

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 5:30 PM

NES Library, 1057 E 5th Ave, Nome, Alaska 99762

A. Call to Order

1. Pledge of Allegiance
2. Nome Public Schools Mission Statement
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of Agenda

B. Consent Agenda

(Routine matter considered for approval as one motion. Any item can be pulled for separate consideration).

1. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting: August 10, 2021
2. Approval of August 2021 Disbursements
3. Approval of August 2021 Personnel Report

C. Awards and Presentations

1. Introductions of Guests & Visitors
2. Skiku Program Overview
3. NPS 2021 Summer Program Overview
4. Spring 2021 PEAKS Results

D. Opportunity for Public Comments on Agenda/Non-agenda Items

(3 minutes per speaker, 30 minutes aggregate)

E. Superintendent Report

F. Information & Reports

1. Principal Reports
2. Director Reports
3. Business Manager Report

G. Second Public Comment Opportunity

(3 minutes per speaker, 30 minutes aggregate)

H. Action Item

1. Approval of NACTEC/NWC Facilities Agreement

I. Board and Superintendent's Comments & Committee Reports

J. Upcoming Events:

- **Tuesday, September 28, Work Session, 5:30 pm, NES Library**
- **Tuesday, October 12, Regular Meeting, 5:30 pm, NES Library**
- **Tuesday, October 26, Work Session, 5:30 pm, NES Library**

K. Adjournment



Our Mission

We inspire and empower students to be culturally grounded responsible citizens who are deeply connected to our community and world.

Our Vision

Together, strong in identity, purpose, potential

Board and Superintendent Guiding Principles

- ✦ Works to ensure academic success for all students
- ✦ Works to promote positive community partnerships
- ✦ Provides leadership and support to ensure reading proficiency by 3rd Grade
- ✦ Supports the recruitment and retention of effective staff

Board and Superintendent Goals

- ✦ Provide the resources for the development and adoption of curriculum as per Board Policy (BP 6141).
- ✦ Support the integration of a student's culture in the curriculum within the context of the community through implementation of the Alaska standards for culturally responsive schools.
- ✦ Work to ensure all students feel connected to their peers and the adults in their schools by improving school climate.



Personnel-School Board Report
September 14, 2021
Cynthia Gray, NPS HR Manager

PERSONNEL ACTIONS: Staff changes/updates:

Certified Employees: New Hires/Change of Assignment/End of employment:

1. None.

Classified Employees: New Hires/Change of Assignment/End of employment:

1. Sarah Swann-New Hire-Behavior Specialist/NBMHS
2. Kaitlin Topkok-Transfer/Title I Aide to Classroom Paraprofessional
3. Heidi Hanebuth-New Hire-Title I Instructional Aide/NES
4. Jerilyn Wellert-New Hire-Inupiaq Immersion Aide/NES
5. Kenosha Kiyuklook-New Hire-SPED Para-PT/Home based

Current Certified vacancies for the 2021-2022 school year:

1. Music/Art K-5

Classified vacancies for the 2021-2022 school year:

1. Behavior Specialist-NES
2. Special Education Paraprofessional-multiple positions/NES/NBMHS/ACSA
3. Substitute Teacher-all schools

PERSONNEL PROJECTS

No Update.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

NPS HR conducted new staff in-service August 11-13, 2021. As previously reported, NPS launched the Employee client portal called EaseCentral. This is the HR technology Platform that replaces our printed benefits material. This allows for our staff to enroll and sign up for benefits all on the web. HR continues to work on the following; State Department of Education required reporting preparations, for multiple reports due in September and October. Verification of Service requests, and on August 13, 2021 HR did a local job fair at NES to recruit for classified vacancies and substitute teachers. Which continue to be a struggle/challenge to fill.

Respectfully submitted by,

Cynthia Gray



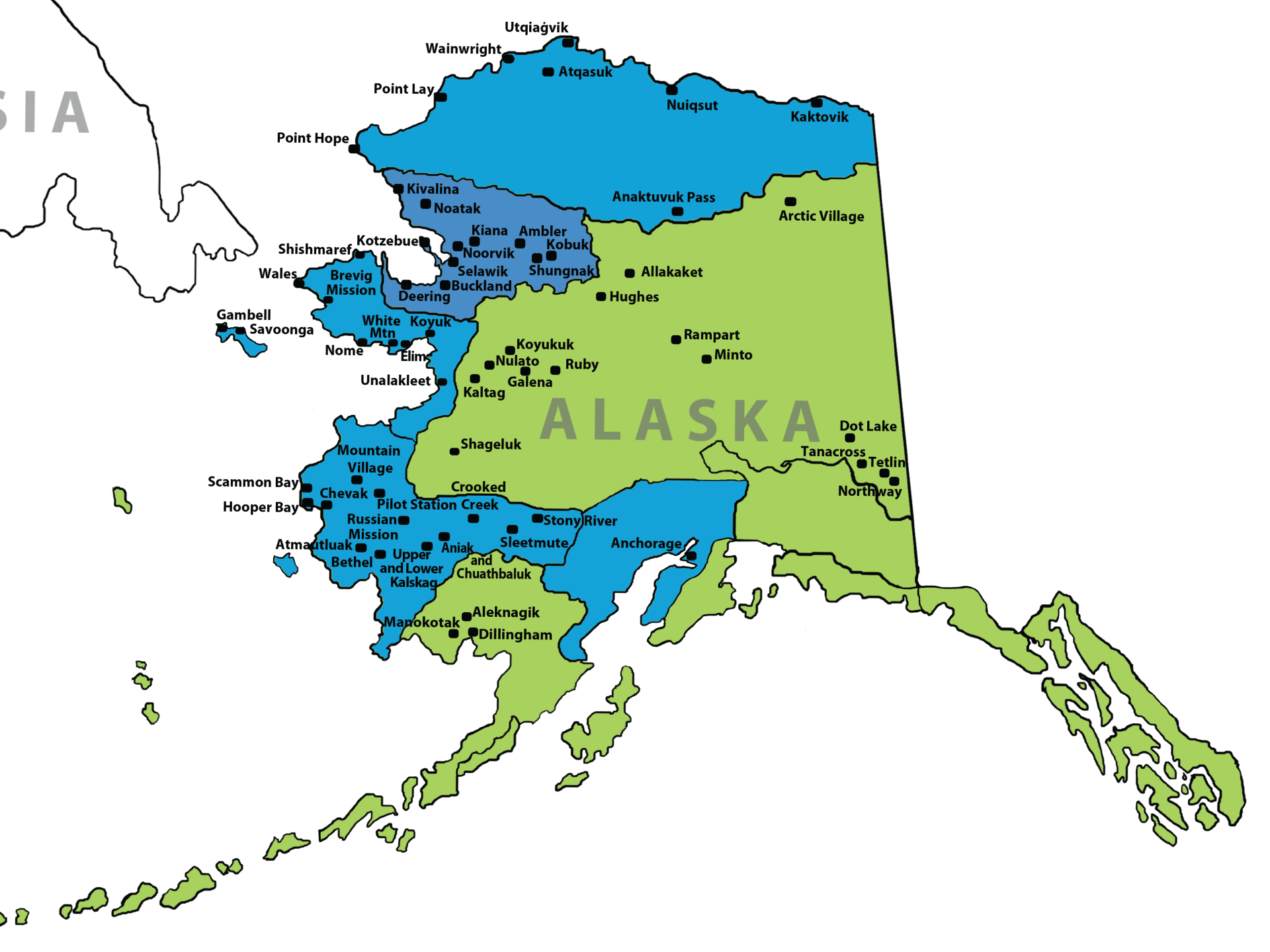
OUR VISION

Smiling, healthy rural Alaskan skiers enjoying their beautiful local landscapes.

MISSION

Promote cross country skiing and its wellness benefits by facilitating development of local ski programs in the Alaskan communities we serve.





ASIA

ALASKA

- Utqiagvik
- Wainwright
- Point Lay
- Point Hope
- Kaktovik
- Nuiqsut
- Atkasuk
- Anaktuvuk Pass
- Arctic Village
- Kivalina
- Noatak
- Kotzebue
- Shishmaref
- Wales
- Brevig Mission
- Gambell
- Savoonga
- White Mtn
- Koyuk
- Nome
- Elim
- Unalakleet
- Koyukuk
- Nulato
- Ruby
- Galena
- Kaltag
- Shageluk
- Mountain Village
- Scammon Bay
- Hooper Bay
- Chevak
- Pilot Station
- Crooked Creek
- Russian Mission
- Atmautluak
- Bethel
- Upper and Lower Kalskag
- Aniak
- Chuathbaluk
- Manokotak
- Aleknagik
- Dillingham
- Sleetmute
- Stony River
- Anchorage
- Dot Lake
- Tanacross
- Tetlin
- Northway
- Hughes
- Allakaket
- Rampart
- Minto
- Kobuk
- Shungnak
- Selawik
- Noorvik
- Kiana
- Ambler













POLARIS

skiku









Thank you!

calisa@skiku.com



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**

GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Education
& Early Development**

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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August 2021

Dear Educator,

Assessment happens every day in classrooms across our state. We administer assessments to make sure our instruction results in students learning what we want them to know and do and helps ensure that support is available for all students. Assessment is a key part of student learning, and everything we do should work toward this goal.

PEAKS, the 2021 statewide summative assessment, was administered in an unprecedented context. Never before has Alaska, or any other state, attempted to obtain valid and reliable data during a global pandemic that disrupted even the most basic routines in society, including our public schools.

It is important to keep in mind that for many students, instruction and assessment looked very different during the COVID-19 pandemic. As local school boards managed the impacts of COVID, assessment participation rates among students taking the assessment were so low that the department cautions against drawing sweeping conclusions about student performance statewide. However, we can still glean helpful information by looking at performance at the school and individual student levels. Parents and educators can use individual student data from PEAKS and other local assessments to make effective instructional decisions during the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, though summative assessment data typically guides activities associated with the Every Student Succeeds Act, the accountability requirements were waived by the United States Department of Education for the 2020-2021 school year. Alaska's Department of Education will continue to support ongoing school improvement efforts in local school districts, including stewardship of COVID relief funds.

Alaska is blessed with many great schools and hardworking educators who worked with families to meet the challenge COVID-19 presented for our students this past year. Thank you for your hard work to provide an excellent education to every student every day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Johnson", followed by a horizontal line.

Dr. Michael Johnson
Commissioner

District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Test Date: Spring 2021

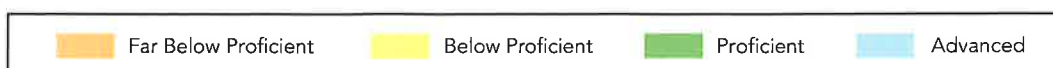
Achievement Level Summary

Group	# Tested	% in Each Level			
District	354	56.8	22.3	18.4	2.5
State	44,444	36.5	24.0	27.7	11.9



Achievement Level Summary | By Grade

Grade	Group	# Tested	% in Each Level			
3	District	55	60.0	21.8	18.2	0.0
	State	6,793	40.9	23.1	25.2	10.8
4	District	53	56.6	22.6	18.9	1.9
	State	6,797	35.4	27.5	25.7	11.4
5	District	51	49.0	33.3	15.7	2.0
	State	6,791	31.6	30.1	30.4	7.9
6	District	46	63.0	15.2	19.6	2.2
	State	6,697	34.9	18.2	34.2	12.7
7	District	52	50.0	25.0	19.2	5.8
	State	6,180	34.4	23.0	28.8	13.7
8	District	52	53.8	19.2	21.2	5.8
	State	5,772	35.2	25.8	27.8	11.2
9	District	45	66.7	17.8	15.6	0.0
	State	5,414	44.1	19.6	20.2	16.1



District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Achievement Levels

Overall scores on the PEAKS Assessment are divided into four achievement levels: Advanced, Proficient, Below Proficient, and Far Below Proficient.

Scale Scores

The number of students, median scale score, mean scale score, and the standard error of the mean are reported at the district and state level in the table below. The median is the middle score in the ordered list of all students' scale scores and is shown by the colored bar. The —●— symbol shows the mean, or average, of all the students' scale scores; the dark circle is the mean and the lines on either side of the circle represent two standard errors of the mean.

For more information on the report, please see the Educator and Parent Guides to Reports on the PEAKS webpage: education.alaska.gov/assessments/peaks

Score Summary — By Grade

Grade	Group	# Tested	Scale Score Median/Mean	Score					
				400	450	500	550	600	
3	District	55	456/461						
	State	6,793	477/480						
4	District	53	464/471						
	State	6,797	485/487						
5	District	51	464/467						
	State	6,791	485/486						
6	District	46	462/467						
	State	6,697	494/496						
7	District	52	470/477						
	State	6,180	490/493						
8	District	52	462/472						
	State	5,772	486/488						
9	District	45	447/456						
	State	5,414	480/483						

District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Performance by Reporting Category

The table below shows how the performance of the district and state compared to the state standard for proficiency on specific areas of the English Language Arts test.

Grade	# Tested	English Language Arts Reporting Category	District	State
3	55	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽
4	53	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽
5	51	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽
6	46	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽

Performance Results Key

The district or state

△ *did better than* the state standard for proficiency.

▬ *did about as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

▽ *did not do as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

■ *did not attempt any items in this category.*

District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Performance by Reporting Category, Cont.

The table below shows how the performance of the district and state compared to the state standard for proficiency on specific areas of the English Language Arts test.

Grade	# Tested	English Language Arts Reporting Category	District	State
7	52	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽
8	52	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	≡
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽
9	45	Reading	▽	▽
		Key Ideas and Details	▽	▽
		Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	▽	▽
		Literary Text	▽	▽
		Informational Text	▽	▽
		Writing	▽	▽
		Text Types and Purposes	▽	▽
		Distribution and Production/Research	▽	▽
		Language	▽	▽

Performance Results Key

The district or state

△ *did better than* the state standard for proficiency.

≡ *did about as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

▽ *did not do as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

■ *did not attempt any items in this category.*

District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: MATHEMATICS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Achievement Level Summary

Group	# Tested	% in Each Level			
District	349	37.8	42.7	18.1	1.4
State	44,000	29.1	38.6	25.9	6.5



Achievement Level Summary | By Grade

Grade	Group	# Tested	% in Each Level			
3	District	55	34.5	43.6	21.8	0.0
	State	6,746	26.8	35.3	27.9	9.9
4	District	53	22.6	50.9	26.4	0.0
	State	6,730	24.3	39.1	29.3	7.3
5	District	51	33.3	45.1	21.6	0.0
	State	6,750	30.3	36.2	27.6	5.9
6	District	47	31.9	46.8	19.1	2.1
	State	6,666	20.3	47.3	27.7	4.7
7	District	52	46.2	38.5	11.5	3.8
	State	6,135	36.3	35.9	22.4	5.4
8	District	49	38.8	46.9	12.2	2.0
	State	5,707	28.7	45.3	20.8	5.2
9	District	42	61.9	23.8	11.9	2.4
	State	5,266	39.4	29.9	23.6	7.1



District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: MATHEMATICS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Achievement Levels

Overall scores on the PEAKS Assessment are divided into four achievement levels: Advanced, Proficient, Below Proficient, and Far Below Proficient.

Scale Scores

The number of students, median scale score, mean scale score, and the standard error of the mean are reported at the district and state level in the table below. The median is the middle score in the ordered list of all students' scale scores and is shown by the colored bar. The \bullet symbol shows the mean, or average, of all the students' scale scores; the dark circle is the mean and the lines on either side of the circle represent two standard errors of the mean.

For more information on the report, please see the Educator and Parent Guides to Reports on the PEAKS webpage: education.alaska.gov/assessments/peaks

Score Summary — By Grade

Grade	Group	# Tested	Scale Score Median/Mean	Score					
				400	450	500	550	600	
3	District	55	475/475						
	State	6,746	484/491						
4	District	53	473/482						
	State	6,730	486/491						
5	District	51	470/475						
	State	6,750	480/487						
6	District	47	468/477						
	State	6,666	481/486						
7	District	52	454/462						
	State	6,135	467/476						
8	District	49	455/462						
	State	5,707	466/475						
9	District	42	442/454						
	State	5,266	466/476						

District: Nome Public Schools

SUBJECT: MATHEMATICS

Test Date: Spring 2021

Performance by Reporting Category

The table below shows how the performance of the district and state compared to the state standard for proficiency on specific areas of the mathematics test.

Grade	# Tested	Mathematics Reporting Category	District	State
3	55	Number and Operations in Base Ten	▽	▽
		Number and Operations—Fractions	▽	▽
		Operations and Algebraic Thinking	▽	▽
		Geometry and Measurement	▽	▽
4	53	Number and Operations in Base Ten	≡	▽
		Number and Operations—Fractions	▽	▽
		Operations and Algebraic Thinking	▽	▽
		Geometry and Measurement	≡	▽
5	51	Number and Operations in Base Ten	▽	▽
		Number and Operations—Fractions	▽	▽
		Operations and Algebraic Thinking	≡	▽
6	47	Geometry and Measurement	▽	▽
		The Number System	▽	▽
		Ratios and Proportional Relationships	▽	▽
		Expressions and Equations	▽	▽
		Geometry	▽	▽
7	52	Statistics and Probability	▽	▽
		The Number System	▽	▽
		Ratios and Proportional Relationships	▽	▽
		Expressions and Equations	▽	▽
		Geometry	▽	▽
8	49	Statistics and Probability	▽	▽
		Numbers, Expressions, and Equations	▽	▽
		Functions	▽	▽
		Geometry	▽	▽
9	42	Statistics and Probability	▽	▽
		Number and Quantity	▽	▽
		Algebra	▽	▽
		Functions	▽	▽

Performance Results Key

The district or state

△ *did better than* the state standard for proficiency.

≡ *did about as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

▽ *did not do as well as* the state standard for proficiency.

■ *did not attempt any items in this category.*



Parent Guide to Student Reports Spring 2021 PEAKS Assessment English Language Arts and Mathematics

The Purpose of PEAKS Assessment

The PEAKS assessment is administered annually statewide to students in grades 3 through 9. It provides students the opportunity to show their understanding of Alaska's English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Standards. The assessment provides information to parents, educators, policymakers, communities, and businesses about how Alaska's schools and districts are performing. The PEAKS assessment also provides information to help schools improve and to meet Alaska's educational mission, "An excellent education for every student every day."

Types of Items

The ELA and mathematics subject area assessments contain several different types of questions (also called items). For multiple-choice items, students are asked to select one correct response from four possible answer choices. For multiple-select items, students are asked to select more than one correct response from the answer choices. Computer-based assessments include technology-enhanced items that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills at more complex levels of thinking. Each technology-enhanced item has a similar counterpart item on the paper-based versions of the tests. Students in grades 4 through 9 are asked to complete a Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) item. Unlike a writing prompt, the TDA item is a text-based analysis, based on a passage or multiple-passage set that each student reads during the assessment. The TDA item type addresses both literary and informational texts. Students must draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage in order to develop a comprehensive, holistic essay response.

In ELA, multiple-choice, multiple-select, and technology-enhanced items are scored as one or two points. The TDA item is scored on a scale of 0 to 4 points. In mathematics, items are worth one point each.

Reporting Categories

The Alaska standards define what students should know and be able to do in English language arts and mathematics. Standards are broken down into categories in each subject. PEAKS items assess student skills within these reporting categories. The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) recognizes that the 2020–2021 instruction and assessment environments were very different and provided unique challenges. PEAKS reporting for this year will not provide direct comparisons from previous years of assessment. Due to these differences, DEED encourages you to visit the PEAKS Results link from the PEAKS webpage for further guidance on how the data and reports can be interpreted and understood within this unique context: [PEAKS webpage](#).

For more information visit the [Alaska Standards webpage](#).

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PEAKS Student Report



PEAKS Assessment

Students in grades 3–9 take the PEAKS statewide assessment. The assessment provides information on a student's understanding of the state's standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. PEAKS results for schools and districts provide information to the public about how Alaska's schools and districts are performing and to help them improve.

Student Report

Student Name: Clarence Montgomery-Washington
Grade: 5

A AKSID: 123456
Test Date: Spring 9999

District: District Name
School: School Name

English Language Arts | Scale Score **580**



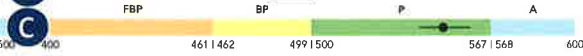
Advanced: Student meets the standards at an advanced level, demonstrating knowledge and skills of complex grade-level content.

The **—●—** symbol shows the student's scale score; the dark circle is the score. If the student were to test again, the student's score would likely fall within the lines on either side of the circle.

Scale Score	# Tested	FBP	BP	P	A
Clarence					580
School (median)	18				530
District (median)	41			475	
State (median)	5,461		485		

FBP - Far Below Proficient BP - Below Proficient P - Proficient A - Advanced

B Mathematics | Scale Score **550**



Proficient: Student meets the standards at a proficient level, demonstrating knowledge and skills of current grade-level content.

The **—●—** symbol shows the student's scale score; the dark circle is the score. If the student were to test again, the student's score would likely fall within the lines on either side of the circle.

Scale Score	# Tested	FBP	BP	P	A
Clarence					550
School (median)	16				555
District (median)	52			505	
State (median)	4,058		480		

FBP - Far Below Proficient BP - Below Proficient P - Proficient A - Advanced

English Language Arts Reporting Category	Performance
Reading	△
Key Ideas and Details	▽
Craft and Structure/Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	△
Writing	■
Text Types and Purposes	■
Distribution and Production/Research	■
Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA)	0
Language	■

Reading Text Type Reporting Category	Performance
Literary Text	△
Informational Text	▽

250000-000005-05520

Mathematics Reporting Category	Performance
Number and Operations in Base Ten	▽
Number and Operations—Fractions	△
Operations and Algebraic Thinking	△
Geometry and Measurement	■

Performance Results Key
Your student
 △ did better than students who scored just barely proficient (scale score of 500).
 ▽ did about as well as students who scored just barely proficient (scale score of 500).
 ▽ did not do as well as students who scored just barely proficient (scale score of 500).
 ■ did not attempt any items in this category.

Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Key
Possible scores range from 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest).

Page 1

Summary Achievement Level Descriptors (ALDs)

These are general descriptions of what a student in this grade level can do at each achievement level. A student who scores at an achievement level would also be expected to demonstrate the skills at the previous achievement levels.

Achievement Levels	English Language Arts	Mathematics
Advanced	Students who score at this level read and comprehend complex grade 5 text. Students summarize and determine implied themes, subtopics, point of view, and purpose more effectively and at an in-depth level. When writing and revising, students extend their use of language to use more challenging vocabulary and conventions. Students incorporate implicit details at an in-depth level when reading and writing.	Students who score at this level can write, evaluate, and interpret numerical expressions with multiple sets of parentheses; they can generate complex numerical patterns, translate them into ordered pairs, plot them on a coordinate plane, and explain data displayed on a coordinate plane. Students can read, write, compare, and perform all four operations with multi-digit numbers, decimals, and fractions. Students can calculate multistep measurement conversions; they can identify applications of perimeter, area, and volume. Students can classify 2-D shapes by hierarchy.
Proficient	Students who score at this level read and comprehend grade 5 text. Students summarize, determine themes and purpose of a text, determine meanings of more difficult words and complex figurative language, and identify literary elements and text structures, including explaining connections between these features. Students explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text. When writing and revising, students use grade-appropriate language, conventions, and techniques to structure text logically and sequentially.	Students who score at this level can write, evaluate, and interpret numerical expressions with parentheses; they can generate numerical patterns from given rules, translate them into ordered pairs, and plot them on a coordinate plane. Students can read, write, and compare decimals to the thousandths; they can multiply and divide multi-digit whole numbers and decimals to the hundredths. Students can solve problems involving fractions and all four operations. Students can calculate measurement conversions; they can distinguish between perimeter, area, and volume. Students can recognize 2-D figures by hierarchy.
Below Proficient	Students who score at this level read and partially comprehend grade 5 text to identify main ideas and explicit details, determine meanings of basic words and phrases while identifying literal and figurative language, identify text features and structures used to organize a text, and identify relationships between parts of a text. When writing or revising, students use appropriate language and conventions, use strategies particular to a type of text, and structure a text to support a purpose or opinion.	Students who score at this level can write numerical expressions and apply parentheses; they can identify a rule for a given pattern and identify ordered pairs on a coordinate plane. Students can read, write, compare, and multiply decimals to the hundredths. Students can solve problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions; they can multiply a fraction by a whole number. Students can calculate simple measurement conversions; they can identify volume as an attribute of 3-D objects. Students can classify figures according to their attributes.
Far Below Proficient	Students who score at this level attempt to read and minimally comprehend grade 5 text to identify main ideas and explicit details, determine meanings of basic words and phrases while identifying literal and figurative language, identify text features and structures used to organize a text, and identify relationships between parts of a text. When writing or revising, students attempt to use appropriate language and conventions, use strategies particular to a type of text, and structure a text to support a purpose or opinion.	Students who score at this level may be able to evaluate 1-step numerical expressions, identify the next term in a pattern, and identify the coordinate plane. Students may be able to identify the place-value name for a given digit or decimal to the tenth and add and subtract decimals to the hundredth. They may be able to use models to subtract unit fractions with unlike denominators. Students may also be able to calculate 1-step conversions of length, identify measures of volume, and find the volume of rectangular prisms by counting unit cubes. They may also be able to plot points on a coordinate plane.

