
CCSD Superintendent Report

January 2026

CCSD Appreciations

- Thank you so much to Tina Steffen, Josh Andrews, CHS Staff, and all CCSD school along with community volunteers for everything they did to make the second annual Cultural Basketball Tournament such a success. It truly couldn't have happened without the time and support of all involved.
- Thank you to Denise Mathena and Elsie Leach from Community Connections for providing behavioral management training for our instructional paraprofessionals on Friday, January 16, 2026, at CES. We truly appreciate the shared expertise and professional development provided to our staff with practical strategies that will directly benefit our students and classrooms.

CCSD Finances/Budget

- CCSD's reconciled FY2026 OASIS Foundation Summary is included in this month's Correspondence section. On November 4, 2025, CCSD certified an October student count and FY 2026 Foundation Claim of 574.84 students. The final reconciled foundation count was **573.84**. This does not reflect DEED's deduplication process or final approval of CCSD's intensive claims (+3). Our count will likely decrease by **-13.92** due to duplicated students between PACE and another Alaska Public School. The final funding impact will not be known until DEED completes its review; however, compared to FY 2025 (approximately 630 students), CCSD is down 56 students, resulting in an **estimated loss of \$265,000** in public school (BSA) funding.
- The Department of Education and Early Development's FY 2027 School Construction and Major Maintenance Capital Improvement Project (CIP) Reconsideration Decision Lists are included in the Correspondence section. CCSD remains ranked number one for the CEMS Rehabilitation Supplemental Funding Request under the Major Maintenance CIP.
- CCSD has received the third quarter sales tax revenue check from the City of Craig for **\$353,722.83**. Fiscal year-to-date, the District has collected \$565,374 of the projected \$700,000.
- The CEA Classified Staff of Craig Schools has formally requested to open negotiations for a new contract, as their current agreement expires June 30, 2026. The request letter is included. As a reminder, Board President, Hans Hjort, and Board Vice President, Ben Page, were approved to serve on the CCSD Board Negotiations Committee.
- Given CCSD's ongoing General Operating Budget challenges, the shortfall in public school funding due to declining enrollment, previous certified and upcoming classified labor negotiations, it is fiscally responsible to reduce fixed operating costs wherever possible. With that said, it is my recommendation that CCSD consolidate the Wasilla PACE Learning Center/Office into the Anchorage PACE Learning Center/Office. Due to recent PACE Staffing changes, the Wasilla location will soon be supporting only one (1) staff member while costing the District \$3,100 per month in rent, increasing to \$3,800 per month after March 26, 2026. Since CCSD's largest homeschool population is based in Anchorage and a Learning Center/Office already exists there, maintaining the Wasilla office is no longer cost-effective. Consolidation would generate significant monthly savings while continuing to provide effective services for our PACE Statewide Correspondence Homeschool students and families.
- The second session of the 34th Alaska Legislature convened on Tuesday, January 20, 2026. While education continues to be a key focus, lawmakers appear to be prioritizing policy changes over increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA). Proposed legislation addresses student safety, curriculum improvement

(particularly in math), adjustments to the Special Education Service Agency's (SESA's) funding, homeschool accountability, graduation requirements, and support for military connected as well as Alaska Native students. There is also discussion about stabilizing district budgets through changes to enrollment count calculations. Overall, the session highlights a focus on accountability, safety, and instructional quality, while long-term education funding increases unfortunately remains uncertain.

- CCSD Business Manager, Ms. Melinda Bass, and I have been working on the FY2026 First Budget Revision and will likely be meeting with CCSD's Budget Committee before February's School Board Meeting.

CCSD Human Resources (HR)/Staff Updates

- Please join me in welcoming the following staff to CCSD: Ms. Jessica Hughes (CMS Long Term Social Studies Substitute), Daisy McNamara (CEMS Special Education Paraprofessional), Tina Nelson (CEMS Special Education Paraprofessional), Alex Vickers (CMS Head Wrestling Coach), Hunter Fitch (CMS Assistant Wrestling Coach).
- CCSD currently has the following positions posted: CCSD Maintenance Director & Bus Driver, CES 4th Grade Teacher, CMS English/Language Arts Teacher, CMS Science Teacher, CHS CTE Teacher (Grant Funded, see details below), & K-12 Health & PE Teacher, PACE Administrative Assistant (ANC).

