

Date: March 12, 2026
To: LPSD School Board
From: Kacy Lou Leyba
Regarding: March Student Services Report

We have officially reached the part of the school year that feels like we are on a rollercoaster click...click...click...ing our way to the top of the track before the steep drop off occurs and we careen to the end of the school year. Things in our part of the LPSD-world are running smoothly, but at an incredibly fast pace. Elisabeth has continued to stay busy with her recertification coursework, her caseload, and supporting students and families across the district with social work specific needs. She has also continued to do a phenomenal job alongside Moon with putting out our new monthly newsletter. (See attached.) Patty has been busy preparing for the BBRCTE intensives this spring, working her caseload for her 9th through 12th grade school counseling internship, overseeing district-wide student government, helping students with scholarships and to solidify their post-graduation plans, and supporting the roll out of Sources of Strength. I have stayed busy with the behind-the-scenes work that comes with rolling out Sources of Strength, preparing for the SNAP Meet Post-Secondary Fair, working with my SEL caseload students, organizing the LPSD chapter of the National Honor Society, preparing for the Spring Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire roll out, solidifying systems that we have built within the Student Services program over the last few years, and continuing to look for ways to better support our students, families, and staff.

One of the ways I have sought to better support our students has been through finding unique grant opportunities that can help broaden our students' horizons. LPSD was a recipient of one such grant from the Alaska Children's Trust this spring. Our team was able to organize for three of our district-wide student government members to fly to Juneau alongside Superintendent Luke and the several BBRCTE team members to advocate for the funding of social emotional learning and mental health programs in schools, as well as the proposed residential funding for BBRCTE that has been included in the governor's draft budget. I was able to chaperone these young ladies in Anchorage when they flew back from Juneau and it was so much fun to hear how that experience helped to shape their view on local and state government, as well as how they see how they can help to shape the government around them. We love to see education in action!

Speaking of education in action, Patty and I had the opportunity to travel to the [Sources of Strength](#) Train-the-Trainer last week and we are even more excited than before to watch this program come alive for students during SNAP week and at our sites in the weeks and months after. Our first Adult Advisor training will be Saturday, March 28th from 8:30am to 12:30pm and I would like to extend an invitation to our Board to join to learn more about Sources of Strength! I have included a bit of the information we have sent to our potential Adult Advisors below. Please feel free to email me if you would like to join and I will be sure to get you the Zoom link.

There is so much more I could say about all the good things that are happening in Student Services, but I will save some details for in person chats at SNAP. Looking forward to seeing you all in person soon!

For the kids, always—
Kacy Lou Leyba

WHAT'S
NEW

LPSD



March 2026

MENTAL
Wellness

March is Self-Harm Awareness month. Self-Harm Awareness month reminds us to pause and acknowledge the complexities of life, even when they are not noticeable or obvious to those around us. Those who engage in self-harm may feel trapped by shame and fear, hesitant to seek help because they are afraid they are going to be judged or labeled. It's important to remind those who are hurting that help is available and that starts with finding healthy ways to cope with emotions. As we navigate through self-harm awareness month, let's commit to creating spaces of empathy and understanding.

PROM Closet

Do you have old prom outfits collecting dust? Want us to take them off your hands?

We are in need of prom dresses, men's formal wear, & ties for our 2026 Prom!

Please mail donations to:

Patty McCasland

PO BOX 89

Iliamna, AK 99606

*Flat rate boxes work well to ship to Alaska!

BE Safe

Storing firearms securely—locked, unloaded, and stored separately from ammunition—is associated with up to an 85% reduction in the risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens and a decrease in youth suicide rates.

By filling out the short order form at this link:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSenioj2FvmMPNtDKWhsSagwrKlj9mBMfLslzyM1hLnTmmVR5w/viewform>

You can order free gun locks to keep your household safe.

For more information about pediatric gun safety, please visit:

<https://besmartforkids.org/> and

<https://momsdemandaction.org/>



**upcoming
EVENTS**

Mar. 6 End of 3rd Quarter
Mar. 11-14 ASAA B-Ball State
Mar. 16-20 CTE Session 3
**Mar. 30-
Apr. 3** State Testing

WHAT'S NEW LPSD

READER Spotlight



March 2026

Faith Woodcock- Nondalton Elementary Teacher

My favorite things to read are thriller and fantasy books, but I love books from lots of genres. I read after school and sometimes before bed. A book I would highly recommend is Project Hail Mary.

Miles Carltikoff - 5th Grade Student

My favorite books to read are funny (I really like the Stick Dog series). I read in school. A book I would recommend is any of the Stick Dog books.



One Small Thing

One small thing you can do at home to help build strong readers is talk about your day. At dinner, on the snowmachine, cleaning fish, ask your child to tell you one thing they learned today.



LITERACY MYTH of the Month

Myth: "Good readers don't need help."

Truth: All readers grow when they are able to ask questions, talk about ideas, and figure out what unfamiliar words mean.

Ask a TEACHER

My child guesses words. Should I correct them?