For more information on the report, please see the Educator and Parent Guides to Reports on the PEAKS webpage: education.alaska.gov/assessments/peaks



Reading the PEAKS Student Report

- A** This section presents student, school, and district information.
- B** The number in the box indicates the student's scale score in English language arts and mathematics. *Please note:* If the student did not attempt the test or if the student did not receive a valid test score, there will not be a scale score or other information reported. Contact your school for more information about the specific circumstances.
- C** The horizontal bar graphically illustrates the student's scale score and the location of that score in the achievement level attained by the student. The dark circle in the symbol (—●—) represents the student's actual scale score. The bars on the side of the circle represent the range of where the student's score would likely fall if the student were to test again. This represents the standard error of measurement (SEM).
- D** This section describes the student's achievement level as determined by the scale scores reported in **B**. Achievement levels are reported as Advanced (A), Proficient (P), Below Proficient (BP), or Far Below Proficient (FBP). The Achievement Level Descriptors on the back page of the report provide more specific information about each achievement level.
- E** This section shows the student's scale score and how it compares to median scores at the school, district, and state levels. The median represents the middle score in an ordered list of scores. Half the scores are above the median and half are below. The median is used instead of the mean (or average) because it is more stable if there are some extremely high or low scores in a group.
- F** This section shows a comparison of how the student performed in the reporting categories for English language arts and mathematics. The symbols indicate how the student performed compared to students who score just barely at the proficient level (a scale score of 500). The number in the performance column for the Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) represents how the student performed on a scale from 0–4.
- G** This section shows the Performance Results Key, which provides the meaning of each of the four performance symbols that appear in the Reporting Category sections.
- H** This section shows the Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Key, which shows the possible scores that a student may receive on the TDA item.
- I** This section provides general descriptions of what a student in this grade level can do at each achievement level in each subject. Find the student's achievement level on the first page of the report and read the description to learn more about the content and skills that the student demonstrated and see what content and skills would be demonstrated by students reaching a higher achievement level on PEAKS.

Terms and Types of Scores

Scale Score: A number that provides a common metric for expressing student performance. The student's overall performance on PEAKS is reported as a scale score. Points earned by answering an item correctly are converted into a scale score that takes into consideration the difficulty of the item.

Achievement Levels: Student performance on PEAKS is reported in one of four achievement levels. These levels describe the performance of the student on the standards tested at the grade level. The four achievement levels are:

- **Advanced (A)**—Student meets the standards at an advanced level, demonstrating knowledge and skills of complex grade-level content.
- **Proficient (P)**—Student meets the standards at a proficient level, demonstrating knowledge and skills of current grade-level content.

- **Below Proficient (BP)**—Student partially meets the standards, and may have gaps in knowledge and skills but is capable of most grade-level content.
- **Far Below Proficient (FBP)**—Student may partially meet the standards, but has significant gaps in knowledge and skills of current grade-level content.

Standard Error of Measurement (SEM): The SEM provides information about the level of confidence that a student would achieve the same score if that student tested again on an equivalent form of the test without changing knowledge or skills. The SEM is specific for the particular grade and content area.

Spring '21 PEAKS ELA & Math Scores Review



“Tell the truth. Give them hope.”

Dr. Michael Johnson

2021 PEAKS (Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools)

Participation Rates for NPS

GRADE	Number of Students Enrolled	Number of Students Tested ELA	Number of Students Tested Math
3	57	55	55
4	54	53	53
5	52	51	51
6	50	46	47
7	53	52	52
8	52	52	49
9	55	45	42

Considerations when interpreting scores

- Statewide Participation rates were low
- Caution against making “sweeping conclusions about student performance” using the PEAKS 2021 Data
- Parents and educators can use the data to look at individual student assessments to “make effective instructional decisions” for the 2021-2022 school year
- ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) accountability requirements regarding assessments were waived by USDOE for the 2020-2021 school year.

PEAKS ELA

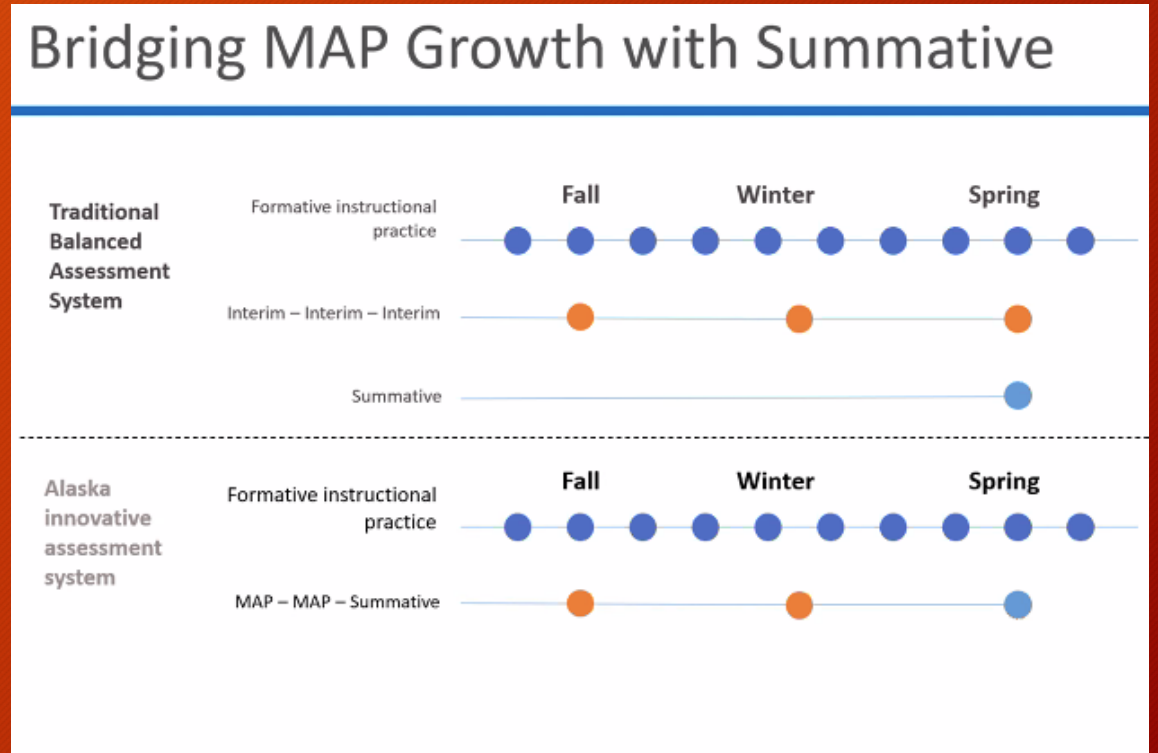
- ELA assessment encompasses reading, writing, and language
- District level- 354 students tested
 - 21% proficient or above
 - 79% below proficient
- State level 44,444 students tested
 - 39.5% proficient or above
 - 60.5% below proficient

PEAKS Math

- Math assessment assesses various skills by grade level
- District Level- 349 students tested
 - 19.5% proficient or above
 - 80.5% below proficient
- State Level- 44,000 students tested
 - 32.4% proficient or above
 - 67.6% below proficient

PEAKS has a new vendor for 2022!

- NWEA will be the new vendor for Alaska's statewide summative assessment
- NPS currently uses NWEA MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) as our interim (formative) assessment
- 2021-2022 will look much like testing in the past
- 2022-2023 will consist of a formative assessments in Fall and Winter and ONE summative test in the Spring



Conclusions (Hope)

- Statewide there were low participation rates due to COVID
- Caution drawing “big picture” conclusions from PEAKS 2021 results
- NEW VENDOR for statewide summative test starting spring 2022
 - Linking study to merge MAP formative and the new summative assessment
- Less time used for assessment and more time used for learning!

Public Comment Statement

The Board of Education welcomes community member input during meetings about issues on or not on the agenda. The Board is not able to respond directly to you during Public Comment; the Board may decide at the end of the meeting during Board Member Comment to discuss your topic at a work session, regular meeting, or direct the Superintendent to look into a situation further.

The Board may not speak about subjects that are protected by legal confidentiality such as specific student discipline issues or personnel issues that could disparage or slander district employees.

The general guideline is approximately three minutes per speaker; however, additional time is allowable if needed. When you speak to the Board, please state your first and last name for the record.



Nome Public Schools
Superintendent Report
Jamie Burgess
September 14, 2021

1. The District participated in a project by the Alaska Mental Health Authority to survey Mental Health supports available for staff and students in Alaska school districts; this was an especially timely project given the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional research will be conducted with community mental health providers. A copy of the project's key findings is attached along with the summary from school districts, including the profile from Nome Public Schools.

2. Attached for the Board's information is an updated AR 6146.1 to address early graduation requirements. The old version of the AR references the old HSGQE graduation exam requirement, and was somewhat contradictory/unclear in its language regarding whether students could apply for early graduation with fewer than seven semesters completed. The language also clarifies that early graduates are not eligible for consideration for valedictorian/salutatorian status.

3. The Department of Education and Early Development in conjunction with the Department of Health and Human Services recently sent a letter to school districts regarding recommendations around COVID-19 mitigation policies. In addition, the letter stated that due to a shortfall in contact tracing personnel, some responsibility for this may fall upon school districts. NSHC's partnership with NPS has thus far relieved some of the burden for our school administrators in this regard, although if we see a rapid uptick in cases, that may not always be the case. A useful infographic was also distributed to clarify how close contacts are identified within a school setting. A copy of the letter and the infographic are attached for your information.

4. NPS is working with Vincent Villela of NACTEC, who is also overseeing the Northwest Alaska Health Education Consortium (AHEC) work for this year, regarding some suicide prevention and mental health training for staff this year. The plan is to continue to train a few staff who can then act as presenters/trainers for their colleagues throughout the year. AHEC provided training directly to students at NBMHS last year, and will again this school year. AHEC also will be providing Healthcare training to students through NACTEC, including American Red Cross certifications, PCA/CNA training, and an EMT certification course.

The District is also working with the PC CARES project (Promoting Community Conversations Around Research to End Suicide) this year. This community-centered project has disseminated a survey to NPS staff as well as inviting a few staff members to participate in the project's monthly talking circles around community-wide efforts on suicide prevention.

5. District Committees – I am in the process of gearing up for creation of this year's Calendar Committee. A brief sign-up survey has gone out on all available channels just to collect emails of interested individuals and their affiliation (i.e. student, staff, parent, etc.) in order to create a balanced group, and I have contacted tribal leadership to determine tribal representatives. Once I have a list of names/emails, I will send a Doodle Poll to set up the first meeting in early/mid-October. Currently Ms. Martinson is the Board representative to the Committee, with Dr.



Nome Public Schools Superintendent Report Jamic Burgess September 14, 2021

Amarok as the alternate. However, since the first meeting may be held after the Board re-organization at the October meeting, those seats may change.

The Equity Committee is also gearing up to hold a first meeting in October – we are seeking a regular meeting date as well as determining membership. Since this is now a Standing Committee of the Board, community notifications and a brief agenda will be distributed. The meetings will be open to the public.

6. Below are photos from the installation of the Middle School Outdoor Activity Course on the Beltz campus. It is located immediately behind the school in front of the Beltz Apartments and Quonset hut. We are excited to see this finally getting installed to provide our students with an opportunity for fresh air and exercise during their lunchtime and after school.



7. Enrollment Report

Enrollment by Date	
School	9/7/21
ACSA	60
NES	318
NBMHS	320
Extensions	17
TOTAL	715

AR 6146.1 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Options available for meeting established requirements:

1. Pupils may be graduated with the minimum number of required units of credit listed by the state department education. The minimum number of required units approved by this Board, or alternative programs equivalent to a regular program that are designed to meet individual needs and developed with administrative approval.
2. Most handicapped pupils must meet the basic requirements.

Adjustments of credit, based on fulfillment of individual education program (IEP) objectives, may be made at the discretion of the principal with advice from the program coordinator and teacher.

Substitution of credit:

A principal may substitute as many as two units of elective credit.

1. Athletics = PE Credit

Participation for a full season in athletics would count as a PE course toward the requirement of Basic PE or the elective credit for PE. The amount of credit would be contingent upon the number of hours the student spent involved in the athletic activity. 90 hours, combined of practice and competition time would be equivalent to 1/2 credit of PE. No student may earn more than 1/2 credit per semester of PE through this method.

2. Drama Credit = English Credit

Students taking a role in a high school theater production would count as a course toward a 1/2 elective credit. The number of contact hours required in participation of the activity will mean 90 contact hours spent rehearsing together as a cast in the presence of the drama coach and the actual production.

The Drama Coach will provide a syllabus/criteria for the course and verification for the number of contact hours for each participant. An evaluation of each student's participation and performance will be provided along with a letter grade.

EARLY GRADUATION

A student who, for sound educational and vocational reasons, wishes to graduate from high school in less time than the ordinary grade 9-12 sequence may request permission to complete graduation requirements on an altered schedule. Their

intention to accomplish this will be stated in writing to the principal. The principal will submit the request to the superintendent who will provide it to the Board for either information or approval ~~is~~ (if less than 7 semesters), for all early graduation requests.

Requirements: The candidate must have:

1. completed seven semesters of high school attendance (~~fewer than 7 semesters required formal board approval of request~~):
2. satisfied all of the requirements of a four-year graduate:
3. earned at least a "B" average at the end of the sixth semester:
4. ~~qualified by virtue of~~ extenuating circumstances, ~~or~~ special goals, ~~and/or concrete post-secondary plans.~~
5. ~~passed the 3 sections of the HSGQE.~~

Procedures: If the applicant meets the above requirements, the student will submit a written request for early graduation to the high school principal, ~~preferable during the sixth semester~~ preferably by March 1st of the year prior to the planned graduation year, but no later than October 1st of the planned graduation year ~~of the seventh semester~~. The request must contain: a statement of endorsement and the signatures of the parents or legal guardian, and must clearly express the reasons for the request.

The matter will be thoroughly reviewed in conference to include the student, counselor, parents, and the high school principal. After a complete evaluation of the request. the principal will forward recommendations to the superintendent for consideration and Board action.

Graduation: If early graduation is approved, the student may participate in commencement exercises on the same basis as other graduates. Students who do not participate in commencement will receive their diplomas as soon as practical after the exercises. **Students will not be eligible for valedictorian/salutatorian status.**

GRADUATION OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

The Board of Education desires to provide equal educational opportunity for all students, including those with exceptional learning needs. Therefore. exceptional students successfully completing a plan of high school study will be awarded a standard high school diploma and will be allowed to participate in all graduation activities with the regular student body.

To remove any stigma or label associated with special education programming and to foster maximum development of a student's potential. the graduation of an

exceptional student will require successful completion of the same number of credits required of all other students.

All exceptional students will receive instruction in English, Mathematics, US History, science, physical education, and health for the credits specified as requirements for graduation. In addition to this instruction in core areas, exceptional students are required to take electives to complete the necessary numbers of credits for Graduation. Successful completion of the requirements for a certain number of credits may be accomplished in various ways, for example:

1. Institution of specialized courses subject to Board approval.
2. Tutorial assistance in existing courses
3. Modifications of requirements for existing courses
4. Through a pass-fail system for certain courses.

Program modification for exceptional students will be the responsibility of the planning and placement team and is based on an exhaustive assessment of the needs and suitability of program options for any given child.

It is assumed that prospective employers of high school graduates usually will seek additional information on an applicant if there are any questions about qualifications for a given position.

The School District will provide such information in accordance with student requests and its policy on student records.

Due to the uniqueness of programs for exceptional students and the implications accompanying this policy on high school graduations a number of parent conferences will be held during a child's enrollment in the high school. The guidelines below suggest only minimum parent contact.

1. Initial conference - freshman year to discuss planned program and to explain graduation policy.
2. Final conference - prior to graduation to review program and to reassert the intent of high school graduation policy.

(cf. 5127 - Graduation Ceremonies and Activities)

(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance and Counseling Services)

Legal Reference:

ALASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

4 AAC 06.075 High school graduation requirements

Revised: September 14, 2021



Adopted: June 10, 2003

Nome Public Schools



MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents

FROM: Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner 
Dr. Anne Zink, Chief Medical Officer, DHSS 

DATE: August 26, 2021

SUBJECT: Recommendations for keeping Alaskan K-12 students safe in school

The delta variant is causing a dramatic rise in COVID-19 cases in Alaska and throughout the country. Currently, most of Alaska's boroughs and census areas are in the high-risk level. Presently, the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services' (DHSS) ability to process COVID-19 testing results and perform contact tracing in a timely manner is delayed. Cases of COVID-19 occurring in schools that are not promptly identified and managed can spread quickly and broadly, resulting in increased community spread and possible school or classroom shutdowns.

Districts with optional masking policies and limited screening testing policies are more likely to experience considerably higher rates of COVID-19 transmission. Already, full classrooms have had to quarantine where students were not universally masked. Conversely, when proper universal masking is implemented, the number of students quarantined is greatly reduced.

DHSS recommends that in areas with ongoing community transmission, school districts should implement the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#) to the fullest extent possible. The CDC guidance is designed specifically to keep students safely in the classroom to benefit from in-person learning.

These guidelines underscore the importance of a layered approach to preventing COVID-19 transmission in schools that takes into consideration the level of community transmission and vaccination coverage rates, among other things. The layers of protection outlined in the guidance include vaccination of eligible students and staff, universal masking, social distancing, appropriate ventilation, screening testing, and appropriate isolation and quarantine.

DHSS also recommends that schools assist by including procedures for internal contact tracing and rapid notification to close contacts in their mitigation plans to respond quickly and efficiently to COVID-19 cases in school settings. While the DHSS Division of Public Health works to increase capacity, **we are asking schools to take the lead on intraschool contact tracing.**

DHSS remains available to answer questions, provide consultation as needed, and assist districts with their COVID-19 mitigation planning.

School districts are best situated to quickly respond to cases that occur in their schools as they are the most knowledgeable about district-specific policies (and associated compliance) regarding student and staff spacing, masking, and school-based interactions. Districts can also work swiftly with staff to determine which students and staff were close contacts and notify parents to implement appropriate quarantine guidance.

Here are recommendations for school districts regarding contact tracing:

- Each school should establish internal procedures to rapidly notify students and staff who are close contacts to confirmed cases. Schools should also identify one point of contact to coordinate with local public health nurses or contact tracers.
- Parents of students with a known exposure, as defined by CDC, should be notified by the school district of the exposure and be given appropriate quarantine instructions.ⁱ Parents should be notified of an exposure regardless of the vaccination status of students. Students who are unvaccinated will need to quarantine.
- If contact tracing is not possible and a positive case is detected in an indoor setting where all students were not consistently masking, all unvaccinated students who were in the same room with the infected individual for an extended period should quarantine and all students in the school should be notified of the positive.

Per CDC, students are considered to be a “close contact” in the K–12 indoor classroom setting if any of the following criteria are met:
1) An unvaccinated student who was fully masked but spent a cumulative 15 minutes at less than 3 feet from a COVID-19 positive student who was also <i>fully masked</i> ; OR
2) An unvaccinated student who spent a cumulative 15 minutes or more at less than 6 feet from a COVID-19 positive student where one or both students were <i>unmasked</i> ; OR
3) An unvaccinated student who was exposed to a COVID-19 positive teacher or staff member for 15 minutes or more at less than 6 feet, regardless of masking. ⁱⁱ

We recommend sharing with parents the contact tracing efforts that will be performed by your district and letting them know in advance the types of notifications they can expect to receive.

The Division of Public Health has created two template letters to help you communicate with parents. Please see the attached. These templates can be modified to meet your needs. They include up to date recommendations for quarantine of close contacts, and a general letter that informs parents about the limited capacity to perform contact investigations, and the actions they can take to protect the health and safety of their children and families.

If your school cannot perform contact tracing or contact tracing efforts cannot determine whether students meet the known exposure criteria, the minimum expectation is for schools to provide notification to parents of potential exposures.

The Division of Public Health remains available to provide guidance and suggestions on school district contact tracing procedures. It is the intent of our contact tracing workforce and local public health nurses to continue to notify the school when new staff and student positives are reported and identified as associated with the school setting.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued partnership. Keeping students in school this year is a priority for all of us! If you have any questions or would like assistance, please email schoolhealthandsafety@alaska.gov or call the school health and safety number: 907-269-3433.

For more information, please visit the [DHSS School Health Information webpage](#).

Enclosures (3)

ⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact>

Evaluating Potential Close Contacts (students only)

School setting: **WITH** correct and consistent mask use*

Is potentially exposed student fully vaccinated? **



What is the distance the infected student was from other student(s) for ≥ 15 mins over a 24-hour period (cumulative)?

YES

STAYS IN SCHOOL

When 6 feet or less from the infected student, the potentially exposed student stays in school, fully masked indoors. Recommend testing 3-5 days after exposure.

3-6 feet

NO

Less than 3 feet

QUARANTINES AT HOME ***

Potentially exposed student quarantines AT HOME for 10 days (returning on day 11) after exposure OR 7 days after exposure (returning day 8) AND tests negative day 5 or later post-exposure

These guidelines DO NOT apply to:

- Symptomatic children, vaccinated or unvaccinated
- Children more than 6 feet apart from the infected student.
- Children who are within 90 days of recovering from COVID-19.

* Correct and consistent mask use means both the infected and potentially exposed student(s) wore masks that fit snugly on the face and were made of more than 1 layer.

** Fully vaccinated means the student is at least 2 weeks out from their second dose of vaccine.

*** In unvaccinated populations, the entire class may require quarantine.

NOTE: Infected students should isolate at home.



2021-2029 In-Person Learning Guidelines and Resources

Trust

Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

This project was funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority.

Mental Health Supports in Alaska Schools

A LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT



Presented by Stellar Group
stellargp.com

JUNE 2021

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KEY FINDINGS

The variability of the mental health supports and services provided in Alaska school districts makes it challenging to definitively identify overarching commonalities and themes. These key findings provide an overview of the landscape of mental health supports and services, with an acknowledgment that not all districts will reflect the same experiences.

- » Districts are using a range of approaches and internal and external resources to address student mental health. These combinations generally allow most districts to provide some level of social emotional learning and mental health supports and services. However, the levels of services and supports available vary significantly between districts.
- » Districts often use in-service and professional development opportunities to provide staff training for school climate and mental health priorities. Training topics have included trauma-engaged principles, culturally relevant approaches, and social emotional learning, among numerous others.
- » The impacts of COVID-19 on the mental health of school communities were widespread. Districts shared informal student observations of pandemic-related concerns such as isolation, trauma, depression, and anxiety. Some saw an increase in student mental health needs that is predicted to continue into the 2021-2022 school year. These observations are prompting some districts to review the levels of social emotional learning and the mental health supports and services they will provide moving forward.
- » Districts also saw pandemic-related burnout and increased stress and anxiety among staff. Generally, mental health services and supports for staff are addressed through professional development and in-service opportunities focused on self-care and wellness, as well as through staff health benefits programs.
- » Delivery of social emotional learning curriculums and student mental health supports and services were disrupted by COVID-19. While virtual delivery is generally found to be less effective than in-person, many districts are finding ways to use virtual platforms to address gaps and add additional student supports and services.
- » Districts of all sizes face barriers to implementing or delivering mental health supports and services. Some of these barriers include alignment; availability, access, and resources; and external influences. Community partnerships are often valuable in overcoming some of these challenges.
- » Trained school staff and community partners are critical to providing mental health supports and services. Many districts include their staff and community partners as a strength for this work. The relationship building with families and community partners that comes from these efforts is also a positive for districts.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In December of 2020, the Alaska Mental Health Trust (Trust) and partners from the State of Alaska Departments of Education & Early Development (DEED) and Health & Social Services (DHSS) invited a group of statewide stakeholders to a conversation on visioning and working towards improved mental health supports and services for Alaskan students.

