being Trusted, to Seek help and experience being helpful, to Communicate and more.

The players are discovering what they can't do alone, they can do in a team.



Wrapping the evening, Cheyenne and Marvin, both former Youth Leaders, prepare the youth for a circle of trust.

After a weekend of enlightening presentations, intense conversations, and various team building games, in the beautiful and scenic village of Noorvik, the Youth Leaders and their advisors depart for their home villages. The young p and coming leaders are excited to put what they have learned at this retreat into action in their home schools.



From 2010 to 2016 I had the honor of serving as a Youth Leader in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District and as a captain for Selawik. Those years shaped me; taught me about responsibility, resilience, and the quiet power of listening. Today you inherit that same trust and the same promise: to lift one another, to lead with heart, and to meet hard challenges not by turning away but by coming together.

Youth leadership is more than organizing events or leading chants; it is holding space for people when life feels too heavy. You will face old struggles of loneliness, peer pressure, substance use, and new ones, like the relentless reach of technology that can magnify isolation and bullying. Suicide, drugs, and bullying are not distant problems; they are real, urgent, and sometimes invisible. Your role is not to have all the answers but to be the steady person someone can turn to without fear of judgement.

Remember three simple truths in your work. First: listen more than you speak. A conversation that begins with "How are you, really?" can change a life. Listening builds trust; trust saves lives. Second: lead by example. Your choices: showing kindness, seeking help when you need it, standing up calmly when you see harm will teach others what courage looks like. Third: reach out. Connect with elders, school staff, health professionals, and families. You are part of a network that is stronger when it is used. No one expects you to carry every burden alone.

When technology brings challenges, use it as a tool for good. Create online spaces that promote positive culture, share resources, and check in with those who might be withdrawn. But remember to unplug sometimes, face-to-face care matters. And when you encounter someone struggling with substance use or suicidal thoughts, act: contact adults, use emergency resources, and never promise secrecy over safety. Your prompt, caring action can prevent the worst.

Cherish the small victories. A student who attends one more class, a friend who laughs again, a message returned; these are the milestones of meaningful work. Celebrate them and let them fuel you when the obstacles seem too large.

You stand on the shoulders of those who served before you, and one day others will stand on yours. Lead with humility, courage, and compassion. Protect one another. Ask for help. Keep learning. The work is hard, but it matters. More than you may ever know.

And always remember that you are loved, you are cared for, you are supported.

With respect and hope,

Cheyenne Ticket-Foote

Youth Leaders Coordinator, NWABSD