Yes, gently. Encourage them to slow down and look at all the letters. You might say, "Let's try that again and look at the beginning sound."



BECOME A SOURCES OF STRENGTH ADULT ADVISOR!

What is Sources of Strength?

Sources of Strength is a best practice, upstream prevention program with a radically strength-based approach to suicide prevention. Our mission is to promote well-being, help-seeking, resilience, healthy coping, and a sense of belonging. The Sources of Strength team begins with a group of adults willing to partner with our students to create positive social change in our school and community.




Why become an Adult Advisor?

Ideal Adult Advisors have unique connections with young people and an understanding of community culture. The Role of an Adult Advisor is to:

 **IDENTIFY PEER LEADERS:**
Recruit students from all corners of our school to be agents of positive change, connect with their own Strengths (protective factors), and become connectors to help.

 **INCREASE YOUR IMPACT:**
Support our Peer Leaders in ongoing meetings as they develop and implement messaging campaigns for positive change.

 **EMPOWER A WELL WORLD:**
Help us prevent suicide, reduce risk factors, and increase wellness by fostering a culture of Strength and belonging.

What will I do as an Adult Advisor?

- Attend an Adult Advisor training (3-6 hours) to deepen your knowledge and create team strategies.
- Attend a Peer Leader training (4.5-6 hours) to connect with students and lay the foundation for the program's implementation.
- Attend regular meetings (1-2 hours a month) to empower Peer Leaders through Strength-based messaging campaigns.

Diverse perspectives and relationships are invaluable to the program's success. If you are interested in joining the Adult Advisor team, reach out today!

CONTACT: Kacy Lou Leyba | kacylouleyba@lpsd.com

DETAILS ON TRAINING

Adult Advisor Training:

Saturday 3/28/26 from
8:30-12:30 AKST (Zoom)

Peer Leader Training:

Tuesday 4/7/26 of SNAP
Week (In Person)

**SOURCES
OF STRENGTH**

Date: April 1, 2026
To: LPSD School Board
From: Kacy Lou Leyba
Regarding: April Student Services Report

In my last board report I had mentioned that we were click...click...clicking to the top of the metaphorical rollercoaster track. With the calendar turning to April this week, we started speeding down the track— full speed ahead towards SNAP, graduations, summer referrals, and before we know it, the end of the school year.

SNAP Meet is always quite the undertaking for our team, but this year’s is slated to be our most highly involved week yet! We have been able to recruit 39 individuals representing a variety of post-secondary options in the “employ, enroll, and enlist” pathways to join our Post-Secondary Fair, which is split between Wednesday evening and Thursday morning.

Our team will also be training all of LPSD’s attending secondary students in Sources of Strength— the new suicide prevention program I have been raving about all year. Patty and I led a successful Adult Advisor training for Sources of Strength on Saturday, March 27th in preparation for SNAP. **Shout out to all of our communities’ positive, connected, caring adult volunteers who stepped forward and were willing to be trained for the good of our youth.**

Sources has a “one part fun, one part sharing, one part planning” model for their meetings, and boy, did we have fun! The photo below is your fearless Adult Advisors playing a game of competitive Zoom charades, trying to lead their teammates to guess the phrase “Jurassic Park”. (You can also consider this a shameless plug to follow LPSD Student Services on Instagram and Facebook as well to stay up to date with our team and students!)



Our team can't wait to jump in with both feet with our students in our SNAP training. We have a box of rubber chickens just for the occasion... If you're curious, I invite you to join us at the Newhalen Bingo Hall all day Tuesday.

Our docket for SNAP is full, as our team will be running the following portions of SNAP this year:

- District-wide Art Show (Kacy Lou) - Monday evening
- Junior High Sources of Strength Training (Patty & Kacy Lou) - Tuesday morning
- High School Sources of Strength Training (Patty & Kacy Lou) - Tuesday afternoon
- "Campaign Town" class rotation (Elisabeth and Anne from Southcentral Foundation Behavioral Health) - all day Tuesday and Wednesday
- Post-Secondary Fair "Table-ing" (Kacy Lou & Elisabeth) - Wednesday evening
- Post-Secondary Fair Rotations (Kacy Lou & Patty) - Thursday morning
- WorkKeys & ACT Testing (Kacy Lou & Patty) - Thursday mid-day
- National Honor Society Induction (Kacy Lou) - Thursday evening
- Prom (Patty & Student Government) - Thursday evening

On a non-SNAP related note, Elisabeth has continued to do an amazing job at helping to facilitate family engagement nights and has begun doing so alongside Moon McCarley to make the most of our district-wide family engagement funding. She continues to work her regular caseload of social-emotional learning students and recently attended a BounceBack for Classrooms training to become a certified instructor for their social emotional learning and mental health resiliency curriculum.

We would love to tell you more about all of the wonderful things happening in our corner of the world if you happen to have a moment to chat at SNAP Meet. Feel free to pull any of us aside. We look forward to being in person with you all soon!

For the kids, always—
Kacy Lou Leyba