A smaller group from the Trust, DEED, Alaska Mental Health Board/Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and DHSS continued to meet and review the feedback from the larger stakeholder conversation. The list of Behavioral Health in Schools Group participants is available in Appendix A. A primary takeaway was a collective need for more information on the landscape of current school mental and behavioral health activities and services around the state to help project partners determine how to best focus their future efforts.

The Trust contracted with the Stellar Group to complete a landscape analysis of current efforts in Alaska school districts. Every Alaska public school district was invited to participate in an interview. Thirty-one districts completed interviews, representing 91% of students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 as of October 2020.¹ A full list of those districts can be found in Appendix B. Participants varied and included district leadership, counselors, social workers, and other staff supporting or with insights into district mental health services and supports. Interviews were conducted one-on-one or in small groups via Zoom between March and June of 2021.

The interviews focused on five areas of inquiry:

1. Student and staff mental health concerns
2. Foundational elements and general practices of supportive school climates
3. Mental health resources, services, and supports
4. Impacts, barriers, and challenges
5. Ideal systems and future impacts

Within the five areas of inquiry, subtopics covered the impacts of COVID-19, strengths of programs and supports, and application data to inform mental health efforts.

This brief is a summary of the interview key themes and findings for school districts' approaches to providing mental health supports and services. In addition to this report, a profile was created for each of the 31 districts interviewed with detailed information about the specific approaches and needs within each district. Profiles will be available online at alaskamentalhealthtrust.org in the late summer of 2021. Further details on each of the topics covered in the summary can be explored at a district level in the profiles.

¹ Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. District Enrollment by Grade as of October 1, 2020. [Data file]. Available from <https://education.alaska.gov/data-center>

This summary and the profiles are based on details shared by districts during interviews. Some information is anecdotal and may not reflect the full spectrum of activities or experiences. Knowledge of specific subject matter areas covered in the interviews was typically dependent on the participant's role and experience within the district. The second phase of research will begin in July 2021. Phase two will continue to round out the information and incorporate additional context and perspectives, including interviews with community partners.

FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Districts were asked about foundational elements for understanding needs, creating comprehensive and responsive programming, and ensuring buy-in within the school community. Within each of these elements, districts spoke to opportunities for growth or improvement, as well as standout elements that were viewed as strengths.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The existence of goals, plans, and policies related to school mental health is highly variable across districts. In some instances, this includes a general lack of specificity or gaps in explicit goals or policies for school mental health. Translating goals and policies to practice is also an opportunity for some. Some examples of existing goals and policies include:

- » Board goals addressing mental health and social emotional learning instruction
- » Strategic plans that incorporate mental health and social emotional learning
- » District social emotional learning standards and objectives

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Districts typically utilize professional development to deliver information on mental health supports and services, social emotional learning, and school climate building efforts. Training includes both state-required mental health content and district-led sessions, such as:

- » Mental Health First Aid
- » Staff mindfulness, wellness, and self-care
- » Culturally responsive and trauma-engaged principles and practices
- » Social emotional learning approaches and implementation
- » Restorative practices

Some districts have established early-release days to offer consistent in-service time. Delivery of synchronous and asynchronous content during COVID-19 allowed trainers to reach more staff members on a regular basis and created more flexible, on-demand access to professional development content.

During the interviews, supports for staff were covered less extensively and were generally discussed in the context of district benefits (i.e., insurance coverage or employee assistance programs). However, professional development and in-service training came up as key channels for covering staff wellness and self-care.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At a base level, most districts reach out to their communities for collaboration and input during major strategic plan updates. Many also typically engage some form of an advisory group made up of families and other community members. Engagement examples include:

- » Engagement with Tribal organizations
- » Facebook Live and teleconference open forums and Q&A sessions
- » Community and family surveys

In a few instances, districts noted how the restrictions around COVID-19 created barriers to getting families and community members into the school buildings to the extent that would be possible during a normal school year.

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) has both school social workers and community advocates. The community advocates work at some LKSD school sites as a liaison between school and community. Both the social workers and community advocates play an integral part in providing more culturally relevant services and building community relationships.

CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Some districts utilize the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools to inform aspects of their mental health approaches, such as staff training and curriculum review. Beyond this standard expectation, efforts range from organic or informal to intentional approaches. Some districts rely on the local knowledge, experience, and relationships of staff to bring cultural relevance into the school community, but this is not always supported by a specific effort to ensure cultural relevance. Some activities include:

- » Student credit opportunities for culturally responsive activities in their villages
- » Staff roles such as migrant and cultural coordinators
- » Family outreach activities in multiple languages
- » Curriculum review with a focus on cultural relevance
- » Resources committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion work

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Through the Culturally Responsive and Embedded Social and Emotional Learning (CRESEL) grant, Lower Yukon School District (LYSD) is completing a set of Yup'ik social emotional learning standards. The standards are being created by a team of Yup'ik mentors and teachers to infuse Yup'ik values and worldviews into LYSD's social emotional learning approach.

TRAUMA-ENGAGED PRINCIPLES

Similar to other foundational elements covered, integration of trauma-engaged principles generally starts with building staff awareness through professional development. Many districts either plan to implement or are currently implementing trauma-engaged principles. Examples of efforts include:

- » Trauma-engaged professional learning communities
- » DEED-led training and e-learning modules
- » Use of the Transforming Schools framework and toolkit developed by DEED and the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
- » Restorative practice and trauma-informed updates to discipline policies
- » Adoption of trauma-informed board policies and strategic planning elements

DATA USE

Districts utilize a mix of data sources to collect insights on student mental health and districtwide trends. In addition to discipline and academic data, districts used sources such as:

- » AASB's School Climate and Connectedness Survey
- » Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)
- » PowerSchool
- » District-administered staff, family, and student surveys

Outside of formal data sources, there is a fair amount of anecdotal and informal data being used. A few districts also find that a current lack of data is an indicator that this is an area in need of attention and resources. Some districts needed or are in the process of sourcing a universal data system with specific social emotional and mental health tracking capabilities.

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District is piloting Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA), an identification and assessment tool for social emotional competencies.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Districts are using a range of approaches as they work to address student mental health. A central focus of the interviews was to gather a general understanding of the level of existing school mental health resources and services within each district. One common method for organizing supports and deliveries is the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), a three-tiered framework that can be applied to both academic and social emotional learning and is used to identify students who may be struggling and need more support. A goal of the MTSS framework is to provide early interventions to prevent or address academic and behavioral challenges.

The three tiers of MTSS as outlined by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services include:

- » **Tier 1 Universal Strategies:** Universal Tier 1 services are typically offered to all students within a school system and could include widespread screening, social-emotional based learning curricula, and prevention-based activities that foster healthy functioning in a generative school climate.
- » **Tier 2 Selective Services and Supports:** Tier 2 services allow for early intervention and targeted support. For example, this could include services for students exhibiting risk factors often associated with potential issues but for whom the issues have not fully manifested. This could include more directed student screening and interventions to reduce the likelihood of issues developing or resolve early manifestations of difficulty.
- » **Tier 3 Intensive Services and Supports:** Tier 3 services are generally for students identified as experiencing mental health or substance-related difficulties and may include individual or family treatment or other individualized interventions.

Districts were asked to outline their mental health services and supports in the context of the MTSS continuum. Most districts have some form of services and supports at all three levels of the MTSS framework, with some exceptions.

Districts also shared their strategies for identifying students who may benefit from the targeted and more intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. The specific supports and services offered within each tier are inconsistent between districts and not always clearly distinguished.

TIER 1 UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES

Universal Tier 1 supports are the most widely used, are generally grade-level specific, and are often curriculum-based. A smaller number of districts have developed their own programming, typically created by a counselor or related role (i.e., social worker, social emotional learning coach, etc.). Teachers and counselors (if available) are most frequently leading Tier 1 delivery through classroom instruction. In some instances, districts are working

with community partners to deliver Tier 1 content, though it is far more common to see community involvement for targeted and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. At the Tier 1 level, some districts offer individual school sites and staff choices on specific curriculum and programs. Tier 1 supports and services include examples such as:

- » Specific curriculums such as The Fourth R, Second Step, and Kelso’s Choice
- » Suicide prevention programming like Signs of Suicide and Sources of Strength
- » Community partner presentations and guest speakers
- » Rotating thematic focuses on topics like dating violence and bullying prevention

**STORIES
FROM
ALASKA
SCHOOLS**

Chatham School District partnered with Elders and community members to develop culturally appropriate universal Tier 1 supports. Their work with Elders is contributing to the identification of student needs, availability of supports, and integration of spiritual practices for grief support.

TIER 2 SELECTIVE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Targeted Tier 2 supports are available in most districts, though gaps start to emerge at this level. Interventions often take on what one district described as “more of a menu” of supports, based on available resources and student need. Districts also start to recommend outside support at Tier 2, particularly if they do not have school counselors, social workers, or trained mental health clinicians on staff.

Some school sites use a form of a student assistance team made up of district staff and occasionally, outside community partners and agencies. These teams are involved in activities such as the delivery of supports, identification and referral for student needs, and review of student progress. Typically, student assistance teams become more involved as students move into more targeted Tier 2 and intensive Tier 3 support levels. Examples of Tier 2 services and supports include:

- » Specific curriculum like Check-In/Check-Out
- » Targeted groups (i.e., grief groups) and social skills groups
- » Individual counseling with district counselors or with community and telehealth providers
- » Referrals to local and regional mental health services and supports

**STORIES
FROM
ALASKA
SCHOOLS**

Sitka School District’s social workers and counselors leverage a variety of services and supports for Tier 2 interventions, including social skill groups, Check-In/Check-Out, and targeted behavior student supports. This combination of services and supports provided by school counselors and potentially social workers is common in other districts.

TIER 3 INTENSIVE SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

Intensive Tier 3 supports are highly variable and dependent on access to trained district or outside personnel. It is common to see more overlap with special education services and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) at this level as well. Counseling and service delivery might initially continue within the district if appropriate staff are available. However, a referral or recommendation for outside services typically occurs once the level of need exceeds available services. Often, district staff who can provide this level of Tier 3 support within the school environment are funded through grants or are itinerant providers (i.e., school psychologists). Staff members are generally involved in supporting students with reentry programming if the services take the student out of the school environment for an extended time.

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District has embedded school-based clinicians through work with the Mat-Su Health Foundation Behavioral Health in Schools initiatives. The program has built connections between families and schools.

Access to and availability of providers for Tier 3 varies widely depending on the district's location and ranges from onsite delivery within the school building to virtual telehealth services. Districts depend on funding and partnerships from a variety of organizations, including Tribal organizations, local or regional health clinics, and mental health facilities, among others. Examples of how districts are connecting students with intensive Tier 3 include:

- » School-based clinics
- » Itinerant and telehealth therapy
- » Sessions onsite at the schools with community providers
- » Reports to Office of Children's Services
- » Regional Tribal health providers such as SouthEast Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) and Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Anchorage School District partners closely with multiple community organizations and clinics to connect students with Tier 3 services and supports. Partners also come in to provide information to counseling staff on the programs available through the community.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION FOR TIER 2 AND TIER 3

Generally, districts rely on two primary sources for identifying individual student needs and connecting them with the appropriate level of support:

- » Identification by someone in the student's life
- » Progression through the MTSS or similar framework

Families, counselors, other school staff or teachers, community providers, or sometimes the student themselves may identify potential needs for supports and services. Small districts also rely on more informal identification given staffs' tight-knit relationships and integration with their communities and students. For framework-based identification, some districts use student data in combination with staff analysis to review an individual's situation and determine the appropriate next steps. This could include additional screening or assessment through either a district tool or a recommendation to connect with an outside provider for further screening. In some instances, qualified staff will make a direct referral to an outside provider. Outside providers could include community, regional, or telehealth providers, among others.

IMPACTS OF COVID-19

The impacts of COVID-19 in schools were pervasive for individuals, districts, and communities and were discussed in almost all areas of interview inquiry.

- » For individuals, pandemic impacts manifested in the form of issues such as stress, anxiety, and burnout for staff and observations of increased needs among students that some predicted could continue into the 2021-2022 school year. Isolation, trauma, depression, and anxiety were all anecdotal examples of pandemic-related impacts among students.
- » The increase in need put pressure on all tiers of supports and services, from delivery of universally offered Tier 1 supports to identification for intensive Tier 3 services.
- » Limited face-to-face interactions created feelings of isolation, which were intensified in some instances by regional physical barriers that restricted travel in and out of districts that typically allowed for access to mental health services.
- » Delivery of district social emotional learning programs and mental health services were disrupted to varying degrees, with some programs pausing completely during COVID-19 and others adapting to accommodate virtual delivery.
- » Identification of student need was challenging in virtual interactions. Virtual environments also made it difficult to contact and deliver services to some students, with some losing all contact with districts.

POSITIVES AND PIVOTS FOR THE FUTURE

In general, districts are hopeful about resuming services with school re-openings, and some were able to maintain a level of consistency by resuming in-person school early in the 2020-2021 year. Positive impacts also emerged among the challenges.

TECHNOLOGY

Expansion of virtual supports and tools was viewed with mixed sentiment given the preference for in-person delivery. However, districts of all sizes are considering ways to continue the use of virtual mental health training for staff and delivery of supports for students. Districts spoke to:

- » Benefits of becoming more comfortable with virtual technology and how that might facilitate continued use of alternatives to in-person service delivery
- » Overcoming lack of home internet access by finding ways to get devices and internet into student homes

Remote districts are finding gradual access benefits from the integration of telehealth services that were in many cases reinforced during COVID-19. In some instances, students are able to visit with providers onsite within the school building or local clinic, reducing the need for travel and gaining access to more specialized care.

**STORIES
FROM
ALASKA
SCHOOLS**

With its remote school locations, Kuspuk School District utilized a combination of itinerant and telehealth for the delivery of universal and targeted supports before COVID-19. During COVID-19, lack of internet in student homes made remote and distanced delivery challenging, and restrictions limited itinerant travel. However, as schools began to reopen, Kuspuk has been able to increase access to their Tier 1 and Tier 2 through telehealth services.

RELATIONSHIPS

While instances of isolation and disruption to student interactions certainly existed, some districts found increased connections during the pandemic. Examples included:

- » Phone and video outreach helping staff connect more consistently and grow relationships with students' families
- » Smaller in-person class sizes and cohorts, allowing for more direct student-to-teacher interactions
- » An increase in support and acceptance as students became more self-aware of their own mental health needs and the needs of their peers

**STORIES
FROM
ALASKA
SCHOOLS**

When students were learning remotely, districts had to rely more on phone and virtual outreach to families. Denali Borough School District, Bristol Bay Borough School District, and Yukon-Koyukuk School District shared experiences of building more connections with families through their calls to students' homes.

EXISTING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to pandemic-specific observations, districts discussed mental health needs and concerns among students and staff, as well as barriers and challenges to implementing and delivering services and supports.

A small number of districts identified existing data sources and indicators related to mental health concerns, but most of the topics covered in the following needs and concerns section are based on anecdotal observations.

PRESSING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS AND CONCERNS

Overall, districts indicated that students' anxiety is a pressing concern, as well as trauma and related topics of instability, addiction, or substance use among families. Depression and suicide, suicidal ideation, or self-harm were also commonly referenced concerns. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and other concerns were also discussed.

Stress and anxiety were frequently cited as staff concerns. Opportunities for self-care and wellness were often brought up as unmet needs, as well as related feelings of "burnout" and being overwhelmed with limited time available to meet all student needs. Isolation and lack of community emerged in the context of COVID-19, but also in a few rural or remote regions. Secondary and pandemic-related trauma were also mentioned, among other concerns.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Districts discussed existing challenges and barriers to implementing and delivering mental health supports and services.

ALIGNMENT

Districts discussed alignment and consistency in the context of strengths, goals, and barriers. Situations were described where districtwide prioritization of social emotional learning and mental health services and supports lacked focus, continuity, and allocated time. As one district explained, training teachers to become trauma-informed helps, but the systems and policies that support their instruction do not always align. Other examples included:

- » Pressure for academic performance versus mental health and social emotional learning
- » Limited bandwidth and time available for mental health trainings and professional development
- » Lack of statewide social emotional learning standards

AVAILABILITY, ACCESS, AND RESOURCES

Availability of and access to services and supports came up for districts of all sizes. This area is commonly influenced by whether there are enough trained personnel and adequate funds to meet the level of need. Examples include:

- » Provider shortages statewide and availability of qualified personnel
- » Inconsistent and unpredictable mental health funding in schools and communities
- » Lack of staff and funding for a mental health role committed to each school site

Access in rural and remote areas is further complicated by regional barriers, including travel. Weather can obstruct providers traveling to communities, as well as students and staff who need to leave their homes to seek services elsewhere. Travel often requires time out of the classroom and away from communities, which could further impact students' overall success.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

Districts also discussed the impacts of system factors and family environments on students, particularly as family involvement becomes more critical for students accessing outside providers. Challenges include:

- » The stigma around accessing mental health services and privacy challenges in small, tight-knit communities
- » Transportation to and from mental health appointments and services
- » Impacts of substance use among student families
- » Issues tied to family and provider trust-building due to frequent provider turnover

OPPORTUNITIES

Districts listed numerous existing and planned efforts designed to address challenges and barriers. Partnerships are a common example.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH COMMUNITY AND STATE

State, regional, and local community partners play integral roles in supplementing the services outside of a district's scope, such as more intensive Tier 3 residential treatment or ongoing psychological interventions. Other partners are stepping in to collaborate with districts and share their expertise with students and staff through presentations and other universal Tier 1 or targeted Tier 2 support services. The relationships range in formality and include contractual agreements and grant partnerships, with the latter providing numerous benefits for districts.

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Districts are leveraging state resources to increase student services and supports and provide training. Multiple districts discussed plans to engage DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist for delivery of services and supports and staff professional development. Other districts are working with staff trained through the University of Alaska Fairbanks Rural Human Service (RHS) Program to build community relationships and to provide student supports.

Partners include DEED, AASB, Tribal organizations, local or regional health clinics, and mental health facilities, among others. Examples of programs and efforts include:

- » Use of a social emotional learning coach through a local partnership that helps with staff training and student supports
- » Tribal organizations and public health partners that travel to sites for in-person classroom instruction

STORIES FROM ALASKA SCHOOLS

Kodiak Island Borough School District is making a conscious effort to increase all levels of counseling support. As part of this effort, KIBSD convened a cross-functional group of community providers, including mental health nonprofits and the local women's resource center, to strengthen their community network and ability to respond to student needs.

FUTURE PLANS AND IDEAL SYSTEMS

Individual districts discussed numerous goals, plans, and pilot programs for school mental health. In many ways, COVID-19 continues to influence how districts are thinking about the future of their mental health supports. Some predicted a growing commitment to social emotional learning and mental health prompted by the impacts of the pandemic, while others are more focused on resuming their standard level of supports after significant disruptions.

When asked to describe an ideal system that met the mental health and wellness needs of all students and staff, aspirations and ideas covered many topics. A common ask is for local supports that integrate family and community elements, with some mentions of interest in building "homegrown" talent within the mental health field. Some districts described a stronger blend of student and family services, supported by roles like community social workers and Elders programs. Other ideas included examples such as de-escalation spaces in schools, consistent funding, specific mental health personnel, and additional time for mental health supports and social emotional professional development.

APPENDIX A: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS GROUP

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APPENDIX B: LIST OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS INTERVIEWED

Aleutian Region School District	Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District
Anchorage School District	Kodiak Island Borough School District
Annette Island School District	Kuspuk School District
Bristol Bay Borough School District	Lower Kuskokwim School District
Chatham School District	Lower Yukon School District
Chugach School District	Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District
Craig City School District	Mount Edgecumbe High School
Denali Borough School District	Nenana City School District
Dillingham City School District	Nome Public Schools
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District	Petersburg City School District
Galena City School District	Sitka School District
Haines Borough School District	Tanana City School District
Hoonah City School District	Unalaska City School District
Iditarod Area School District	Yukon-Koyukuk School District
Juneau Borough School District	Yupit School District
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	

ADDENDUM 1: SCHOOL DISTRICT PROFILES

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Mental Health in Schools Profile:

ALEUTIAN REGION SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Aleutian Region School District (ARSD) serves the Western Aleutian Island communities of Atka and Adak. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's two schools serve approximately 30 students.

ARSD's small size and relationships with local communities contribute to the staff's ability to proactively identify student needs and knowledge of who to reach out to if student needs exceed the services and supports available through the district.

Highlights of ARSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Formation of district benchmarks and standards for social emotional learning and wellbeing
- » Early identification of needs and individualized outreach from teachers to connect students with appropriate level of supports and services
- » Intentional integration between school and community
- » Partnerships with local health clinics and tribal organizations to provide more intensive Tier 3 services and supports
- » Collaboration with itinerant therapists to provide classroom lessons on topics like coping strategies

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Although ARSD was in person, COVID-19 created feelings of isolation for staff and students given the limited ability to leave and travel between the islands. Similarly, travel restrictions significantly reduced access to mental health providers and community health services. With the lifting of travel bans, the district anticipates seeing continued efforts to meet the pandemic-related concerns of families and students, such as stress.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

With less than 20 students at each school site, ARSD takes an organic approach to universal and targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and services. Community, itinerant, and telehealth providers are integral for delivery of intensive Tier 3 supports and services.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic approaches Classroom lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic approaches
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, itinerant therapist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, special education director, itinerant therapist
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, community partner student screenings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern Aleutian Tribes offered through itinerants and telehealth Aleutian Pribilof Island Association
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District foundation and special education funds

BARRIERS

ARSD schools are in remote, isolated communities and staff numbers are small. The district does not have a school counselor on staff and relies on partnerships with community health clinics and itinerant and telehealth providers for more intensive Tier 3 supports and services. Turnover is common among these providers. Teaching staff often fill many roles within their schools, making it challenging to add new mental health programs to their existing priorities. The physical distance between the two island school sites also creates challenges for bringing staff together in one location and building comradery and collegiality.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

ARSD discussed the potential for continuing the mental health telehealth supports introduced during the pandemic into the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, ARSD would like to continue offering opportunities focused on staff social emotional health. The district would also like to consider providing training for student identification in the context of the school communities' histories.

Ideally, ARSD would like to see a social worker at each school site to help connect families to resources, services, and supports.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Anchorage School District (ASD) is located in Southcentral Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 96 schools serve approximately 41,900 students

ASD has focused on building shared language and consistency around mental health and social emotional learning for many years. More recently, the school board added language specific to these efforts into their goals and guardrails.

Highlights of ASD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Establishing common staff language and foundational trainings around the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and broad approaches to social emotional learning that are encompassing of related supports (i.e., trauma-informed)
- » Introduction of an equity-informed social emotional learning charter to serve as a streamlined guide for evaluating curriculum and programs
- » Ability to provide social emotional programs and supports through use of grant funds
- » Access to professionally trained staff with a commitment to community and the flexibility to reimagine and revise programs and services based on student needs
- » Strong partnerships with community-based organizations, with shared goals tied to their work in schools and collaborative efforts to deliver onsite services such as ASD's school-based health centers

COVID-19 IMPACTS

With virtual delivery, identification of intensive Tier 3 student needs was difficult, and some students and families had yet to be reconnected with ASD after losing contact. Most community partners provided telehealth delivery and continued to maintain the service as sites reopened. There were also positive impacts. ASD high schools partnered with community providers to raise awareness of the lingering mental health impacts of COVID-19 and the availability of local support options. The increased use of online systems and asynchronous training for professional development allowed the district to reach more staff and may potentially continue into next school year.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

ASD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the MTTS. Approaches and processes vary from school-to-school. Intensive Tier 3 supports incorporate a combination of ASD personnel, resources available through the district’s school-based health centers, and community partners.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Connected and Respected • Safe & Civil Schools • CHAMPS • Capturing Kids’ Hearts • Lions Quest • American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher-led interventions • Progress monitoring of individual student need
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, support teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, student support team
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, student support team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, and grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Mental Health First Aid • Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) suicide prevention • You’re Not Alone • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based health centers • School psychologist, coordinator, and behavior strategist • Volunteers of America (VOA) • Providence • Southcentral Foundation • North Star Behavioral Health • Cook Inlet Tribal Council
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support team, assessments, staff recommendations
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and grant funds

BARRIERS

While ASD is a large district with many community partners, the district still faces access barriers for early intervention and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. Funding is one piece of extending access. However, funding is limited by the availability of trained personnel and community-based services in the state. Additionally, demands on time make it difficult for mental health personnel to come together to network and align on practices.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

ASD is looking at alignment opportunities between social emotional learning and employment skills as an option for high school universal instruction. Additionally, the district set a goal to expand school-based health centers through existing community partnerships with Volunteers of America (VOA) and Providence. The new Equity Department is developing a data dashboard focusing on equity issues that will likely encompass aspects of social emotional learning and mental health supports.

Ideally, ASD would like to connect existing statewide funding with the needs of communities, as well as investing in adding a mental health specialist at every school or investing in current counseling staff. The idea of adding networking time with other districts to share and combine efforts, potentially by expanding Echo Trainings, was also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

ANNETTE ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Annette Island School District (AISD) is located in Southeast Alaska and based in Metlakatla on the west coast of Annette Island, 15 airmiles south of Ketchikan. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 315 students.

AISD's use of a Response to Intervention (RTI) approach is reinforced through ongoing efforts to engage and build trust among families and students and through regular collaboration with mental health community partners.

Examples of AISD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Introduction of a family engagement specialist role to provide behavioral health and limited social worker supports and to build relationships with students and families
- » Collaboration between AISD and community partners on student mental health services, supported by a weekly partner meeting between school counselors and community providers
- » Progression toward closing trust gaps with families and expanding overall engagement, including a new partnership with Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) on the FIRE Grant, a family engagement grant
- » Culturally-responsive programming through annual student workshop opportunities, Zaretta Hammond in-service book series, and integration of cultural groups at student assemblies

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Early during COVID-19, counselor staffing gaps and condensed schedules made it difficult to reach students for universal and targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and services. A new "COVID assist" position was added to help fill these gaps using pandemic funds. More intensive Tier 3 services from outside contracts transitioned to online delivery due to travel restrictions. The district also partnered with their local tribal organization to fund internet for all families, which helped allow for some continuation of Tier 3 services while students were online.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

AISD uses RTI as the primary approach for mental health services and supports at all three tiers of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Local and regional community partners and contracted itinerant providers are involved in targeted and intensive Tier 2 and 3 supports and services.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Intervention • Student portfolios • Seminars for major grade transitions (i.e., 6th and 9th) • TEEN TRUTH • Second Step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Intervention • Individual counseling • Parent meetings • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, family engagement specialist, special education teacher, nurse • Annette Island Service Unit • Children’s Mental Health
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Intervention process
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID and general budget funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID and general budget funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itinerant and telehealth contracted outside providers • Children’s Mental Health • Annette Island Service Unit • Community Connections • Raven’s Way • iGrad
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Intervention process
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education and general funds

BARRIERS

While AISD has access to Ketchikan as a regional hub, the district is in a rural community. Access to qualified providers is limited, and teacher retention can be a challenge. High turnover and lack of longevity of community partners can impact the consistency of services and supports. Additionally, it can hinder relationship building and lessen trust among families, particularly those who may have had negative experiences in school environments. Overall availability of time and the many roles held by staff is an additional challenge faced by AISD.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

AISD would like to formalize their mental health services and supports and select a districtwide tool that can be used consistently. Counselors and administrators are also considering options for social emotional learning curriculum that may potentially replace Second Step. Continuing to offer telehealth may be a way to maintain services like a school psychologist at a lower cost than hiring for a full-time role. The district will also continue their work with the AASB through the family engagement FIRE Grant and also plan on introducing trauma-engaged resources as part of contract work with The Sustainable Learning Projects' Dr. Trevor Sponis.

Ideally, AISD would like to see temporary community student housing and additional access to regional mental health resources for staff.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

BRISTOL BAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Bristol Bay Borough School District (BBBSD) is based in Naknek, which is located on the northeastern end of Bristol Bay, 297 airmiles southwest of Anchorage. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development \(DEED\) Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's two schools serve approximately 100 students, in addition to 20 students enrolled in the Bristol Bay Correspondence program.

By utilizing local and state partnerships, BBBSD is able to access the knowledge and expertise of trained personnel to provide student services and supports.

Highlights of BBBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Leveraging community services through Camai Community Health Center to provide a social emotional learning coach that oversees universal and early intervention supports at Tier 1 and Tier 2, as well as contributing to staff trainings
- » Participating in a new mental health partnership with DEED's mental health education specialist to provide staff training on mental health and social emotional learning
- » Initial introduction of trauma-informed approaches through staff trainings

COVID-19 IMPACTS

With COVID-19 school closures, students who relied on the school environment as a safe space were heavily impacted and the lack of in-person contact made it difficult to identify student need. Overall stress among staff was intensified by the political climate around the pandemic, paired with isolation from their peers and family outside of Alaska. With increased reliance on alternate communication methods during COVID-19, BBBSD staff gained greater insights into their students' home lives and established more frequent outreach to families.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

The BBBSD social emotional learning coach has developed the approaches for the district’s universal and early intervention Tier 1 and 2 services and supports. Community partnerships are integral for more intensive services and supports offered in Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District-designed supports Second Step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual and group social emotional learning instruction Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, social emotional learning coach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, social emotional learning coach
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student data review meetings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camai Community Health Center Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher observation, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

BARRIERS

BBBSD could benefit from establishing a long-term approach that builds on their current supports. Lack of consistent funding for clinically trained roles and staff turnover are currently barriers to establishing that broader approach, as well as tools to formalize data collection and reporting. Stigma has also hindered acknowledgement of social emotional needs and topics within the broader school community. Historical trauma associated with western education systems may also continue to be a barrier for some stakeholders.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

BBBSD is positioned to continue growing existing partnerships. The district plans to offer more intensive Tier 3 supports next year through DEED's mental health education specialist and to expand the staff and student mental health knowledge base with their community-funded social emotional learning coach.

Ideally, the district would like to have access to a child psychologist and additional mental health professionals focused on early education.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

CHATHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Chatham School District (CSD) is located in Southeast Alaska with schools in Angoon, Gustavus, and Haines. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 140 students.

CSD's emphasis on culturally-appropriate approaches has created opportunities to engage Elders and local communities in CSD's mental health and social emotional learning services and supports for students.

Highlights of CSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Investing significant time in creating culturally-appropriate programs, supports, and services, including partnering with Elders on activities such as district planning, student identification, and spiritually-based grief student support groups
- » Development of a community-created universal Tier 1 social emotional learning curriculum with supporting staff training, as outlined in CSD's strategic plan
- » Offering trauma-engaged trainings for staff, as well as training opportunities with SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)
- » Establishing annual in-service time focused on goal setting and planning that addresses trauma, with quarterly progress check-ins

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Existing trauma within CSD schools was exacerbated during the pandemic. COVID-19 created a significant increase in the number of students in need of support during the 2020-2021 school year. Student mental health concerns, such as depression, appeared early in the fall of this school year, as opposed to typical school years, when more issues might manifest during the winter months. Travel in and out of the district was also limited, restricting access to supports and services via hubs in Juneau or Seattle.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

CSD has some strategies and supports at Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Administrators provide targeted student interventions for Tier 2, but options become more limited at this level and are unavailable for more intensive Tier 3 service and supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community-developed curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual meetings
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrators
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff, parent
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outside of reports to the Office of Children’s Services (OCS), Tier 3 supports are not available

BARRIERS

Addressing trauma is a significant focus of CSD. The district’s staff sizes are small, making it challenging to meet the level of need. Beyond existing efforts, CSD does not have funding or personnel to provide additional targeted Tier 2 interventions, such as counseling. More intensive Tier 3 services and supports are currently nonexistent.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Year two of the district's community-developed curriculum was found to be more effective than the first year, including increased identification of students.

Ideally, CSD would like to build a community-based team to support all levels of the MTSS. This team could help work with staff on universal and targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 and provide local intensive Tier 3 that allow students to receive services and supports in their community. The idea of ongoing trauma training and an introduction to more intensive Tier 3 services and supports for staff was also discussed, as well as implementing virtual services for Tier 3 delivery.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Chugach School District (CSD) has three schools across Prince William Sound in Chenega, Tatitlek, and Whittier. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development \(DEED\) Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 90 students, with an additional 600 students enrolled in the FOCUS Statewide Homeschool program.

CSD's small school sizes and multiple sites across a large geography creates a unique situation for the structure and delivery of their mental health supports. Low-turnover and tenure among staff has allowed for organic integration and engagement with their local school communities.

Highlights of CSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Guiding commitments to whole child, social and emotional health, and social services that are built into the district's vision statement, goals, and planning process
- » Formation of a solid foundation for community engagement approaches established through a previous multi-year healthy pathways grant that helped shape goals and strategic plan elements
- » Support for direct service and professional development from DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist through participation in the Mental Health Support Grant
- » Integration of trauma-engaged approaches at CSD's Voyage School, a variable-term statewide residential school, with a focus on bringing student resiliency into all processes and procedures
- » Expanded access to intensive Tier 3 supports through a community partnership with Chugachmiut, an Alaska Native agency serving the seven Native tribes in the Chugach Region

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Delivery of mental health supports were disrupted by reduced travel and school closures caused by COVID-19. Counseling sessions were able to move to virtual delivery, but with limited student participation and likely less effectiveness than in person supports. Isolation has negatively impacted both the physical and social interactions among staff, with an opportunity to mitigate the impacts by resuming wellness programming and outreach. While

in person supports will continue to be the preference, CSD found some benefits for virtual models, particularly for establishing new ways to connect with their homeschool students.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

CSD schools have some variation in universal and targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports and services. Any supports beyond teacher-led delivery are dependent on the availability of the itinerant school counselor. Similarly, intensive Tier 3 supports are dependent on community providers and telehealth.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habits of Mind • MindUP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups • Cognitive behavioral therapy • Choice theory
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, parent
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District foundation and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District foundation and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and supports through outside providers • Telehealth through Chugachmiut community health centers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local behavioral health aides • Itinerant school psychologist • Llargarwik Recovery Camp
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community funded

BARRIERS

CSD schools are part of small communities that are geographically isolated from each other. Limited local services and the unpredictable nature of travel during winter months for itinerant providers can be a stressor for families as they try to access care. Some of the communities have limited housing, making it difficult to house itinerant providers during local site visits. Student clinical needs are likely not being met and existing universal and targeted Tier 1 and 2 need additional intensive Tier 3 reinforcement from professionals outside of the district. The stigma of accessing mental health supports and the potential to receive supports

from someone who is a family member can also be a barrier in the small villages and communities in the district.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

CSD is in the planning stages of incorporating Mental Health First Aid for the district. Ideally, CSD would like to increase resources and access by adding a full-time itinerant mental health counselor and reinforcing supports available at each school site with additional staff and teacher professional development.

Ideally, the district's one school counselor, who is primarily based at the residential school, would have additional personnel to provide more regular support at the other school sites. The idea of addressing student and community needs collectively through systems that incorporate family needs was also discussed. This system could potentially be supported by roles like full-time community social workers.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

CRAIG CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Craig City School District (CCSD) is located on Prince of Wales Island, 56 airmiles northwest of Ketchikan. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, enrollment in the district's three schools is approximately 215 students, with an additional 660 students in the PACE Homeschool program.

CCSD's small class sizes and strong relationships between staff and students create a close-knit school community that allows for early intervention. Local knowledge and connections among the counseling staff helps bring an awareness of student needs into the district's approaches.

Highlights of CCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Updates to school board policies and the strategic plan focused on building skills and knowledge of trauma-informed practices
- » Offering professional development focused on building staff knowledge of trauma-engaged approaches
- » Student and staff exposure to mental health content through school counselor presentations on topics such as suicide prevention and awareness and anxiety
- » Distribution of an annual needs survey for middle and high school students to identify relevant prevention programming topics for the school year

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Return to in-person during the 2020-2021 school year helped restore some of the service gaps created during the prior school year's virtual learning, with the added option of using virtual services emerging as an ongoing benefit. COVID-19 restrictions on in person activities and family involvement within the school building impacted school climate and culture both for families and students. Travel restrictions also added to stress and anxiety among staff. CCSD saw an increase in student and family needs for intensive Tier 3 supports that led to a strain on availability of outside resources. COVID-19 has also prompted CCSD to examine the existing supports and consider ways to take a more systemic approach.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

CCSD has curriculum and counseling services in place to support universal Tier 1 services and supports, with opportunities to grow their targeted Tier 2 services and supports. Delivery of intensive Tier 3 services and supports are highly reliant on the availability of outside providers.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth R • The Great Body Shop • Second Step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention programming • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Community Connections
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School psychologist (itinerant) • Community Connections
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, parent, teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant funds

BARRIERS

CCSD is a small community with existing local partnerships, but limited resources and trained personnel can create challenges for accessibility of supports. Delivery of intensive Tier 3 supports have been inconsistent, primarily due to turnover and increased student needs during COVID-19. The stigma of accessing mental health supports can also be a barrier in a small town, both from a privacy perspective as well as through negative feedback about local supports being shared via word-of-mouth and preventing others from seeking supports. Lack of access to indigenous and Alaska Native providers is also a barrier that can limit the availability of culturally-relevant supports.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

CCSD would like to continue partnering with local tribal associations and community providers to share information with teachers, parents, and students on the mental health and social emotional learning supports available in their community. Counselors would like to reinforce this outreach through in-service presentations with staff. CCSD currently has two school counselors.

Ideally, the district would like to add a full-time mental health clinician that could be available onsite daily to bridge the gap from school counseling to ongoing therapeutic interventions, as well as consistent funding for mental health supports.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

DENALI BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Denali Borough School District (DBSD) is located along the Parks Highway with schools in Anderson, Cantwell, and Healy. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 175 students, in addition to 1,040 students enrolled in the Denali PEAK homeschool program.

DBSD's small size allows for students to build staff relationships. This relationship building is reinforced through the DBSD's use of an EL Education Crew structure that pairs groups of high school students with a teacher over multiple years.

Highlights of DBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Establishing a school culture of connectedness and safety in risk taking through the EL Education Crew structure
- » Commitment to flexibility and sensitivity from staff in supporting students
- » Offering professional development opportunities focused on trauma-engaged principles and restorative justice practices
- » Providing a level of flexibility for the services and supports offered

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The COVID-19 cohort format and student schedules made it difficult to consistently connect with students and staff. Some students also likely dropped counseling services during the pandemic. Communication with the community counselor has also been difficult due to pandemic social distancing restrictions. There were also positive impacts. Prior to COVID-19, the district started using an EL Education Crew structure, which potentially helped maintain strong attendance during remote learning through the model's small group format. Reliance on alternate communication channels, including phone calls to student homes, helped increase connections with families.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

DBSD has some strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community partnerships are integral for the more targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EL Education Crew structure Zones of Regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual counseling Restorative justice Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, counselor, student assistance team Itinerant school psychologist Railbelt Mental Health itinerant providers
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School psychologist, anecdotal and behavior data
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title funds (potentially others) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title funds (potentially others)

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers Student and family check-ins Houselessness resources
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student assistance team Itinerant school psychologist Railbelt Mental Health itinerant providers
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counselor, school psychologist
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncertain

BARRIERS

DBSD is in a rural area. Local resources are limited. Currently, there are some approaches in place to provide universal Tier 1 supports, but DBSD lacks a specific districtwide social emotional learning program. Pressures on staff time can also make it difficult to provide mental health supports in the time available. Community partners are a significant benefit, but personnel is limited. When connections to community providers are made, students may need to go on wait lists prior to receiving services. The stigma of accessing counseling also prevents some students from using community resources.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

DBSD is reviewing options for a peer-modeling suicide prevention program, such as Sources of Strength. With the success for the EL Education Crew structure, the district is looking to implement a supporting social emotional curriculum.

Ideally, the pipeline of mental health personnel could be built by increasing interest among local community members and youth. If there were a possibility to increase personnel, DBSD would like to add a community mental health counselor and potentially consider ways of creating a school-based clinic that is structured to serve a district of their size.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

DILLINGHAM CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Dillingham City School District (DCSD) is located on the north end of Nushagak Bay in Southwestern Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's two school sites serve approximately 410 students.

DCSD recognizes the value of addressing behavioral and mental health as well as providing onsite student supports and services. The district is actively expanding existing supports to provide more options for students.

Highlights of DCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Introduction of new mental health roles through CARES funding, including two directors of school climate and culture and a behavioral and mental health counselor
- » Effective approaches to personalized student interventions through intensive Tier 3 services and supports
- » Awareness among district stakeholders of available student services and supports, as well as staff autonomy to utilize their expertise in a collaborative way
- » Staffing for various roles and approaches focused on community engagement, such as work led by the district migrant coordinator and ongoing collaboration with the local tribal council and regional healthcare providers

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Early in the pandemic, DCSD set the expectation to continue providing student services and supports, which was reinforced through existing behavioral and mental health personnel in place. Shortened school days limited access to students for mental health programs and supports. The time constraints also made it challenging to balance academic instructional time with mental health and wellness. DCSD also had to delay the rollout of universal Tier 1 services and supports as risk levels changed. Anxiety and uncertainty of the future is likely a lingering impact of COVID-19 that will need to be addressed in students and staff.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

DCSD has strategies and supports at Tier 1 and Tier 3 of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Tier 3 is provided through a combination of district, local, and regional services and supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of social emotional learning approaches offered between sites • Annual mental health resource fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students currently move from Tier 1 to Tier 3
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff 	
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID and Title funds 	

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral and mental health counselor, migrant coordinator • Raven’s Way • Office of Children's Services (OCS) • Tribal Council • Itinerant special education service agency provider
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partner, family, teacher, district staff, self-identification
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title funds

BARRIERS

The level of need among students and staff in DCSD exceeds the existing personnel resources. District turnover has created frequent transitions between mental health approaches and limited the sustainability of programs. The lack of consistency contributed to a gap between universal Tier 1 and more intensive Tier 3 services and supports that DCSD is actively working to address. Part of this gap is tied to a lack of policies and procedures for identifying, assessing, and evaluating needs as students transition between levels of supports and services.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

DCSD is reviewing comprehensive curriculum options, with plans to select one that can inform planning, policies, and regulations for all tiers. The behavioral and mental health team is working to put a comprehensive counseling plan in place with student services and interventions at every level, delivered in part through a mobile gaming app that will allow improved data tracking of student needs. DCSD also has plans to offer their first annual Mental Health Awareness Month activities through a virtual resource fair, with student screening and an opportunity to introduce families to the district's mental health resources.

Ideally, the district would like to offer asynchronous and synchronous professional development resources on the mental health continuum, as well as trainings for families to help extend the impact of services and supports in the community.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) is located in Interior Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 35 schools serve approximately 10,430 students, in addition to 970 students enrolled in the Fairbanks BEST Homeschool program.

FNSBSD has committed the last several years to putting a strong social emotional framework in place and is now in the early stages of implementing and driving impacts. This work is strengthened by access to local partnerships and community resources.

Highlights of FNSBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Access to supports through a dedicated student support services team staffed by roles such as counselors, social service managers, prevention intervention specialists, and behavior aids, among others
- » Offering an annual in-service day focused on culturally-relevant education, as well as significant tribal and community consultation in the district planning processes
- » Completing an annual contracted audit focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion
- » Sharing of resources and offering of additional student services and supports through community partnerships
- » Availability of transparent school climate data through the FNSBSD data dashboard

COVID-19 IMPACTS

FNSBSD pivoted during COVID-19 to provide professional development focused on a variety of social and emotional learning topics, including self-care. These efforts also included providing support to deliver social emotional learning, while focusing in on core academic concepts and skills. For example, FNSBSD provided frameworks for reducing curriculum and suggestions for how to incorporate more wellness checks, connection, and engagement with students. COVID-19 also created rollout delays of new social emotional learning tools and of application of updated trauma-informed discipline policies.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

FNSBSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports that are aligned through Collaborative Academic Social Emotional Learning (CASEL). Community partnerships are integrated throughout all tiers.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Sources of Strength • CHAMPS • Kagan strategies • Zones of Regulation • Character Strong • SMART kids • Fourth R • Safe Dates • PREPaRE crisis response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check & Connect • Second Step • Individual counseling • Small groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support services team • Project AWARE social service managers • Community volunteers • Fairbanks Native Association
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student support services team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, grant, Title, and CARES funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • De-escalation spaces • Contracted services through residential treatment program
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School psychologists • AK RISES mental health clinicians • Project AWARE social service managers • Alaska Behavioral Health • Family Centered Services of Alaska
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTSS process
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, grants, and CARES funds

BARRIERS

In the FNSBSD region, local resources have limited clinically trained personnel. Time between student identification and delivery of supports can be extended, with limited

options for specialized providers that can offer intensive Tier 3 services. Filling the personnel gap with local community members can be challenging given the limited options for Alaska-based mental health training programs. Inconsistencies between FNSBSD funding resources can create challenges to budgeting for behavioral health supports and mental health professionals. Staff are becoming versed in FNSBSD’s social emotional learning and mental health supports, but limited training time and inconsistencies in program adoption can impact delivery.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

In building toward a comprehensive approach, the Mental Health Technology Transfer Center “National School Mental Health Best Practices: Implementation Guidance Modules for States, Districts, and Schools” provides a comprehensive model FNSBSD would like to emulate. Additionally, FNSBSD would like to strengthen data collection and evaluation of tiered interventions to help determine program effectiveness, starting with data from Project AWARE, AK RISES, and National Outcome Measures. An increased focus on social emotional learning alongside academic priorities will likely continue into next school year, a shift initially prompted by the pandemic. This will also be paired with a transition to apply a culturally-responsive lens to the social emotional learning framework that is inclusive of FNSBSD’s tribal and community stakeholders.

Ideally, the district would like to see funding that allows for additional community therapeutic resources, adoption of state and district social emotional learning standards, and ongoing training utilizing new virtual delivery models.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

GALENA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Galena City School District (GCSD) is located on the Yukon River, 270 airmiles west of Fairbanks in Interior Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 150 students, with an additional 9,250 enrolled in the Interior Distance Education of Alaska program.

In addition to existing counseling goals and plans related to school mental health, GCSD has started early conversations on how the district's mental health and social emotional learning efforts could continue to progress.

Highlights of GCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Access to school counselors, as well as community-based supports and services through a local psychologist and two behavioral health aides
- » Availability of telehealth therapy sessions offered onsite at schools and at local community clinics
- » Providing classroom lessons and small group work based on the Alaska School Counselor Association (AKSCA) and national models
- » Efforts underway to bring more trauma-engaged principles into the district

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Time constraints made it challenging to learn new online systems and adapt services for the COVID-19 virtual format. Lockdown and quarantining restrictions also reduced access to school counselors and community providers. The focus on academic needs also limited the delivery of social emotional services and supports.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

GCSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community partnerships are integral for the more targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • The Fourth R • Relationship building skills • Small groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Small groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, specialist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Tanana Chiefs Conference offered locally and through telehealth • Edgar Nollner Health Center offered locally and through telehealth
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, counselor
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partner funds

BARRIERS

GCSD's broader school community has limited access to trained mental health professionals, creating barriers to meeting the level of student and staff needs. Balancing the delivery of mental health services and supports with academic priorities can also be a challenge. The stigma of accessing mental health professionals can also prevent some students from connecting with community-based providers.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Additional staffing for the 2021-2022 school year will potentially help increase the universal delivery of social emotional learning curriculum.

Ideally, GCSD would like to create a comprehensive school counseling plan that aligns with American School Counselor Association Recognized ASCA Model Program and Alaska School Counselor Association. The idea of partnering with teachers to develop cross-curriculum social emotional learning content and proactively working with students in classrooms to meet social emotional needs and develop skills was also discussed. There is also interest in adding Kelso's Choice to GCSD's curriculum options.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

HAINES BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

The Haines Borough School District (HBSD) is located on Lynn Canal, 80 airmiles northwest of Juneau. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's two schools serve approximately 210 students, in addition to 70 students enrolled in the Haines Homeschool program.

HBSD's small size and relationships with families and community providers allow for a more custom approach to the district's mental health and social emotional learning services and supports.

Highlights of HBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Awareness among students about the role of the school counselor as a consistent support option through regular interactions with the counseling staff member
- » Collaboration between HBSD and local mental health providers to support students and families with available resources
- » Hosting inter-agency meetings between local police, SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) Lynn Canal Counseling, and school staff
- » Support for staff mental health and wellness through the Sunshine Committee, a group that plans challenges and activities for overall morale and to encourage physical movement

COVID-19 IMPACTS

HBSD was in person for the 2020-2021 school year, which led to benefits for students and staff, including the ability to rely on in-person meetings and interactions to identify and serve students in need of supports. School leadership recognized the increased student need during COVID-19 and helped the district's counselor make time for more individual and classroom supports. With the community's December landside tragedy and ongoing impacts of COVID-19, HBSD anticipates an ongoing increased need for counseling and mental health supports. Prior to COVID-19, SEARHC providers were able to meet with students before or after school, an important support program for the district that allowed students to receive services without requiring transportation. The district will reintroduce onsite SEARHC services once it's safe to do so.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

HBSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. The district tries to collaborate with community partners as often as possible at all tiers, with a specific focus on the delivery of more intensive Tier 3 supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Kelso’s Choice • Counselor classroom instruction • Annual healthy choices event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Individual counseling
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor • Community organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, family, staff meetings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain (potentially grant and general funds) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain (potentially grant and general funds)

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School counselor, special education, teacher • SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) offered locally and through telehealth • Bartlett Regional Hospital telehealth counselors • Telehealth psychiatrist or psychologist
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain (potentially grant and general funds)

BARRIERS

HBSD is in an isolated community. Regional barriers in Southeast Alaska make it difficult to access more intensive Tier 3 services supports, specifically for securing spaces in facilities for students experiencing suicidal ideation or actions. Locally, there are a limited number of counselors to meet community and student needs. Within the school, constraints on time can make it difficult to focus on mental health and wellness. In-service time is limited, and the structure of the school day can make it challenging for teachers to address self-care.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

HBSD has access to Coping Cat for more intensive Tier 3 support and hopes to eventually implement it with students.

Ideally, HBSD would like to add an itinerant social worker liaison or social service provider, a clinician trained in child psychology, and play therapy approaches.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

HOONAH CITY SCHOOLS

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Hoonah City Schools (HCS) is located on Chichagof Island, 40 airmiles west of Juneau. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's one school site serves approximately 130 students.

With specific staff committed to mental health, use of the Positive Behavioral Interventions Supports (PBIS) framework, and ongoing staff trainings, the district has worked to establish consistency and expectations for schoolwide supports and services.

Highlights of **HCS's approach to providing mental health supports** include:

- » Building consistency and awareness of districtwide universal Tier 1 programming among staff
- » Collaboration between the school social worker and counselor to deliver student services and supports, as well as staff trainings on trauma-informed practices, self-care tips, and mental health awareness exercises
- » Partnering with a family engagement committee that meets monthly and includes representation from school staff, Hoonah Indian Association (HIA), and the forest service, among others
- » Participating in professional learning communities (PLCs) run with the Association of Alaska School Boards

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The virtual COVID-19 format made it difficult to build a connection and therapeutic relationships with students in a crisis. Delivery of targeted Tier 2 services and supports were negatively impacted, particularly for small group sessions. Observations of stress, uncertainty, and loss were more present during the 2020-2021 school year. However, HCS observed a new appreciation among students for being in school and connecting with peers.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

HCS uses the PBIS framework. Through the PBIS framework, the district is offering strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. A combination of district resources and community partnerships are used for more intensive services and supports in Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Social emotional learning tie in for career and college prep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Second Step for small groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, social worker
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, parent, or self-identification
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain outside of grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain outside of grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, social worker • Itinerant school psychologist • Juneau-based services offered regionally and through telehealth
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-identification, counselor, principle, teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain outside of grant funds

BARRIERS

HCS is in an island community. Locally, access to a professional counselor is inconsistent. Access to supports and services off the island require time and coordination with multiple agencies, as well as logistic considerations like transportation. Family acknowledgment of a student’s needs and stigmas tied to mental illness can also serve as barriers to accessing services and supports. Availability of staff time and competing priorities can also be a challenge.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

HCS is reviewing options for universal screeners. The PBIS team is also working on defining decision rules for identifying students. COVID-19 impacts to targeted Tier 2 student groups prompted the district to investigate a virtual social emotional learning platform, BASE Education, for online support options.

Ideally, HCS is interested in finding a more updated culturally-responsive Tier 2 intervention to replace Second Step. Ideas such as increasing community collaboration and infrastructure, establishing steady district personnel funding, and continuing staff mental health and wellness activities were also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

IDITAROD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Iditarod Area School District (IASD) is located in Central Alaska with school sites in Anvik, Grayling, Eagle River, Shageluk, Holy Cross, McGrath, Takotna, and Nikolai. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development \(DEED\) Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district serves approximately 175 students across seven schools, in addition to 150 students enrolled in the Distance Learning Center.

As a geographically dispersed district with small schools, IASD staff work actively to bring awareness to available mental health resources and to tap into supports available through the state and regional resources.

Highlights of IASD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Staff commitment to putting kids first and providing as much support as possible within their roles
- » Proactive outreach to bring in new services and continue partnerships with regional providers, including support from DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist and collaboration with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)
- » Attention to cultural relevance through collaboration with the school sites and villages to develop a local plan in partnership with IASD, as well as cultural training for teachers
- » Providing channels for students to pursue their cultural identity and practices with supporting policies for awarding high school credit for culturally responsive activities

COVID-19 IMPACTS

IASD distributed surveys, made calls, and held Zoom talking circles to identify how to support families during COVID-19. Air service was suspended for six months during the 2020-2021 school year, limiting the ability to access health services. Quarantine periods created isolation and left community members at home and without support. Students and families were not able to gather, celebrate, and grieve. As villages and schools started to open, staff described a hesitancy among families to return to school due to fear of the pandemic.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

IASD has limited strategies and supports at each of the three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Where options are available for early intervention and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports, local village clinics and regional supports are integral to delivery.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AASB Social Emotional Learning curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local health clinics
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special education staff
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers Special education staff University of Alaska Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Tribes Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) State troopers and juvenile courts Alaska Regional Health Center
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

BARRIERS

IASD schools are in small, isolated communities spread out across a large geography. Local resources for students and families are limited. The stigma of counseling and mental health needs paired with lack of trust between community members and outside providers can be made more challenging by provider turnover. Personnel is limited, including a lack of a school counselor or nurse and staffing gaps in community and village clinics. Interventions to address trauma, substance use, and safety issues are lacking. Allocating funding to mental health efforts can be made more challenging due to declining enrollment and subsequent teacher reductions.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

IASD plans to continue work with DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist into next school year. Phlight Club was previously offered through a grant that has ended; it was a beneficial social emotional learning program for the district and work is underway to apply for a new grant to reinstate the program.

Ideally, the district would like to see consistently staffed roles such as an itinerant school counselor, nurse, and post-secondary career advisor. In lieu of local supports, improved internet and available devices would help with accessibility of telehealth and virtual resources.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Juneau School District (JSD) is on the mainland in Southeast Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development \(DEED\) Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 14 schools serve approximately 3,760 students, in addition to 390 students enrolled in the HomeBRIDGE program.

JSD's staff training opportunities, grant-funded roles, and community partnerships come together to provide a range of student services and supports.

Highlights of JSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Creating opportunities for regular exposure to counselors at every school through weekly lessons at the elementary and ongoing contact at the middle and high school level
- » Staffing from grant-funded mental health clinicians and behavioral health specialists who partner with school counselors for delivery of district-based services and supports
- » Holding effective professional development sessions, such as Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience, Youth Mental Health First Aid, restorative practice training, and culturally-responsive program training through community partners Sealaska Heritage Institute and Association of Alaska School Boards
- » Integrating racial equity and culturally-responsive learning into the district's strategic plan, with efforts such as implicit bias training and Tlingit language learning opportunities

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The COVID-19 virtual learning environment made it difficult for counselors to deliver content and to connect with students, particularly at the elementary level. Plans to roll out resources around topics like trauma-engaged principles were put on hold to refocus on virtual learning needs brought on by COVID-19. JSD also anticipates increased student mental health needs during the 2021-2022 school year as a result of the pandemic. There were positive impacts as well, including increased engagement with special education and pre-Kindergarten families. In some instances, remote learning environments also provided benefits for some students with social anxiety or who are easily overstimulated.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

JSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. The district provides some intensive Tier 3 services and supports that are supplemented with community partnerships for long-term intensive needs.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Zones of Regulation • Responsive Classroom • Restorative practices • Kelso’s Choice • #WinAtSocial • Healthy Life Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Small groups • Individual counseling
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff, counselors, advisory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health clinicians • Behavioral health specialists
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and general funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and general funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual interventions and counseling • Family services and therapy sessions • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Mental health clinician • Behavioral health specialist • Contracted high school teen health center • Juneau Youth Services • Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. (JAMHI)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Student of concern team process through school staff • Referral from outside agency
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and grant funds

BARRIERS

The overall shortage of mental health professionals across the country and in Alaska impacts JSD's ability to meet student need. Sustainable funding, recruitment, and turnover all contribute to personnel barriers. This shortage can create capacity issues for delivering services and supports beyond the universal Tier 1 level, with a specific gap identified for more intensive Tier 3 services and supports. Time constraints can also make it challenging to establish consistent mental health professional development opportunities without further stretching staff capacity.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Two additional mental health clinicians will start in the fall of the 2021-2022 school year as part of the DEED Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) grant. JSD will also expand use of the #WinAtSocial digital social emotional learning and social media curriculum to all secondary students after initial positive reception to a spring 2021 pilot. JSD will also provide all certified staff with an all day training on social emotional learning, trauma-engaged, and equity prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year, followed by support sessions and related social emotional learning/restorative practices training through the remainder of the year.

Ideally, the district would like to create a cohesive mental health plan, offer additional professional development time, and support social emotional competency development among staff and students.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD) encompasses a region of 25,600 square miles. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, KPBSD serves approximately 6,300 students across 41 schools, in addition to 1,780 students enrolled in the Connections homeschool program

KPBSD has integrated numerous evidence-based social emotional efforts. Currently, the district is moving toward explicit expectations for social emotional learning as a priority, prompted in many ways by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Highlights of KPBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Offering a range of content and formats for social emotional staff professional development, including trauma-informed training for all school staff, Youth Mental Health First Aid training, sessions with Homer-based Dr. Linda Chamberlain, and staff mental health and wellness workshops hosted by school psychologists and counselors
- » Support for student outreach and relationship building through flexibility and eagerness among staff, as well as a level of teacher choice to select their specific classroom approaches
- » Establishing staff roles for providing targeted Tier 3 wraparound supports and services typically focused on student needs around trauma, including a homeless liaison, student success liaison, and recidivism specialist
- » Observed benefits of Sources of Strength program when implemented consistently
- » Expansion of district connections with outside community organizations to focus on upstream prevention

COVID-19 IMPACTS

While COVID-19 virtual delivery created an engagement barrier for students without internet or consistent phone access, family and student outreach became more flexible by using online meeting spaces and tools. Many of KPBSD's existing programs provided support for virtual implementation formats. KPBSD also put funding toward reaching families in new ways, such as public service announcements and online engagement activities. Pandemic impacts for staff prompted KPBSD to support teachers in prioritizing self-care through professional development opportunities focused on managing personal wellbeing. Looking

to the 2021-2022 school year, lasting pandemic impacts will create more focus on universal Tier 1 social emotional learning for all students and will likely lead to an increase in early intervention Tier 2 needs.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

KPBSD has services and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Specialized district positions to support high-risk populations and community partnerships are integral for the more targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Great Body Shop MindUP Sources of Strength Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Schools Youth Mental Health First Aid Fourth R 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-In/Check-Out Social skills groups Individual counseling Modified Alternative to Out of School Suspension (ATOSS) program Restorative practices
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Homer Recreation Room LeeShore Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff LeeShore Center Kenaitze Tribe
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, intervention team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General, Title, and grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General, Title, and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers Substance use support Summer support Student shadows
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff and liaisons Kenaitze Tribe Peninsula Community Health Services of Alaska (PCHS) SeaView Community Services
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PowerSchool, intervention team, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title, grant, and community partner funds

BARRIERS

KPBSD is part of a large community. While their size and location allow for local resource options, district and community supports are not always immediately accessible due to capacity and expertise barriers like provider wait lists and high student-to-counselor ratios. Addressing the availability of district supports can be challenging due to budgetary constraints for balancing the cost of mental health personnel with academic needs. Staff training on trauma-informed approaches is helping to address some of the day-to-day needs, but work is still underway to establish more alignment between systems and policies that support classroom instruction.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Starting during the 2020-2021 school year, goals for social emotional wellness will likely be integrated into updates to the district's strategic plan. Explicit recognition of social emotional learning and its importance to successful student learning will start to be visible in curriculum documents and lesson plans. KPBSD is also working on numerous competitive grants to support work around suicide prevention and Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning competencies, as well as reviewing ways to incorporate social emotional competencies in content curriculum. The district has also hired six elementary counselors for the 2021-2022 school year.

Ideally, KPBSD would like to see sustainable funding sources for social emotional programs that allow the district to develop internal trainers who can train other staff.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District (KGBSD) is located in the southern region of Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development \(DEED\) Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's nine schools serve approximately 2,160 students.

KGBSD and community partners actively collaborate to address student needs, in addition to work within the district to provide ongoing staff trainings on mental health services and supports.

Highlights of KGBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Offering ongoing trauma-engaged professional development, including a fall conference and weekly sessions reviewing the "Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska" from DEED and the Association of Alaska School Boards
- » Reinforcing trauma-engaged practices with updates to the district's discipline, bullying, and harassment policies
- » Providing training districtwide on Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) for social emotional learning focused on how to create and embed consistent expectations
- » Collaboration between school nurses, health aides, counselors, psychologists, and community partners to identify and address mental health needs
- » Creation of a cultural coordinator role to connect with staff on developing culturally-relevant school environments, as well as recognizing and celebrating local cultures

COVID-19 IMPACTS

KGBSD schools were primarily in person full time for the 2020-2021 school year, limiting disruption of supports. Some students stopped accessing services when outside agencies switched from in-person to telehealth. Accounting for the impacts of COVID-19 through student screenings was also a challenge. KGBSD used CARES Act funding to hire additional paraprofessionals to staff student cohorts and to provide support for group interventions, which led to a reduction in behavior issues for elementary students.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

KGBSD is in the process of updating the district’s interventions and approaches under the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and currently have existing supports in place at each of the MTSS Tiers. Community partnerships are integral for the more intensive supports offered in Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Good for Drugs • Second Step • Kelso’s Choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Small groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, paraprofessional
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student attendance, grade, and behavior data
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Behavioral intervention plan • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itinerant and full time school psychologists • Mental health counselor • Community Connections • Ketchikan Wellness Coalition (KWC) • PeaceHealth • Tribal Councils • Women in Safe Homes (WISH)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTSS or PBIS team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General and special education funds

BARRIERS

KGBSD is an island district with less local amenities than a larger city. Hiring and long-term retention of specialized mental health roles is a challenge, with recent turnover in some of the district’s student support positions. Approaches for supports could benefit from districtwide alignment, consistent training, and delivery. Existing data sources tend to rely on academic and discipline indicators and could expand to include information on student behavior and social emotional learning.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Currently, KGBSD is pursuing best practices to bring their academic and social emotional learning approaches together under the MTSS by supporting MTSS-certified teachers, data systems, and funding. After seeing improvements in student behavior under the COVID-19 cohort model, KGBSD has proposed hiring four new elementary teachers to maintain low class sizes.

Ideally, an additional mental health clinician or social worker would help reduce the high student-to-counselor ratio.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD) is located on the northwest tip of Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 11 schools serve approximately 2,070 students, in addition to 230 students enrolled in the AKTEACH homeschool program.

Over the last several years, KIBSD has grown their mental health team significantly to try to meet rapid increase in student needs. This period of team growth, followed by observations of the inequities exposed during COVID-19, is prompting a period of positive transitions as the district begins to align and organize district and community-based supports.

Highlights of KIBSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Access to a coordinated team of district counselors and contracted mental health clinicians to provide mental health supports to all school sites, primarily focused on universal and early intervention Tier 1 and 2 supports and services
- » Offering contracted services through Providence to provide more intensive Tier 3 mental health supports through a school-based clinic with two full-time clinicians
- » Recent efforts to engage a cross-functional group of community mental health providers to review school community needs and to begin to identify a path forward
- » Addressing staff wellness and mental health through programs and benefits such as counseling, a confidential help line, and self-care activities

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Trauma was prevalent in KIBSD prior to COVID-19 and trauma exposure likely increased overall as a result of the pandemic. The pandemic restrictions prompted increased access to services and supports through telehealth, but other variables such as bandwidth and family comfort with operating the virtual platforms created additional barriers to receiving the virtual supports. Many students did not show up for their appointments. KIBSD wanted to maintain supports over the summer and is using CARES Act funding to offer mental health counseling during the break before the 2021-2022 school year. KIBSD is also working to identify and address the gaps that COVID-19 highlighted around mental health and inequities.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

KIBSD has implemented supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Contracted school-based providers are in place for intensive Tier 3 services.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conscious Discipline Second Step Safe & Civil Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check-In/Check-Out Zones of Regulation Incredible Flexible You Skillstreaming Rethink Social skills groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, school staff, counselor
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports through school-based clinic Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracted Providence school-based clinic Outside providers (as needed)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family, teacher, counselor
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and special education funds

BARRIERS

KIBSD is in a rural community. Availability of local services is limited. Even with recent team growth, ratios of students to mental health staff make it challenging to fulfill all levels of need especially with recent increases in students experiencing suicidal ideation and accessing more intensive supports. Local resources and the number of clinically trained personnel are outpaced by the level of need, particularly for family resources. Recruitment and retention for trained personnel has severely limited availability of local family resources. The local Office of Children’s Services office has been without consistent case management for several years.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

KIBSD has set goals to establish mental health processes, expertise, and alignment within their mental health team and the broader staff, including professional development around suicide response interventions, health and mental health curriculum alignment, team protocols, and additional family supports. The district is also adding a social worker position to their 2021-2022 budget and are developing partnerships with the local native corporation to continue expanding community-based supports.

Ideally, these efforts would support funding for a variety of needs including a universal data collection and reporting system tied to counseling and mental health; social emotional learning curriculum onsite at each school; and community substance abuse treatment.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

KUSPUK SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Located in Western Alaska, the KuspuK School District (KSD) encompasses 12,000 square miles with schools in Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Kalskag, Stony River, Sleetmute, Cooked Creek, and Lower Kalskag. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's nine schools serve approximately 390 students.

KSD is leveraging virtual providers and staff professional development to bring mental health services and supports to students, with work underway to continue expanding the current student health intervention program.

Highlights of **KSD's approach to providing mental health supports** include:

- » Facilitating consistent direct instruction for social emotional learning through a virtual school social worker and supported by a districtwide program, shared vocabulary, and persistent messages
- » Developing profiles that incorporate both academic and social emotional data for each student
- » Engaging communities through efforts spanning from planning to implementation, including ongoing district and school site communications with the six Tribes in the region
- » Offering extensive professional development in-service opportunities, including a student and staff wellbeing series and monthly trainings with the school social worker or school psychologist focused on mental health topics

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Remote and distanced delivery during COVID-19 limited student experiences due to lack of internet and, in some instances, phone service in students' homes, as well as loss of physical connectivity during village closures. Hiring and retention has been challenging, particularly during the pandemic, given the district's remote location and number of employees who come from other areas. Commercial flight service stopped, greatly increasing the cost of travel. There were also positive impacts, including increased access to telehealth services for students and staff. With schools reopening, representatives are hopeful to continue increasing student services and implementing pre-COVID-19 plans and goals.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

KSD has strategies and supports at Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Providing more wraparound, intensive Tier 3 services and supports to fill the current gap at this level is a key focus of the district.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Social emotional lessons • District-created curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups • Individual counseling • Check In/Check Out
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher • DotCom Therapy telehealth • Virtual social worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual social worker
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, administrator, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and Title funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and Title funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 3 services and supports are not currently available

BARRIERS

KSD schools are in remote communities. Mental health services and supports across the district and region are inconsistent and funding is insufficient to meet the current level of student need, particularly for issues like suicide and depression. The physical distance between school sites and limited internet and phone service outside of the school buildings is also a challenge. Beyond services and supports through the itinerant behavior and mental health specialist at the sub-regional clinic, accessing the closest providers often requires a flight to Bethel or Anchorage. When providers can be onsite, response time is sometimes slowed due to travel issues. Additionally, awareness of mental health issues is increasing in the KSD region, but some stigma still exists around recognizing and addressing needs.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

KSD is focused on creating a new approach to mental health services and is eager to address the district's existing needs through outside support and partnerships. The district is in the process of writing a grant for new, complete wraparound cradle to career services focused on providing more comprehensive supports for all students. The program concepts include a restorative education center and alternate education pathway, student success coaches at every school, community partnerships, and data-based referrals and monitoring for student transitions between the MTSS Tiers, among other programs and services.

Ideally, KSD would like to see investment in internet infrastructure for each of the villages in the region.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

LOWER KUSKOKWIM SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) covers approximately 22,000 square miles on the lower part of the Kuskokwim River Delta, located 400 airmiles west of Anchorage. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 29 schools serve approximately 4,090 students.

LKSD has a long-standing commitment to providing student supports and access to services. The school social worker department follows a long-standing board directive to provide suicide prevention and intervention training for staff and students, which was later expanded to include specific mental health and suicide interventions.

Highlights of LKSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Staffing for multiple roles focused specifically on mental health services and supports with an emphasis on community relationship building and culturally-relevant services, including positions such as itinerant school counselors and social workers and local community advocates
- » Engaging with the school community through a Central Native Education Parent Advisory Committee with representatives from all the Tribes within the district, as well as Advisory School Boards (ASBs) at each school site
- » Ongoing outreach to staff through the district's employee assistance program (EAP) provider to build awareness of the program's availability and supports

COVID-19 IMPACTS

COVID-19 travel restrictions greatly impacted itinerant visits from counselors and social workers to school sites. Intensive Tier 3 services were most impacted; telehealth services through village health clinics stopped and lack of in-home internet created a reliance on phone-based services. To address these challenges, LKSD rolled out an intranet program with hardware installed in students' homes that will continue to be available. School social workers also found creative ways to administer universal Tier 1 strategies, including use of Keynote virtual social emotional learning lessons and book readings through Zoom. These approaches helped reach more students and are opening new options to supplement onsite support with virtual interactions to help with intense travel schedules and burnout among itinerant staff. Social workers are also administering a parent survey about mental health

needs for students, a result of the increased conversations happening during COVID-19 about supporting mental health.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

LKSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community partnerships play an active role for the more intensive supports offered in Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Prentice Hall Health • Teen Health • Personal life skills class • Social worker presentations • Signs of Suicide • More Than Sad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check & Connect • Sources of Strength • Individual counseling • Social skills groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor, social worker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, social worker, community advocate
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, parent, self-identification, site administrator
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school site funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School improvement and Indian Education funds

INDICATED SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Case management • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itinerant school social worker and school community advocate • Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation Behavioral Health offered through telehealth • Bethel Family Clinic • Village Behavioral Health Aides • Elders
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social worker
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and community partner funds

BARRIERS

LKSD sites are geographically dispersed. The ability to physically access sites can be a challenge due to weather, or more recently, COVID-19. Staff turnover and the subsequent need to rebuild connection and relationships with families and students is also a challenge. From a regional perspective, LKSD identified a lack of culturally-relevant intensive treatment facilities close to students' homes for issues like adolescent substance abuse.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

For the 2021-2022 school year, LKSD plans to continue roll outs that were stopped or slowed by COVID-19, including introducing Sources of Strength and consultant-led work around restorative practices. LKSD is also continuing to build community partnerships, specifically through encouraging the district's Advisory School Boards (ASBs) to develop their own crisis response plans with key community resources.

Ideally, LKSD would like to lower turnover by investing in existing staff resources like the EAP and adding more local, trained professionals through promotion of social work and counseling student career trackers and training options like UAF's Rural Human Services (RHS) program. Additionally, ideas such as hiring a full-time social worker and counselor at each school site, as well as building partnerships with local providers, were also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

LOWER YUKON SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

The Lower Yukon School District (LYSD) is located on the lower portion of the Yukon River and encompasses 22,000 square miles. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's 11 schools serve approximately 2,100 students.

LYSD's schools are centrally located in rural Alaska Villages and the district aims to regularly engage their local communities on school planning and efforts. The district's goals and plans related to mental health resources are supported by grant partnerships with the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and the Association of Alaska School Boards.

Highlights of LYSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Focusing on building community supported, culturally appropriate programs through activities such as tribal leader participation in district strategic planning and work with the district's Yup'ik Language and Culture Committee
- » Creating a range of new mental health services and approaches through three key grants that are building out community-based mental health systems, violence prevention through school climate building, and peer support training for suicide prevention and mental health supports, among others
- » Connecting students to targeted Tier 2 supports through regional and statewide programs
- » Leveraging the expertise of Community Human Service Providers trained through the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Rural Human Service (RHS) program to serve as liaisons between communities and schools

COVID-19 IMPACTS

During the pandemic, it was difficult to reach students at home and identify needs with the lack of face-to-face interactions. While delivery of LYSD's universal tier 1 curriculum was disrupted, students were able to continue peer support from home through the Natural Helpers program. For the 2021-2022 school year, social emotional learning and mental health supports and services will likely be more active as a result of the pandemic. These activities will likely include identifying and connecting students with services and supports for Tier 3 needs, and staff professional development and in-service.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

LYSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community and regional partnerships are integral for the more targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected and Respected Activators Integration of local cultural teachings and values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suicide Alertness for Everyone (safeTALK) Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RHS-certified community human service providers Counselor Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) Alaska Crossings
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School staff, special education screening
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers UAF Suicide Prevention Program Safety and youth services trainings Mental health training with Elders
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RHS-certified community human service providers Elders Special-education itinerants Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC) offered locally and through telehealth Alaska State Troopers Office of Children’s Services (OCS) Indian Child Welfare Association (ICWA)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special education, YKHC screenings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

BARRIERS

LYSD schools are in isolated, remote areas that come with delivery constraints given the unpredictable nature of weather. While community partnerships are integral to LYSD's approach, the availability of local supports are limited. School staff fill many roles for their students to make up for the gap in local supports and sometimes their self-care suffers as a byproduct.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

LYSD is completing a set of district Yup'ik Social Emotional Learning (SEL) standards, a culturally-relevant document created by Yup'ik mentors and teachers.

Ideally, LYSD would like to establish a clear referral process and staffing for behavioral and mental health counselors at each school would be beneficial, as well as adding a school-based Elders program and after-school mental health activities for students and families. The idea of increasing the number of personnel and interventions coming from local community members and organizations was also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD) covers approximately 25,000 square miles in the area 35 miles north of Anchorage often referred to as the “Valley.” Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district’s 47 schools serve approximately 18,350 students.

As part of the district’s approach to mental health services and supports, MSBSD has set social emotional learning standards and objectives. These standards and objectives have been supported by mental health partnerships.

Highlights of MSBSD’s approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Providing well-established behavior support programs at each school and use of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- » Offering ongoing professional development opportunities on topics such as social emotional learning, trauma-informed schools, and Adverse Childhood Experiences training
- » Integrating choice and flexibility for staff on the social emotional learning program offered at each school site
- » Funding and personnel support from community agencies, such as trusted embedded clinicians through the Mat-Su Health Foundation initiative for behavioral health in schools and small group support on vaping provided by American Lung Association

COVID-19 IMPACTS

During COVID-19, changing schedules and social distancing impacted some program delivery (i.e. Check-In/Check-Out), as well as virtual counseling services for students who may not have a quiet space at home. However, the ability to reach students and families via online platforms, as opposed to phone or email, was a benefit. Online student access was supported by community partner MTA, which helped students connect to internet access and online learning.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

MSBSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the MTSS. Community partnerships are integrated throughout all tiers.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Action • Second Step • Lions Quest pilot • Social Express pilot • Ripple Effects pilot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Self-monitoring • Home notes • Behavior contracting • Hot passes • Small groups
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency clinicians, counselors, school psychologists
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District, school site, and grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District, school site, and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent involvement • Functional behavioral assessments • Behavior plans • 504 accommodation plans • Referral to special education • Individual and small group support • Supports from outside agencies
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff and agency support as determined by the 504 Team and Individualized Educational Plan. • School nurse, psychologist, applied behavior analyst coordinator, roving behavioral technicians • Behavioral health associates or counselors from outside agencies
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention team, parent, staff
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and school funds

BARRIERS

MSBSD has established choice and flexibility within the district's MTSS approach, which can serve as both a strength and a challenge given the potential for complexity of choice between multiple curriculums and programs. Availability of professional development time outside of mandatory trainings, in addition to overall demands on staff, can also be a challenge. Time constraints and competing priorities can also impact the availability of secondary counselors, and counselor roles are currently limited at the elementary level.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

MSBSD is reviewing options for online social emotional programs, including the district's current Ripple Effect pilot, to continue reaching students remotely at home. Creation of new secondary credit is underway for the Credit, Community, Career, and College Readiness course (The 4C's). The 4C's will incorporate evidence-based methods to support students to get back on track, while also fostering trusting relationships and providing an opportunity for a well-rounded education. For fiscal year 2022, three districtwide mental and behavioral health coordinators were hired to support students and staff.

Ideally, MSBSD would like to simplify universal Tier 1 curriculum and program recommendations with realistic time expectations for classroom implementation. Additional time towards professional development, specifically focused on social emotional learning and connection building with community agencies could also be a benefit. Elementary school counselors, onsite community agency counseling support, and additional time for secondary counselor classroom support were discussed as personnel concepts for building an ideal system, as well as smaller class sizes and larger classrooms to allow for increased connection and space for student breaks and creativity.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

MT. EDGECUMBE HIGH SCHOOL

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) is a public boarding school in Sitka operated by the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED). Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the school serves approximately 375 students.

MEHS's residential setting and access to community supports in Sitka allows for consistent access to coordinated, centrally located supports that create a natural wraparound model for students. Clinical staff are critical in facilitating delivery of school-based supports, as well as coordinating outside referrals.

Highlights of MEHS's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Screenings for mental health, suicide, and substance use that allow for early identification of student need and follow up to connect students to supports and prevention efforts
- » Delivery of coordinated student supports through multiple roles focused on student mental health, including clinicians, wellness counselors, and a student support coordinator
- » Nearby access to mental health supports outside of the school day in the student's living environment
- » Offering trainings for addressing staff and student mental health, including annual training for teaching staff, Mental Health First Aid for dorm staff, and staff-led mindfulness trainings
- » Access to student supports during the summer through telehealth sessions delivered by the school clinician

COVID-19 IMPACTS

COVID-19 restricted MEHS's ability to implement prevention and school climate building efforts. The delivery of supports outside of MEHS experienced increased demand and transitioned to telehealth, making it difficult for the district to get students connected with regular clinical support. Campus activities were also reduced, which may be connected to an increase in marijuana use as students spent more time isolated in dorms and unable to participate in prevention programming.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

MEHS is unique in its approach to supports given the school’s residential setting, with a heavy focus on student screenings as a universal Tier 1 approach. School clinicians and wellness counselors oversee the majority of supports for Tier 1 and 2, while also coordinating Tier 3 connections to community providers.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Dates (modified) • Fourth R • Health curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellness counselor, health teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinician • SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) offered locally
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenings, staff and clinician meetings
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, and grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical mental health supports • Small groups • Crisis supports • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitka Counseling offered locally • SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) offered locally • Youth Advocates of Sitka offered locally • Behavioral Residential Program offered locally • North Star Behavioral Health System offered in Anchorage
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinician, student support coordinator
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, and grant funds as well as Medicaid billing (done through community partners)

BARRIERS

Overall, the residential setting at MEHS allows for consistent access to supports. In instances where students need to leave school to receive supports during the day, it can be a struggle for them to miss out on academic class time. With the level of access, there are some instances where connections to outside early intervention Tier 2 supports could potentially come after additional classroom-based approaches are further utilized.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

MEHS is currently updating their substance use programming, with a focus on prevention and early intervention approaches. The school is also exploring culturally based prevention strategies and culture activities as protective factors.

Ideally, MEHS would like to enhance existing supports by adopting a culture of prevention and potentially hiring an additional clinician to provide more evening supports.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

NENANA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Nenana City School District (NCSD) is 55 miles southwest of Fairbanks on the Parks Highway. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's one school serves approximately 120 students, in addition to 1,720 students enrolled in the CyberLynx correspondence program.

Given the distance to Fairbanks, NCSD is eager to bring more local student supports into their community. The district reinforced this commitment by including social emotional efforts in their latest strategic plan and by leveraging high levels of staff engagement with social emotional approaches to proactively identify and connect students with services and supports.

Highlights of NCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Leadership by the Response to Intervention (RTI) committee to determine how trauma-engaged principles and social emotional needs are impacting student academic outcomes
- » Offering professional development focused on social emotional topics and Professional Assault Crisis Training (Pro-ACT) de-escalation training
- » Providing targeted and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 services and supports through a partnership with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)
- » Consistent referral tracking to capture the number of students accessing outside services and supports and subsequent use of the data to inform planning efforts
- » Observed positive changes in behavioral instances through social emotional curriculum and family engagement, including Second Step and Phlight Camp

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The physical barriers introduced by COVID-19, such as limited facial reactions with masking and social distancing, made screening difficult. It was also challenging to determine if student needs were directly related to COVID-19 or tied to other underlying issues. NCSD had to pause use of Second Step during online learning, but the district anticipates reintroducing it for the 2021-2022 school year. COVID-19 did open up access for more targeted and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports through increased use of telehealth and online services.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

NCSD has curriculum in place for universal Tier 1 supports. Connecting students to TCC is critical for delivery of targeted and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 services and supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second Step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Tanana Chiefs Conference offered in Fairbanks
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and community partner funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers Connection back to family for residential students
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tanana Chiefs Conference offered in Fairbanks North Star Behavioral Health
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

BARRIERS

NCSD is a rural district and local resources are limited. The travel required to access services in Fairbanks takes students away from time in class. Several years ago, NCSD was able to hire a counselor through grant funds, but the role was not refilled after funding ending. The limited regional and state intensive Tier 3 options is a significant challenge, particularly in instances where NCSD must connect a boarding school student back to families for safety issues. Connecting students to facilities like North Star Behavioral Health is dependent on parent approval and facility capacity, both of which can sometimes be limited.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

NCSD is researching contracted online mental health services through PresenceLearning, which could help overcome some of the funding barriers associated with hiring a full-time mental health staff member.

Ideally, NCSD would like to have funding to provide more student supports locally and reduce the need make connections to outside providers. The idea of dedicated social emotional funding for local crisis counseling through a new staff position or at the local clinic was also discussed. For the more intensive needs, NCSD would like to see more state services for youth.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

NOME PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Nome Public Schools (NPS) is located in Northwest Alaska on the coast of the Bering Sea. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the districts three schools serve approximately 630 students, in addition to 60 students in the Extensions Correspondence Program.

The community connections and relationships built by NPS's school counselors have helped build continuity for the district's approaches to mental health and social emotional learning.

Highlights of NPS's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Access to experienced school counselors who provide students with a connection to a caring adult through services and supports such as small group and individual counseling
- » Recent adoption of districtwide social emotional learning standards
- » Promotion of staff mental health and wellness through a variety of activities and events offered during weekly early-release professional development days
- » Annual review of the School Climate and Connectedness survey data to set goals, with subsequent evaluations of progress

COVID-19 IMPACTS

NPS schools were open for most of the 2020-2021 school year, allowing the district to continue offering the majority of services. However, transitions to homeschooling and online learning disconnected some students from available services. When NPS schools did shut down for COVID-19, it was a challenge for staff to identify ways to reach students potentially experiencing trauma outside of the school environment. NPS also anticipates that the increased need for mental health supports that emerged during the 2020-2021 school year will continue into 2021-2022, particularly for students transitioning back to in-person school. There were also positive impacts, including the response from high school students to peer supports and an overall awareness of mental health needs within themselves and other students.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

NPS has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Local behavioral health services are the primary option for more intensive Tier 3 supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Connected and Respected • Mental Health First Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small groups • Individual counseling
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, parent, administrator
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, Title, grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norton Sound Health Corporation Behavioral Health Services offered locally and through itinerant staff
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, administrator, counselor, parent
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partner funds

BARRIERS

Local resources for NPS are limited. Funding and staffing for qualified mental and behavioral health personnel is a challenge. NPS has established services and supports for universal and targeted Tier 1 and Tier 2, but is primarily dependent on outside providers for more intensive Tier 3 needs. Connecting students to local behavioral health services has also been challenging, potentially due to clinic capacity issues. When students do access outside services, it can be difficult for families to transport students to local appointments. Regional services also require time away from the school community, which can impact student connections. For the services and supports offered through NPS, the overall availability of staff time to meet academic and social emotional learning priorities can also be a challenge.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

NPS has discussed creating a physical space within the school building to offer onsite services from Behavioral Health Services personnel. Prompted by COVID-19, the district may eventually explore online counseling services to help address provider shortages and access challenges.

Ideally, NPS would like to put sustainable funding toward hiring mental health personnel, such as social workers or a school psychologist, to provide services beyond itinerant special education support. The idea of a larger behavioral health program with added capacity for therapy, counseling, crisis support, and local inpatient services was also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

PETERSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Petersburg School District (PSD) is located on Mitkof Island in Southeast Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 430 students.

PSD's limited turnover, highly involved staff, and strong relationships with community agencies provide students with regular access to caring adults at school.

Highlights of PSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Planning among school counselors and administrators for annual mental health efforts, with use of Suicide Awareness, Prevention, and Postvention (SAPP) grant funds to support yearly goals
- » Providing effective social emotional learning curriculum, including observed impacts from Kelso's Choice and Zones of Regulation for elementary students and early identification of high school student needs through Signs of Suicide
- » Offering in-service sessions on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma through Ricky Robertson trainings and conferences
- » Leveraging strong relationships with community agencies and programs, including partnerships with Sealaska, Girls on the Run, Petersburg Mental Health (now Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium), and Working Against Violence for Everyone

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Virtual delivery during COVID-19 negatively impacted universal Tier 1 lessons and made it difficult to reach some students for intensive Tier 3 services and supports. Once students were onsite, limited physical space continued to impact Tier 3 delivery and pod structures made it difficult to deliver small group counseling services. Overall, COVID-19 added extra stress for staff with limited time for self-care as they worked to adjust to shifting protocols while maintaining a sense of normalcy for students. Positive outcomes also occurred, with reduced class sizes helping some students connect and build tighter bonds with their class and teacher.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

PSD has services and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community partnerships play an active role in the delivery of targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Kelso’s Choice • Zones of Regulation • School Connect • Signs of Suicide • Sanford Harmony • Compassion Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Small groups • Individual counseling • Structured study hall
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, community volunteers • Petersburg Mental Health (now Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium) • Working Against Violence Everywhere
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings, Mileposts, D and F list
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and grant funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Parent meetings and support • Personalized Individual Learning Plan • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, special education, principal, teacher, paraprofessional • Petersburg Mental Health (now Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings, Mileposts, special education, teacher, D and F list, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain outside of grant funds

BARRIERS

In recent years, PSD has experienced an increase in student needs, such as trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). PSD's local community has limited capacity to meet the level of family need, particularly for concerns related to substance use and recovery. Within the district, the overall availability of staff time and competing priorities can be a challenge.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

PSD is working on continued parent trainings for next school year, with hopes of increased participation through in-person opportunities. The high school is also introducing a new social emotional learning curriculum next year, School Connect.

Ideally, the district would like to see additional personnel and community resources, such as a part-time school nurse, programs director, local rehabilitation facility and addiction recovery support, and affordable childcare options. Additionally, ideas such as establishing additional staff time and training for social emotional learning and mental health supports and a schedule that allows for preventive social emotional learning were discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

SITKA SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Sitka School District (SSD) is located on the western edge of Baranof Island, 95 airmiles southwest of Juneau. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's six schools serve approximately 1,180 students.

SSD's strategic plans over the years have included a mandate to provide a school counselor or social worker in every building. Since establishing this expectation, the district has worked to maintain the roles to the extent possible, with more recent efforts to promote and embed social emotional learning in all schools.

Highlights of SSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Integration of social emotional learning practices in classrooms, with support from the administrative team and school board
- » Leveraging the availability of local mental health personnel and services, including community and school-based supports
- » Offering routine professional development focused on topics such as trauma-informed practices, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and self-care
- » Delivering student programs that build mindfulness and coping skills for ACEs to help through developmental stages and resilience building

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The shortened school days and remote learning during COVID-19 limited students' access to mental health programs and supports. Additionally, SSD experienced a scarcity of mental health practitioners, further contributing to difficulty meeting student need. Uncertainty about the future is thought to have added to stress for staff. While the quality and quantity of mental health interventions were impacted, the district made adaptations. For example, school counselors and social workers were able to pivot Second Step programming to high-quality video lessons for students. The district also invested in technology devices for students, which supported consistent connectivity. Looking ahead, SSD would like to increase social emotional learning programs, particularly for the universal Tier 1 and early intervention Tier 2 programs to help catch students up on the experiences missed during COVID-19.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

SSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework. Community partnerships are present in more intensive Tier 3 supports.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • Playworks • Kelso’s Choice • Conflict resolution program • Bear Paws Kindness Support • Incredible Flexible You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In/Check-Out • Social skills groups • Play therapy • MindUP • Superflex • Skillstreaming • Social Explorers • Promoting Executive Function in the Classroom • Mindful Kids
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, specialist, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist, counselor, social worker, paraprofessional
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief Externalizing and Internalizing Screener for Youth
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor, family • Uncertain

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group and individual counseling • Play therapy • Services and supports through outside providers (offered onsite and in community)
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, social worker, administrator, special education teacher • SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium • Sitka Counseling
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening tools • Teacher, counselor, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain

BARRIERS

While SSD is a well-resourced community, its rural location and limited client base for consistent funding of services are barriers to providing upper-level intensive Tier 3 supports. When funding is limited, the need to allocate budget for classroom teachers can impact funding for mental health services and supports. Allocating time for social emotional learning, particularly with the recent academic time lost to COVID-19, can also be a challenge.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

SSD has budgeted to fill a standing mental health vacancy at the alternative high school for the 2021-2022 school year, likely with a school social worker. The high school also plans to offer an early childhood class in partnership with Ventures, the after-school daycare program.

Ideally, SSD would like to see continued funding for mental health services and continued staff trainings on ACEs, trauma-informed practices, self-care, and integration of student mental health and academic needs. The idea of additional supports for families was also discussed.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

TANANA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Tanana City School District (TCSD) is located 130 airmiles west of Fairbanks in Interior Alaska. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early \(DEED\) Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's one school serves approximately 30 students.

TCSD's small size and location makes the district's partnerships with the Tanana Tribe and DEED integral pieces of the mental health supports available for students.

Highlights of TCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Partnership with the Tanana Tribe to provide supports for students, including a mental health coordinator from the Tribe who is frequently in the school
- » Addition of new resources through work with DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist, including staff trainings and classroom and individual student supports
- » Staff education on trauma-engaged approaches and restorative practices through collaboration with DEED
- » Increased access to targeted and intensive Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports through new telehealth services available through the local clinic

COVID-19 IMPACTS

Lack of internet access in student homes was a significant barrier during COVID-19. For example, social emotional learning was less effective with limited opportunity for class discussions and direct student interactions. Internet access also impacted the ability to get targeted Tier 2 supports to students. There were also positive impacts, including increased access to telehealth at the local clinic, allowing more students to receive supports in the village, as opposed to traveling to Fairbanks.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

TCSD has limited services and supports at each of three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Services and supports through DEED and contracted with Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) through the Tanana Tribe are integral for the limited targeted and intensive supports currently offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second Step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual counseling
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DEED's Mental Health Education Specialist
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General and grant funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tanana Chiefs Conference (contracted through Tanana Tribe) offered locally and through telehealth
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher, family
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partner funds

BARRIERS

TCSD is in a small, remote community. Regional access to mental health supports requires air travel. The limited district and local clinic resources are extremely stretched to cover the level of need. Specifically, personnel gaps including a school counselor and staffing at the local mental health clinic limit access. School staff take on many roles within the school community to help bridge this gap, but challenges remain in trying to provide supports for student needs.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

TCSD plans to continue using in-service time for DEED-led mental health and wellness professional development and to continue their work with the mental health education specialist. If local access to telehealth remains beyond the pandemic, TCSD sees an opportunity to continue utilizing the services to provide more access for students.

Ideally, TCSD would like to hire a school counselor and secure funding to explore additional social emotional curriculum and approaches. Career and technical guidance from a counselor could help provide some future planning support to students to address underlying social emotional factors like anxiety and depression.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

UNALASKA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Unalaska City School District (UCSD) is located 800 airmiles southwest of Anchorage on the island of Unalaska in the Bering Sea. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's two schools serve approximately 390 students.

UCSD's small size, family-oriented cultures, and low teacher-to-student ratios create a close-knit school community and proactive identification of student needs. Students are supported by engagement opportunities in the broader school community, such as parks and recreation programming.

Highlights of UCSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Delivery of universal and targeted supports through a student assistance team made up of school staff, with as needed support from community providers
- » Providing increased capacity for mental and behavioral health supports through community partnerships and outside trained clinicians
- » Annual participation in the Association of Alaska School Boards School Climate and Connectedness Survey as basis for program planning
- » Integration of a behavioral or mental health component into fall in-service

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The delivery of social emotional learning and mental and behavioral health supports, such as counseling, was disrupted by the shifts to remote and hybrid learning. Students reported struggling with their mental health, particularly during remote learning. It's thought to be likely that the isolation of COVID-19 significantly increased anxiety and depression among students, as well as stress among staff. Quarantine requirements also made medical travel to Anchorage more challenging.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

UCSD has strategies and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports. Community partnerships are integral for the more targeted and intensive supports offered in Tier 2 and Tier 3.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student assistance team • Kelso's Choice • District-designed supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student assistance team • Individual counseling • Community presenters • Services and supports through outside providers
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff, counselor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Iliuliuk Health Clinic • Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association Behavioral Health • Unalaskans Against Sexual Assault and Family Violence (USAFV)
Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff, parent, student assistance team
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and family counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iliuliuk Family & Health Services • Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association Behavioral Health • Anchorage-based providers
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor, school psychologist
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General funds

BARRIERS

UCSD is in a remote community. Local resources are limited. Air travel is expensive and has been unstable, which can impact those students who need more intensive supports not available in the community. The cost and time required for travel and the additional time required for community quarantine requirements have all been barriers. There is also limited internet for telehealth. The stigma of being seen accessing mental health supports can also be a barrier in a small town, where everyone knows everyone else. Several years ago, the state closed the local Office of Children’s Services branch, and a community social worker position that worked in the schools was not refilled.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Ideally, UCSD would like to have funding for a dedicated counselor at each school site. Currently, UCSD can only support one counselor. More affordable and better broadband could also improve access to telehealth options for students and staff, but in person supports are still preferable.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

YUKON-KOYUKUK SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Yukon-Koyukuk School District (YKSD) encompasses about 65,000 square miles on the Yukon, Koyukuk, and Tanana River systems. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's nine schools serve approximately 300 students, in addition to 4,035 students enrolled in the Raven Homeschool program.

YKSD's relationships among staff and ability to leverage individual strengths, as well as the responsiveness of community partners, helps reinforce the district's existing services and supports.

Highlights of YKSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Engaging social emotional learning curriculum and positive response to adoption of the Department of Education & Early Development and Association of Alaska School Boards trauma-engaged framework
- » Creation of school-specific plans that capture mental health resources through Culturally Responsive Embedded Social and Emotional Learning (CRESEL) grant work
- » Offering mental health and wellness presentations during in-service, including speakers such as Nick Hanson, Ricky Robertson, and public health nurses, on topics like self-care
- » Establishing consistent relationships between staff and community partners that allow for quick connections to outside supports

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The inability to travel to school sites and the local variations in restrictions during COVID-19 had a significant impact on services for YKSD. Most family homes do not have internet access and bandwidth is limited, which made virtual counseling and video meetings challenging. Students had to rely on telephone communication. Isolation between school sites was felt more acutely by staff given the limited ability to gather in person. Despite the challenges, COVID-19 strengthened community and district relationships through increased telephone communication between counselors and families, a benefit that YKSD predicts will continue to improve in the 2021-2022 school year with the transition back to in-person interactions.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

YKSD has services and supports at all three levels of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports, with community partnerships providing a significant impact for the district. Tier 3 services largely consist of connections to outside services, most of which are virtual or require access to transportation.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth R • CHAMPS • Positive Healthy Choices • Safe Dates • Life Skills • Conscious Discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Social skills groups • Individual behavior support plans • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor • Speakers and presenters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, counselor • Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universally offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, parent
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant and general funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant, general, and community partner funds

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual counseling • Services and supports through outside providers
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselor • Boys and Girls Home of Alaska • Graf Rheeneerhaanjii Substance Abuse Center • Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) • Raven's Way • Alaska Psychiatric Institute (API)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher, parent, counselor
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants, general funds, partner-funded

BARRIERS

Geographically, YKSD encompasses an area larger than the state of Washington. Travel to most of the communities and villages is by small aircraft. Itinerant staff is highly dependent on the ability to travel in order to provide services, which was heavily disrupted during COVID-19. Limited internet availability in student homes also created access barriers tied to the pandemic.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

Ideally, YKSD would like to see continued improvements to internet bandwidth. The district would also like to add local mental health professionals, such as a counselor at each school site, a districtwide social worker, or a full-time nurse. YKSD also discussed the idea of implementing video-based self-care training and group counseling sessions for staff.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Mental Health in Schools Profile:

YUPIIT SCHOOL DISTRICT

June 2021

OVERVIEW

Yupiit School District (YSD) is located northeast of Bethel on the Kuskokwim River with school sites in Tuluksak, Akiachak, and Akiak. Based on pre-kindergarten through grade 12 district enrollment totals from the [Department of Education & Early Development Data Center](#) as of October 2020, the district's three schools serve approximately 510 students.

With YSD's rural school locations and limited local services, the district has focused on equipping staff with information on mental health issues and recognizing student needs. Change is slow, but steps are being taken to build awareness of social emotional learning and mental health supports.

Highlights of YSD's approach to providing mental health supports include:

- » Exposure districtwide to trauma-engaged practices through staff professional development, including a book study with state mentor Lisa Mead
- » Leveraging staff proximity of living and working within the school communities to approach family engagement and student needs in a cultural context, such as working with Elders in schools for student supports
- » Introduction of the Responsive Classroom approach and supporting social emotional learning at Akiachak School
- » Tapping into existing social emotional knowledge base to provide weekly staff-led professional development during COVID-19

COVID-19 IMPACTS

In January of 2021, Tuluksak's washateria and water plant building were destroyed in a fire, leaving school staff and community without running water or sewer. The fire created a lack of access to basic needs and further exacerbated COVID-19 challenges. Most homes do not have internet access, so hybrid and remote learning severely limited connections to students and created a heavy reliance on telephone communications for delivery of intensive Tier 3 supports. With return to in-person school, YSD is hopeful to re-start video-based telehealth services in lieu of the telephone outreach.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

YSD does not currently have universal and targeted Tier 1 and 2 supports beyond case-by-case approaches in individual classrooms. Intensive Tier 3 supports are limited to student referrals to special education.

UNIVERSAL STRATEGIES & SELECTIVE SUPPORTS		
	Tier 1 Universally offered, schoolwide supports	Tier 2 Early intervention & targeted supports
Approaches, curriculums, models & programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently using universal supports outside of individual teacher-led approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently using Tier 2 supports

INTENSIVE SERVICES & SUPPORTS	
	Tier 3 More intensive supports
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health counseling if included in Individualized Education Program (IEP)
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PresenceLearning (telehealth)
Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health provider, parent, teacher
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District foundation and special education funds

BARRIERS

YSD schools are in rural, remote villages. Limited local services and the unpredictable nature of travel creates challenges for offering student supports. For instance, YSD previously planned to engage their local health provider Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation after a crisis, but weather prevented their team from traveling to provide onsite support. Housing is limited and is typically prioritized for academic staff ahead of mental health staff.

WORKS IN PROGRESS, CONCEPTS, & IDEAL SYSTEMS

For the 2021-2022 school year, YSD will have a CTE teacher at two school sites and will continue to identify additional interactive learning opportunities for students. The district has also hired new staff members from the local community as interventionists who will provide students with the opportunity to receive individual support in a small group setting. YSD also hopes to further involve their community and Elders in general academic curriculum, as well as in teaching students to understand and learn about the Yup'ik language and local culture.

Ideally, YSD would like to see a dedicated mental health team at each school that focuses on screenings, outreach, ongoing trainings, and implementation of classroom strategies, as well as available housing for those staff members.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

This information was collected through interviews with district staff as part of an environmental scan of the mental health policies, programs, and practices in school districts across Alaska. The project is funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and the research was conducted by the Stellar Group.

Nome Elementary School

Box 131 • Nome, Alaska 99762

Phone: 443-5299 Fax: 443-2850

Elizabeth Korenek-Johnson
Principal



Elizabeth Dillman
Assistant Principal

September 9, 2021 (August Report)

Dear Board Members,

Welcome back to another unique school year! We are grateful, as always, to be fortunate enough to live in a supportive community where everyone is working together to keep each other safe and healthy, allowing us to have in-person schooling. Our mitigation measures are continuing from last year, and even a little tighter in regards to face coverings. Helping students to learn the routines and expectations takes time and patience, but things are coming along well.

We are excited to be starting the year with our new math materials, *Eureka Math*. Teachers were provided two days of in-person in-service training at the start of the year. We felt this was a high-quality professional development opportunity and were grateful for the strong start. Teachers will continue to work together on program implementation during the Wednesday Professional Learning Community (PLC) time.

Regarding PLCs, with the lifting of the travel-related quarantine mandate for vaccinated individuals in the spring we were able to host a facilitator from Solution Tree for a three-day PLC at Work workshop for certified staff. Our School Improvement Grant allowed us to bring in the facilitator and pay the teachers for their time. These three days were jam-packed with really good information and hands-on work in how to collaborate effectively around standards and student evidence in order to improve instruction. This provided the structures we needed in place to help teachers use their Wednesday time as originally intended for our staff- focusing on high-quality, rigorous instruction firmly planted in the standards, with clear expectations for and feedback to students.

As you know, we have a new cohort of students enrolled in our Inupiaq Immersion Program. We are thrilled to have Annie Conger teaching groups of 21 Kindergarten students in her classroom, as Ms. Kiminaq Alvanna-Stimplfe continues in First Grade with her 22 students. It's amazing to have such a rich opportunity for our students.

We also want to welcome several other new members to the NES Staff Family:
Rick Mc Case, Special Education Teacher
Jason Brown, Third Grade Teacher
Sam Schmidt, Fourth Grade Teacher
Talivaaq Wellert, Kindergarten Inupiaq Immersion Instructional Aide
Heidi Hanebuth, Title I Reading Intervention Instructional Aide

Also, Kaitlin Topkok has transferred to Kindergarten Instructional Aide in Ms. Janet's class, so all Kinder classes have aides! We are still looking for a Behavior Specialist, Music Teacher, Special Education Paraprofessionals, and kitchen workers.

NPS Strategic Plan Goal #3: Students and Families will be positively connected to their school, their community and their culture.

Looking back to previous reporting on this goal last year, it is much of the same. Our efforts continue steadfastly:

3.1.1

We will be starting Facebook Live Read Aloud events again and reminding families about the Read to Lead reading logs and school-wide celebrations.

3.1.2

Connections with NEC and Nome Beltz National Honor Society are again in the works through the coordination of Rachel Finney. We hope to get a much earlier start on our reading mentor program "Readers and Leaders".

3.2.1

Our school-wide practices in restorative justice continue. Our Student Support Team is also a consistent piece of our team approach to supporting students who seem to be struggling in any area.

3.2.2

Connected and Respected SEL materials and Kagan cooperative learning structures continue to be a regular component of classroom lessons and routines. New teachers were provided with Days 1 and 2 of Kagan Cooperative Learning prior to the start of the year by our newly certified school trainer, Julie Cross.

3.2.3

We continue to work with families on the best way to communicate with them. We recognize that there are no "one size fits all" magic tools. We utilize Remind, phone calls, and notes home based on what works for families. Frequency of communication is at least weekly, but that can also be adjusted based on family and student needs.

Coming Events:

- Sept. 20-23: Vision and Hearing Screenings
- Oct. 5: Literacy Grant Virtual Fall Convening

Statistics:

School was in session for five days in August.

- We had an attendance rate of 87% (We currently have 317 students registered at NES.)
- We served 697 breakfasts, and 591 lunches.

Nome Elementary School provides a positive and welcoming environment where our culturally-diverse students, staff, and community members are valued through mutual respect, collaboration, safe interactions, and enriching experiences. Clear and high expectations serve as guidelines to reach success and wellness for all students in this rapidly-changing world.



ACSA Board Report, September 14, 2021

Lisa Leeper, Principal

Enrollment / Attendance Update

- There were a few changes to enrollment through the summer. One opening in 8th grade was filled by a new applicant, as there were no students in a waiting pool for that grade level. Grade level balance is our first lottery priority. To fill other openings, we drew names from the oldest waiting pools in the respective grade levels.
- Just over 10% of our students were absent for one or more days for moose hunting.

Classes and Activities

- Inservice included training for our new Big Ideas math program, Mosaic Adaptive Academic Learning, and MAWI Turbo Leader.
 - . The Big Ideas textbook is set up much like our previous textbooks but there are many online features that coincide with lessons and supplement instruction. We will be fairly faithful to the program until we become more familiar with the content and structure, then we can begin to modify as needed.
 - . Mosaic Adaptive Academic Learning is the world's most powerful personalized mastery platform built on proven learning science research and data-driven intelligence to deliver continuously adaptive enrichment, automatic scaffolding and personalized mastery for every student. (<https://www.scootpad.com/>)
 - . MAWI Turbo Leader course is designed for middle school students and includes 17 web-based lessons covering student self-efficacy and agency, positive peer and adult relationships and conflict strategies, and growth mindset skills and tools. The curriculum and assessments are aligned to the CASEL Competencies and the course was given the CASEL SElect designation. Affirming and drawing upon cultural backgrounds is a central theme throughout the curriculum; students are regularly invited to draw on their personal strengths

and recognize and use their cultural knowledge, experience, and perspectives in the course of developing and practicing their social and emotional skills.

- Inservice also included time for teachers to collaborate around planning for this year's theme, Alaska Studies. This collaboration is a pursuit that begins at the end of each school year, as teachers work an extra duty contract to create interdisciplinary plans for the upcoming school year's curriculum. We will continue to refine plans as the year goes on.

. One of the first projects students will complete is a local plant guide. The guide will contain scientific and cultural information and uses of plants.

. In the hallway on the wall, students will all help to paint a physical map of the state of Alaska.

- In the weeks before school started, several parents and students answered the call to volunteer in setting up the school doing jobs such as hanging bulletin boards, cleaning, painting, making copies, and sorting supplies. Throughout the year, we will try to encourage parents to become involved in any way that works for them. As such, we have parents volunteering weekly to monitor the cafeteria so that teachers can take their lunch break.
- On the first day of school, amongst sharing rules and procedures, we got students up and about. They played games and worked together in four "Houses." Houses are student groups of mixed grade levels for the purpose of team building and mentoring. We will use the Houses throughout the year to create a spirit of cooperation and belonging and to increase engagement.
- We took our annual Anvil Mountain Hike on the first Friday of the school year. This hike allows students to help each other accomplish an endeavor and to take a group photo at the top of the mountain. Parents were invited to join us, and several did.
- ACSA held a field day at the Dexter Girl Scout Camp on September 9th. The weather was beautiful and students rotated through several outdoor activities. Several community organizations were invited to work with students, and one guest was able to attend: Keegan Bourdon, Youth Services Specialist for NEC. He helped students look for and learn about local plants. Two parents joined us a different times to help chaperone. We held an additional activity day on Friday, September 10th. Heather Jameson from the ADF&G taught about and organized a game around Musk Ox.

- Rachel Ventress is our new half time teacher for Language Arts. She has taken three periods off my schedule. I still teach math and the art elective.
- Strategic Plan Goal #3 - Students and Families will be positively connected to their school, their community and their culture.
 - ACSA parents and Nome community members are recruited to serve on the Academic Policy Committee, the governing board for our school. We are currently in need of one member.
 - We will continue to strive to make positive parent contacts. We have already had a few conferences with families of students with special needs or concerns.
 - We will continue to seek input from community members to share the history and cultures of our region. We hope to provide opportunities for students to visit entities in our community that will allow students to gain an understanding of local resources and human connections.
 - We will continue to seek parent volunteers to assist in a variety of capacities. When possible, we try to tailor opportunities to fit the skill set and comfort level of each volunteer. Most parents do wish to give time or supplies to help support our program.
 - We have established “houses,” groups of 15 students that span grade levels. Groups work together to complete projects or activities and to score points to earn privileges or rewards.
 - Many of projects for our various subjects allow students the opportunity to showcase cultural values or knowledge. We will attempt to make regular, meaningful opportunities to tie learning to a student’s culture.



Nome-Beltz Middle High School

PO Box 131, Nome Alaska 99762

Phone: 907-443-5201 Fax: 907-443-3626

Date: 14 September 2021

To: NPS Board

From: Jay Thomas and Teriscovkya Smith

Subject: September Board Report

NBMHS Current Enrollment: 320 (up 45 students from last year)

Attendance 2nd Semester: 85%

- Due to limited instructional days prior to this report, NBMHS will continue our tradition of recognizing student, support staff and teacher excellence in October.

New additions and changing roles in NBMHS staffing:

- New teachers:
 - Brandon Smith, HS/MS Music: Brandon comes to us from Dillingham School District with 4 years of experience. Students are excited about new Guitar Class offerings and future music events.
 - Michael Deering, HS Science: Michael comes from Illinois with 3 years of teaching experience and we are excited to have him incorporate science through food in this year's offerings.
 - Ryan Fox, MS Social Studies: Ryan is a first year teacher from Albany, NY and he is an avid runner, hiker, and cyclist (he biked across the country for the second time on his way to Alaska!). He brings great enthusiasm and energy to our middle school team.
 - Sheila Quinio, MS Science: Coming from Cebu, Philippines, Sheila brings more than 15 years of experience to our science department and a unique cultural perspective that will serve our students well.
 - Ben Payenna, MS/HS Native Arts: Ben is a NBHS graduate with extensive subsistence, commercial fishing, and cultural arts experience. He is an accomplished ivory carver and will be an exceptional addition to our staff. His experience will bring new classes such as Seasonal Subsistence, Traditional Carving, and Drum making.
 - Sarah Swann, MS/HS Behavioral Specialist: Originally from South Dakota, Sarah worked for the court system before joining the Beltz team. She will be an asset as we grow our restorative practices.

- Administrative Internship
 - High School English teacher Rebekah Albertson will complete her internship at NBMHS this year as part of her M.Ed. in Leadership through UAS. Rebekah will bring new perspective and innovation to our administrative team and we are pleased to see her continued commitment to education.
- Transitions
 - Kathy Garrison, who worked for three years as a middle school Science teacher, has moved into Special Education after completing her graduate studies.

The following is a list of happenings that currently impact NBMHS:

- Increased enrollment and larger class sizes. NBMHS has had an increase of 45 students since last May.
- Wearing masks appropriately throughout the day
- Planning activities with Covid-19 considerations

Activities Wrap-up:

- XC Country continues their season with more than 30 runners. With muddy roads the Teller meet was not attended by NBHS and COVID caused limited outside runners for the Nome meet.
- VB continues to play strong and has safely competed in Fairbanks.
- The NBMHS state champion Esports team will participate in both the Fall and Spring season.

Goal Area #3: Students and families will be positively connected to their school, their community and their culture.

- Communications
 - School staff maximizes the use of Remind for communications with parents, guardians, and students, who have responded positively to this endeavor.
 - Quarterly high school and middle school newsletters keep families informed on events, activities, and academics.
- Parent/Community Gatherings
 - Due to precautions around Covid, we will not hold our annual Open House
 - The annual 6th and 9th-grade orientation was a great success and many family members were able to attend with their children
- Cultural Connections
 - New class offerings include: Seasonal Subsistence, Traditional Carving, and Drum making with expanded offerings at the middle school level.
 - We are seeking support from local entities to support funding for an additional Native Arts instructor. Historically, Nome-Beltz has had a male and a female Native Arts instructor for a balanced curriculum; it is our desire to bring back this effective model.

Nome Public Schools Board Facilities Service Report, September 2021.

John W. Mortensen, Facilities Director

John.mortensen@nmsusa.com

907-244-4121

For the Month of: **August 2021**

This Month to Date Maintenance Snapshot:

- **Scheduled Work in Progress: 70**
- **Total Open Work Orders: 464**
- **Open Preventative Maintenance Work Orders: 0**
- **Preventative Maintenance: 0**

Injuries & Accidents

N/A

Employee New Hires

N/A

Employee Departures

N/A

Staffing:

Approvals:

- NBHS Snow Plowing Contractor Q-Trucking

Custodial:

Maintenance Department Tasks with Status:

- NBHS Playground Equipment installation sub-contractor project is underway.
- NES Day tank project is on hold until PMI receives barge parts ordered for the job. They do not respond.
- State of Alaska - NES Fuel Spill investigation ongoing. Subcontractor EMI will be here 9-8- through 9-9-21 for preliminary investigation.
- NPS School District DDC / HVAC control systems bids. Going out to bid through City of Nome September 2021
- Pinnacle Mechanical scheduling for NES Day Tank Repair. We are waiting on the materials.
- Fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems need work in both NES and NBHS. We are going out to bid for fire contractors.
- NBHS Emergency sign system installation.
- Asbestos plan and certification are being brought up to speed but will take several months.
- Re-keying of NPS School District ongoing.
- Create site maps with all MEP shutoffs and controls.

- NBHS Gravel Road and Parking Lot

Safety Concerns:

- ADEC/SPAR Report to the State of Alaska

Custodial Department

Other Issues:

Nome Public Schools Director of Technology Report

Jim Shreve
14 September 2021

Current projects

Updates for Network Equipment (E-Rate Category II) - Since mid July, the Tech Department ran over 2 miles worth of network cable to classrooms and connected 64 of 75 improved Access Points to provide a more robust WiFi environment in our classrooms. We still need to install improved APs in both gymnasiums, DO area, and the maintenance shop. We receive 85% reimbursement for qualifying Category II equipment installed in school buildings with students under the E-Rate program.

The rollout of classroom carts that was mentioned in last months report at NBMHS and NES is complete. ACSA will remain 1:1 assigned devices because of their smaller school size. This is the first year that NES will have devices assignable for every student in all classrooms.

ViewSonic - Tech Dept personnel installed 7 of 8 additional ViewSonic interactive displays (4 at NES and 3 at NBMHS, 1 is still pending at NBMHS awaiting mount). This includes a new display in the NES Library to enhance Staff training and School Board meetings.

SPED Equipment - in coordination with the SPED Coordinator, the Tech Department is in the process of updating SPED Student devices and classroom interactive displays.

Future Projections

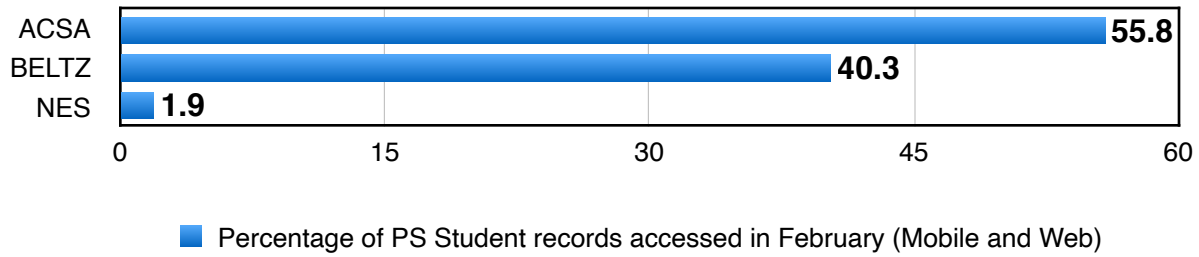
Updates for Network Equipment (E-Rate Category II) - We ordered 17 Power over Ethernet (PoE) capable switches to enable the placement of the new Access Points in all classrooms. These switches will also provide power and connectivity to our security cameras and other network connected peripherals throughout the district. These switches are due to arrive December of 2021. We receive 85% reimbursement for qualifying Category II equipment installed in school buildings with students under the E-Rate program.

Updates to server rooms. With the updates from our Internet Service Provider, mentioned in last months report, we are now awaiting some electrical circuit installation / upgrades for our NES server room in order to cross level some of our servers from NBMHS to NES. The move of this equipment will help balance loads on our network as well as stabilize our PowerSchool SIS in the event of an outage between NES and NBMHS.

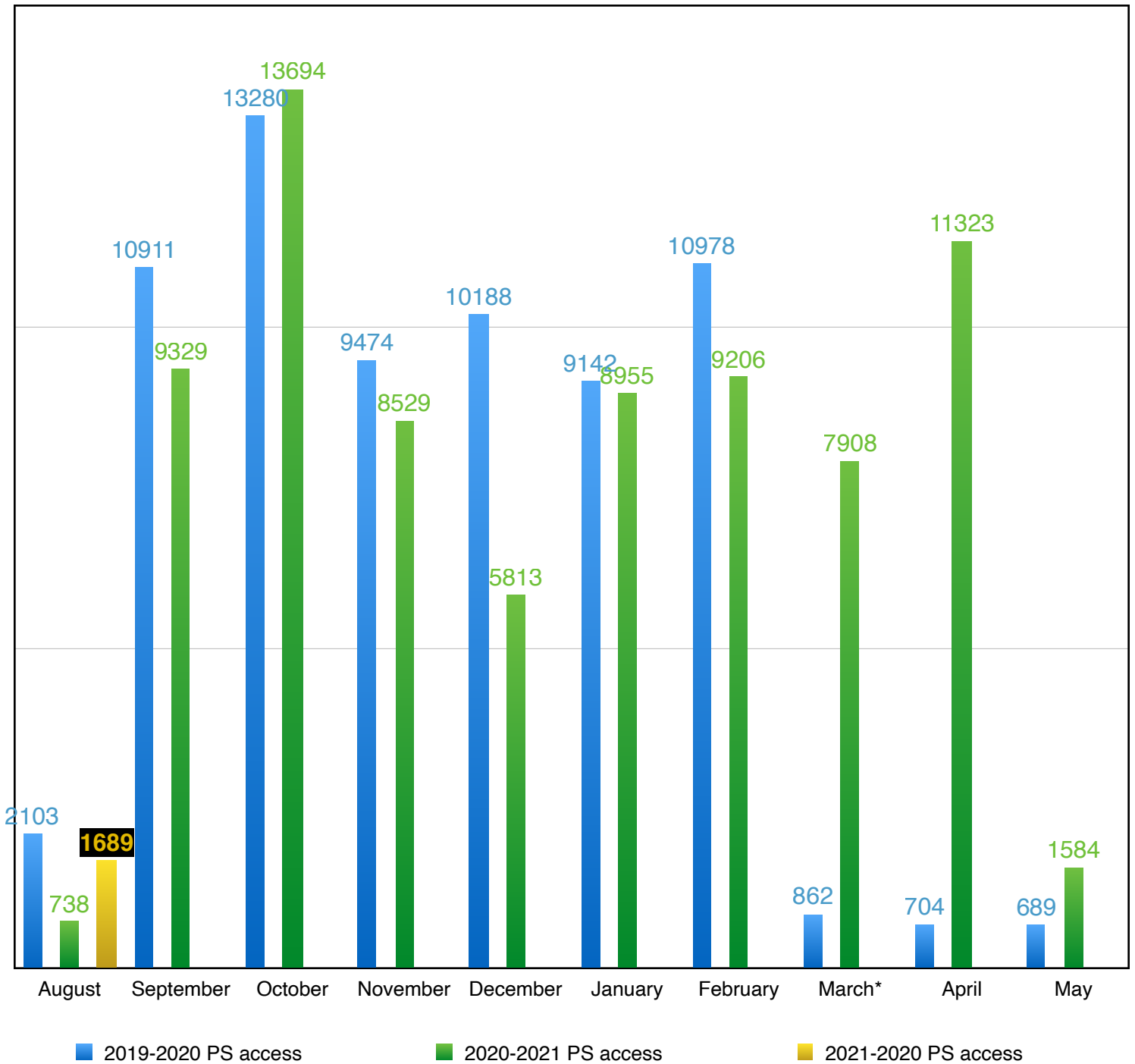
PowerSchool Online Enrollment

The full PowerSchool Online Enrollment system went live August 13th, 2021. 66 records were submitted within 24 hours of snap codes being sent out via email. As of 06SEP21 there are 140 New Student Enrollments and 359 Returning Student Enrollments for a total of 499 records. This equates to **69.6%** of our current student count as having online enrollments completed for SY21-22, which is on pace for this same timeframe last year.

**PowerSchool Student Information System Access data
PowerSchool use, by students and parents.**

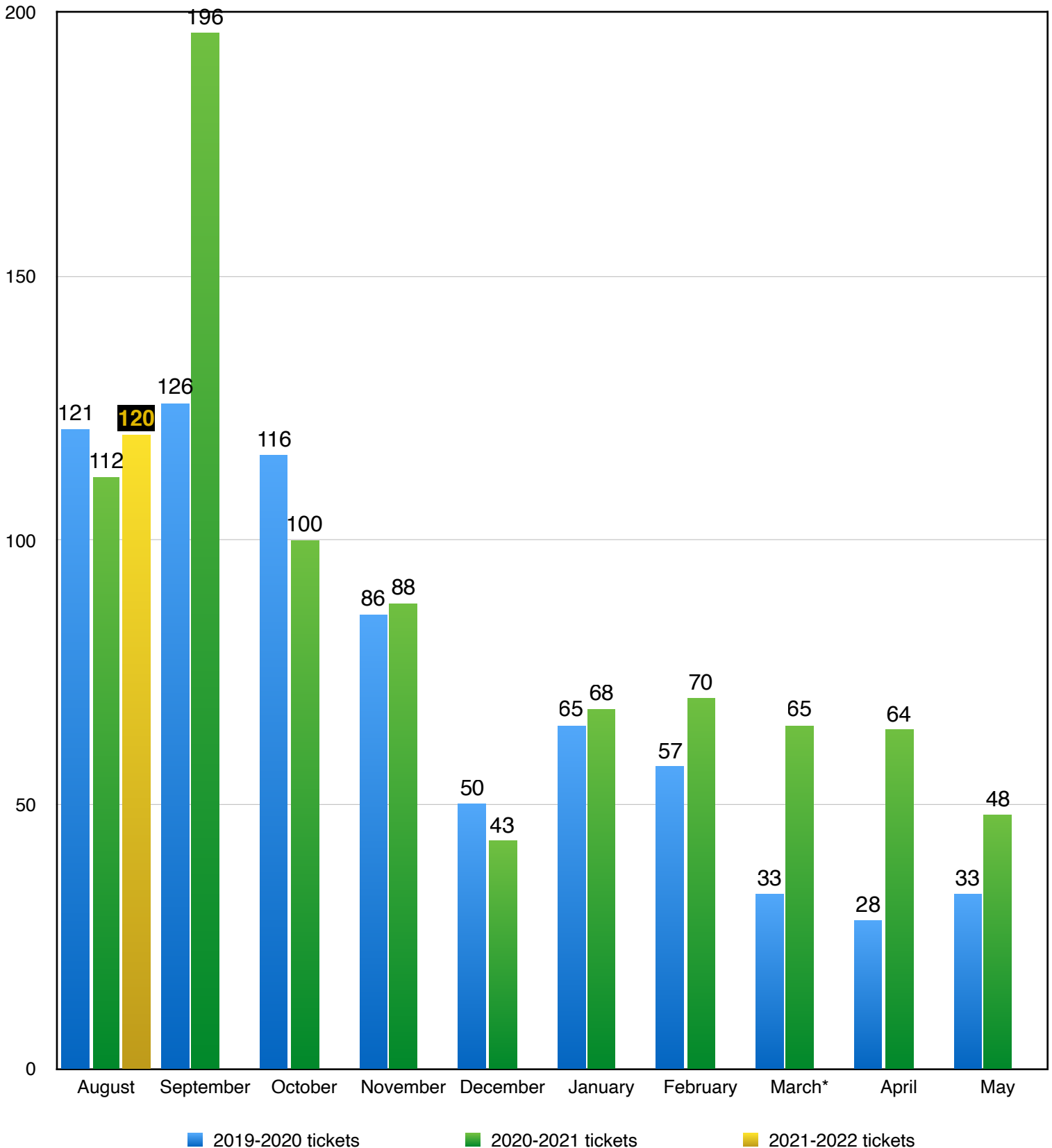


Total Parent and Student PS Web and Mobile Access Sessions:



Technology Web HelpDesk

Part of the Technology Department's duty is to maintain the Technology Web Help Desk for staff to request repairs, training and troubleshooting. In August we resolved 101 out of 120 (84%) of the tech requests submitted through the system. We encourage staff to make use of this resource but many immediate needs are still handled outside of it.





Nome Public Schools

Special Education Board Report, September 2021

Aaron Husemann, Special Education Coordinator

Special Education Department

- ❖ 82 Active Special Education Students
 - 3 New Evaluations carried over from 2020 - 2021
- ❖ 7 Current Paraprofessionals
 - 6 current openings
- ❖ 1 Administrative Assistant
- ❖ 5 Special Education Teachers
 - 2 at Nome Elementary School
 - 3 at Nome-Beltz Middle High School & Anvil City Science Academy
 - Looking to Hire an additional Teacher at NES and replace 2 Para positions
- ❖ Next Level Speech Therapy
 - 1 Speech Language Pathologist
 - 1 Speech Language Pathologist Assistant
- ❖ 2 Itinerant School Psychologists
- ❖ Sprouting Trees Pediatric Therapy and Recreation, Inc.
 - 1 Itinerant Physical Therapist
 - 1 Itinerant Occupational Therapist

Special Education Monthly Snapshot

- ❖ Staffing
 - Job Fair at NES Friday on 8/13/2021 from 1:00pm - 4:00pm
 - Another date soon to come
 - 6 current Paraprofessional Positions open
 - 3 positions at Nome Elementary School
 - 2 positions at Nome-Beltz Middle High School
 - Speech Language Pathologist Services will be provided by teletherapy for the current School Year
 - Current Speech Caseload
 - 7 Speech Only Students
 - 28 Additional Students receive Speech Therapy
- ❖ Upcoming Itinerant Schedule
 - School Psychologists: September 12 - 17, 2021
 - 3 New Evaluations carried over from 2020 - 2021
 - 6 Reevaluations
 - 1 New Referral
 - Occupational Therapist and Physical Therapist:
 - September 26 - October 1, 2021

Aaron Husemann

Nome Public Schools

Special Education Coordinator

aaronhusemann@nomeschools.org

(907) 443 - 6208

Nome Public Schools Board Report

Megan Hayes

Director of Federal Programs

Report prepared for September 14, 2021 Nome Public Schools School Board Meeting

Grants- Consolidated ESEA: Title I-A/Title I-C/Title II-A/Title IV; EASIE; and RLIS

Consolidated ESEA-Currently working on submission of grant for FY22

•**Title I-A- Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged- funds for NES Only-FY22**

Allocation- \$221,247 (with possible carry forward from FY21)- NES only-Funds cover the Reading Specialist and reading aide's salaries, and reading supplies. In addition, this year's funding will pay for science curriculum development stipends, science materials for each grade, and \$1000 set aside for assisting homeless students' needs. Final report for Title I-C FY21, Summer Mass Withdrawal, has been submitted.

•**Title I-C, Migratory Education- funds for NES Consolidated and Districtwide FY22 Allocation-**

\$433,265- This is a \$171,786 reduction from last year's initial allocation. There was an overall decrease at the state level funding for Title I-C. While Alaska received a decrease at the state-level, it is important to note that each district's allocation is dependent on several contributing factors, including the district's relative share of migratory children statewide. However, Nome Public Schools will be receiving "reallocated" funds in November, which I anticipate could be as much as \$100,000. Title I-C funds are "consolidated" with Title I-A funds at NES but are not "consolidated" at the other sites. NES Consolidated funds cover the salaries of the NES counselor and several aides. At the district level, I-C funds pay for a ½ time recruiter, 1/3 records manager and a portion of the director of federal programs salaries, afterschool tutoring at all sites, swimming lessons, preschool tuition at Nome Preschool, Lego Robotics, school supplies and tuition assistance for migratory students taking enrichment or dual credit courses.

•**Title II-A-Supporting Effective Instruction-Districtwide-FY22 Allocation-** \$58,678 NPS uses these district-wide funds primarily for professional development. District wide PD includes Kagan Training (on and off site), Cultural Awareness Trainings, principals' attendance at the Annual Principals Conference, and course fees for teachers working on their campus credential.

•**Title IV-Student Support and Academic Enrichment-Districtwide-FY22 Allocation** \$30,804 and \$10,277 carry over from FY21 for a total of \$41,081. Last year we purchased guitars for NBMHS, and a trail groomer and skis for the local recreational ski program. The funds are divided into three categories: 1) Activities to support well-rounded educational opportunities 2) Activities to support safe and healthy schools 3) Activities to support the effective use of technology. This year Title IV funds will be allocated after conducting our needs assessment.

•**Title VI-EASIE-(aka Indian Education)- Districtwide- FY22 Allocation** \$217,815. This funding covers 70% of the salaries for the cultural teachers at NES and NBMHS. The funding also covers 100% of the Inupiaq Immersion classroom aide.

•**JOM-Districtwide- FY 22 Allocation-** \$10,530 with an additional \$13,754 in carry forward from last year for a total of \$24,284. These funds are generally used to cover the cost of supplies and material for the cultural education classes.

•**Quality Schools**-Application completed and submitted. Approximately- \$28,000 of funding that is "rolled" into the general fund.

School Improvement Grant- NES- FY22 Allocation- \$50,000-

Assessments, Curriculum and Data-

•Presented, requested and currently tracking District Mandated Trainings for NPS employees

•Attended Monthly District Test Coordinator Webinar -9/9/ 2021

•WIDA-Spring Score reports sent home to parents on August 31

•PEAKS & Science

Student scores received by district. Student scores will be sent home by October 1, 2021.

PEAKS vendor will now be NWEA- more information from DEED is forthcoming. Here is a link to the announcement: <https://education.alaska.gov/information-exchange-blog/deed-spotlight-deed-selects-nwea-for-innovative-assessment>

Enrollment by school-Please note the listed enrollments are

Enrollment	5/6/20	9/3/20	5/7/2021	9/9/21
Nome Elementary School	377	309	292	317
Anvil City Science Academy	60	58	56	60
Nome-Beltz Middle Senior High	250	297	277	319
NPS Extensions Correspondence	23	58	52	16
Total Enrollment K-12	710	721	677	712

Public Comment Statement

The Board of Education welcomes community member input during meetings about issues on or not on the agenda. The Board is not able to respond directly to you during Public Comment; the Board may decide at the end of the meeting during Board Member Comment to discuss your topic at a work session, regular meeting, or direct the Superintendent to look into a situation further.

The Board may not speak about subjects that are protected by legal confidentiality such as specific student discipline issues or personnel issues that could disparage or slander district employees.

The general guideline is approximately three minutes per speaker; however, additional time is allowable if needed. When you speak to the Board, please state your first and last name for the record.

SCHOOL BOARD COMMUNICATION

Title: Approval to Move Forward with NACTEC/NWC Facilities Agreement

Date: September 14, 2021

Administrator: Jamie Burgess, Superintendent and Dr. Doug Walrath, NACTEC Director

Attachments: HUD Grant Overview, FUA Legal Review, Draft FUA NACTEC/NWC

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Needed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Improvements to the NBMHS CTE shops were made in 2003 through a grant with the intent of allowing NWC to provide evening courses in building trades. However, recent disagreements between UAF and both BSSD/NPS regarding liability responsibilities have prevented these courses from being offered.

Dr. Doug Walrath has been working with UAF's legal team as well as BSSD/NPS's legal counsel to determine a path forward to allow the Northwest Campus to once again offer courses in welding for local college students. At this point in time, NACTEC is asking for Board approval to move forward to complete an MOA in place of the normal Facility Use Agreement (FUA) to comply with UA's request to waive the normal insurance requirements and worker's compensation abrogation clauses and agree to a mutual indemnification clause. A copy of the normal FUA is attached for the Board's information showing the elements to which UA would not agree, as well as the current draft MOA. Please note that the section labeled "Insurance" is currently incomplete, and work on this section can commence if both Nome Public Schools and Bering Strait School District agree to UA's request.

Approval does mean the districts will accept a potentially greater liability for insurance claims due to injuries during any class held by NWC in the shop facilities on the Beltz campus. The MOA will be completed and reviewed by legal counsel for both UAF-NWC and BSSD/NPS.

Nome Public Schools
PO Box 131
Nome, AK 99762
907-443-2231 – www.nomeschools.org

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends approval for NACTEC to move forward to complete an MOA with University of Alaska Fairbanks-Northwest Campus agreeing to their request to waive the normal insurance requirements and worker's compensation abrogation clauses and agree to a mutual indemnification clause.

Sample Motion: I approve NACTEC to move forward to complete MOA with UAF-NWC agreeing to their request to waive the normal insurance requirements and worker's compensation abrogation clauses and agree to a mutual indemnification clause.

Recent history of UAF faculty/adjuncts serving NACTEC – Early Childhood Education, Wildland Firefighter, Aviation Maintenance, Process Technology, Field Biology, CNA, Facility Maintenance

2003 HUD Grant: UAF-NWC & NACTEC - Renovation of (3) NBHS Shops)

Project Title: Strengthening Bering Strait Communities through Collaborative Training

\$800,000 project with following renovation work in 2004-05:

1. Improve and meet code on both restrooms
2. Attain a separate entrance to the shop areas
3. Install adequate and energy efficient lighting
4. Upgrade mechanical systems; improve ventilation
5. Interior painting of all three shops and classrooms

In addition to providing improved shop facilities for NBHS and NACTEC CTE instruction, the renovation was intended for NWC evening usage. “With the completion of this project, Northwest Campus will be able to provide courses for students to attain and advance careers in the building trades, welding, and engine repair fields” (HUD Grant Abstract, Revised 3/18/04).

Facility Use Agreement –

- Crafted in 2011-12 school year. Reviewed/approved by legal counsel of BSSD/NPS
- Eliminate personal usage of shops by district employees (9/1/11 GB meeting)
 - BSSD policy states no personal usage of school district equipment
 - NPS input: should follow the same across both districts so as to not put the liability across NPS/BSSD in event of accident.
- Insurance – Listing additional insured (NACTEC/NPS/BSSD) by outside entities
 - If a NWC led class, both districts would still be parties in action (D. Brown).
 - Outside entities listing the school districts as additional insured puts their insurance in front of school districts
 - UA is self-insured – not an option to list NPS/BSSD as additional insured.
- Indemnification - UA Risk Management prefers usage of “mutual indemnification”
- UA is asking NACTEC to waive insurance requirements, worker’s comp abrogation clauses, and agree to a mutual indemnification clause.

Documents:

1. Facility Use Agreement – UAF Risk Management edits/concerns in yellow highlight and red strike through. *This is 2012 version of original one-page Facility Use Agreement.*
2. MOA: Use of NACTEC facilities by UAF-NWC, crafted in May, 2021 by JDOLAW on behalf of BSSD/NACTEC/NPS partnership.


Facilities Use Agreement

This confirms the permission given to _____(hereinafter "Permittee") to use the Northwestern Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) dorm, classroom and training facility with related equipment (Premises) for the period beginning on _____and ending on _____, and to permit Permittee's employees, agents and invitees to be in and around the Premises on the above date(s) for the purpose of vocational training.

Permittee agrees to use reasonable care to prevent damage to the Premises and will defend and indemnify Bering Strait School District (BSSD) and Nome Public Schools (NPS), their agents and employees (hereinafter the "NACTEC"), and hold each of them harmless from any claims or demands of any person(s) arising out of or based on personal injuries, death, or property damage arising directly or indirectly from Permittee's use of the Premises.

Permittee shall procure and maintain, in full force and effect, the following policies of insurance. Written evidence in the form of a Certificate(s) of Insurance shall be provided in advance. The requirements for insurance coverage of the kinds and with the limits stated below shall not be construed as a representation that such insurance coverage is adequate or in any way limits Permittee's liability.

Commercial General Liability insurance with a combined single limit of not less than One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence/annual aggregate, which shall include, but not be limited to, premises and operations, independent contractors, products/completed operations, and blanket contractual, ~~including the indemnification clause above. NACTEC shall be named as additional insured, and this policy shall be considered to be primary of any other insurance carried by NACTEC through self-insurance or otherwise.~~

Alaska Workers' Compensation for all employees engaged by Permittee or its contractors and subcontractors, in compliance with the laws of this state, shall be in place. ~~The worker's compensation insurance shall contain a waiver of subrogation clause in favor of NACTEC.~~ 

PERMITEE APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

NORTHWESTERN CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT FOR USE OF THE NORTHWESTERN ALASKA
CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER (NACTEC) BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA-
FAIRBANKS NORTHWEST CAMPUS (NWC)

This Agreement is entered into between the Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) and the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Northwest Campus (NWC) in order to facilitate the use of certain NACTEC facilities by NWC for the purposes of providing welding courses.

WHEREAS, the Parties recognize the benefits of providing expanded trade and professional opportunities for the people of Northwest Alaska; and,

WHEREAS, NACTEC is willing to provide the facilities as described and for the purposes provided herein.

NOW THEREFORE, the Parties agree as follows:

1. Use of NACTEC Facilities.
 - a. NWC may use the facilities for the purposes stated herein and approved by NACTEC, to the extent permitted by law or ordinance. Such purposes include the use of NACTEC training facilities and welding equipment by NWC personnel and students in order to provide adult occupational welding courses.
 - b. All areas of NACTEC facilities not specifically designated for use by NACTEC shall be off limits and not accessible for NWC activities or to NWC employees, students, or invitees. It is understood that NWC's use of NACTEC facilities hereunder may be refused by NACTEC if it is determined that NWC's use may adversely impact NACTEC's mission or operations, such as adversely impacting the health and/or ongoing education of NACTEC students. NACTEC may refuse or revoke authorization to use its facilities for any reason it deems necessary, including a disruption of normal school or other operations, and shall not be liable for refusing request for use or for revocation of a prior approved use.
2. Conditions of Use. This agreement is subject to and compliant with the Memorandum of Agreement between NACTEC, the Bering Strait School District, Nome Public Schools, and the City of Nome, dated September 2020. All provisions of this Agreement relating to renovation, maintenance and use of real property and buildings title, to which is held in the name of the City of Nome, are subject to the approval of the Nome Common Council.
3. No Warranty. NACTEC makes no representations or warranties regarding the condition or suitability of its facilities for the use specified in this agreement or for any activity or use NWC intends to conduct at the sites nor does NACTEC represent or

warrant adequate water, sanitary facilities, electricity, heating/cooling, vehicular access, phone line and/or cable, or other services or amenities for NWC's intended use. NWC accepts use of NACTEC facilities as is, in their present condition, and waives any claims with respect to the sites.

4. Site Preparation, Costs, and Restoration. No alteration or modification of NACTEC facilities shall be permitted without prior written approval of the NACTEC Director. Upon cessation of NWC's use of the facilities, NWC shall remove all NWC property and equipment from the facilities, and repair and restore the facilities to the same condition as existed at the commencement of this Agreement.

5. Permissive Use of Facility Resources and Utilities. NACTEC may, but is not required, to grant NWC authority to use NACTEC facility equipment, communications equipment, and Internet services. Facility resources and associated systems will only be used with authorization of the NACTEC Director. NACTEC reserves the right to deny or limit NWC access to any NACTEC equipment or resources. Nothing in this section shall be construed as an obligation on NACTEC's part to provide or permit use of NACTEC equipment or services.

6. Indemnity by NWC. NWC shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless NACTEC, and its agents, representatives, assigns, employees, administrators, and Boards from and against any and all demands, claims, causes of action, damages (including without limitation consequential damages), losses, liabilities, costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, arising out of or resulting from NWC's use of any portion of NACTEC facilities, the conduct of NWC's business, any breach or default in the performance of any obligation of NWC, or from any activity, work or things done, permitted or suffered by NWC or any of NWC's agents, contractors, invitees, students, or employees, on or about NACTEC facilities.

Indemnity by NACTEC. NACTEC shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless NWC, its agents, representatives, assigns, employees, administrators, and Board from and against and all demands, claims, causes of action, damages (including without limitation consequential damages), losses, liabilities, costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney fees, arising out of or resulting from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of NACTEC or any breach or default in the performance of any obligation set forth in this Agreement.

7. Insurance.

8. Release from Liability. NWC assumes all risks of damage to property and for loss, damage or injury to persons, in, upon, or about NACTEC property, arising from any cause whatsoever any act of negligence or willful misconduct by NWC, and releases NACTEC and waives all claims against NACTEC in respect thereof. This release of liability does not extend to any damage or loss arising from the sole negligence or willful misconduct of NACTEC.

9. Entry and Right of Authority. NACTEC and its agents and representatives shall retain the full right of access to enter NACTEC facilities at any time. NWC shall comply with any rules or requirements of NACTEC administration related to entry or use of NACTEC facilities.

10. No Agency; Compliance with Laws. This Agreement is not intended to and shall not be construed to create the relationship of agent, servant, employee, partnership, joint venture, or association, or as establishing an employment relationship between NACTEC and NWC staff or between NWC and NACTEC staff. NACTEC and NWC shall each comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations as applicable to each agency, and nothing herein shall be construed as an agreement by NACTEC or NWC to assume or perform any obligations imposed by law or regulation on the other party.

11. Contact Information. NACTEC will provide NWC the appropriate facility contact information, and update this information as necessary.

12. Term and Termination. This Agreement shall be effective upon execution by all parties. The persons executing this Agreement represent and warrant that they are duly authorized to execute this Agreement on behalf of the respective parties hereto and that by his/her signature below, the organization or entity for which he/she is signing is fully bound by the terms contained herein. Unless earlier terminated as provided in this section, this Agreement will remain in effect for a period of one year and may be renewed from year to year upon mutual written agreement of the parties. Either party may terminate this Agreement with or without cause which shall be effective thirty (30) days after written notice to terminate is delivered to the other party.

13. No Assignment. NWC's rights and obligations under this agreement are not assignable absent the written consent of NACTEC.

14. No Waiver. The failure by either party to enforce any right, term, covenant, or condition arising hereunder shall not be deemed to be a waiver of such right, term, covenant, or condition.

15. Severability. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this Agreement shall in no way affect the validity of any other provisions hereof, which shall remain in full force and effect.

16. Entire Agreement; Modification. This Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes any and all former agreements on this subject. Any changes, modifications or amendments to this agreement are valid only if in writing and signed by both parties. An oral modification shall not be binding on either party.

17. Applicable Law. This Agreement shall be construed and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Alaska. Any disputes arising under this Agreement which cannot be resolved by negotiation of the parties is subject to litigation in the Superior Court of the State of Alaska, Second Judicial District at Nome.

18. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. Delivery of an executed counterpart of a signature page by facsimile or electronic .pdf file shall have the same force and effect as a manually executed counterpart and shall be deemed an original signature for all purposes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned have executed this Agreement as of the date set forth by each party's signature below.

NORTHWESTERN ALASKA CAREER AND TECHNICAL CENTER

By: _____ Date: _____

Its: _____

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA-FAIRBANKS NORTHWEST CAMPUS

By: _____ Date: _____

Its: _____

CITY OF NOME

By: _____ Date: _____

Its: _____