Additional HR Notes

- As previously emailed to the Board, it is my understanding that the budget revision for the SOAR UP Grant was approved. As a result, CCSD posted for a grant funded CHS CTE Teacher position, with approximately \$55,000 per year for five (5) years provided through the SOAR UP Grant to support salary and benefits. While the remaining salary and benefits will be covered by the General Budget, this funding structure allows us to expand staffing and enhance programs for our students with minimal impact on the General Budget. This new position will oversee SOAR UP data reporting and will primarily be based at CHS, with the possibility of offering one (1) period at CMS as a CTE-based elective.
- As of the writing of this Board Report, CCSD has not received any new applications for the Maintenance Director & Bus Driver position. While one (1) application was submitted, the applicant was not selected for hire. With that said, CCSD currently has no Maintenance Director, which limits our ability to address maintenance needs and presents operational challenges. While the principals and I are doing our best to manage these responsibilities, this role requires specialized expertise and experience that cannot be fully covered in an interim capacity.
- As the Board is aware, CCSD is also currently operating with only one (1) available bus driver. We are actively working on a solution to address this staffing challenge. In the meantime, to continue providing transportation services as consistently as possible, CCSD will temporarily alternate bus routes on a weekly basis until a permanent solution is found.
- CCSD will continue to do our best to advertise and recruit qualified candidates for our vacant positions and will keep the Board informed as the recruitment, selection, and hiring process progresses.

CCSD Curriculum/Instruction & Professional Development/PLC Committee Updates

- CCSD held a Behavioral Management Training on Friday, January 16, 2026, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the CES Library, during the Teacher Workday for Classified Instructional Paraprofessionals. The training was led by Denise Mathena and Elsie Leach from Community Connections, specialists in behavioral support strategies. This training was organized in response to staff feedback requesting additional support in

behavior management. Classified staff reported that the training was worthwhile and helpful, providing practical, personalized tools they can use to support student behavior as well as enhance classroom and playground safety.

- I'm excited to share a professional growth opportunity for our staff through **Project UNITED**, a three (3) year, grant funded program supported by the NPE Grant and in partnership with CCSD, KCSD, SISD, and SSD. Brightways is coordinating participation for 50 total educators, including both teachers and paraprofessionals. The program blends professional learning with travel experiences while strengthening social studies instruction, literacy practices, and classroom management skills (all funded through the grant). This will be a great opportunity for our staff to receive professional development, collaborate across other districts, and bring new strategies back to our classrooms.
- CCSD has received a new planning grant opportunity for re-designated schools in response to district feedback. Given CCSD's PACE program was re-designated for the 2026/27 school year, a planning grant of up to \$10,000 was awarded to support school improvement planning. Please note, these grant dollars are tied to the School Improvement Grant (SIG) and may only be used to support work with CCSD PACE Statewide Correspondence Homeschool and the completion of a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA). Specifically, the grant funding will be used to bring Anchorage based PACE Staff to Craig for the Spring PACE In-Service on March 17-18, 2026, to support the establishment of a School and Community Leadership Team (SCLT), completion of a CNA through the Empowerment Process, and development of a School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- CCSD is moving forward with piloting Gaggle ReachOut, a 24/7 student crisis support service that connects students directly with trained crisis counselors and notifies school administrators when support is needed. CCSD held a kickoff meeting with Gaggle ReachOut to prepare for implementation of this 24/7 student crisis support service on January 21, 2026. The meeting covered service overview, District contacts (CCSD Admin), alert protocols, reporting, webchat setup, and coordination with local law enforcement and community resources. We are nearly ready to roll out the service for students at CES, CMS, and CHS. Once again, the pilot will serve CCSD K-12 brick-and-mortar students from implementation (anticipated the week of January 26, 2026) through January 31, 2027, including summer break.
- CCSD is planning a follow-up Learning Pit professional development session with James Nottingham, similar to the session held in August. I am currently working to schedule a 2-hour session during CCSD's April 20th In-Service. This session will provide staff with additional strategies to support student learning and engagement, building on the skills and concepts introduced in the previous training.

CCSD Special Programs

- Last month, I shared that CCSD had submitted an application to be considered for the January Embrace (special education database) transition cohort. I am pleased to report that CCSD has been selected and will be part of the piloting cohort. I attended the initial Embrace meeting for Special Education Directors on January 12, 2026. Brandon Groves, the state-designated Implementation Specialist, will provide support throughout the transition, including data migration, training, and implementation. There are four (4) opportunities for upcoming kick-off meetings for the pilot. Jared Grieve, CCSD's Network Technician, and I will attend the first session on January 26, 2026. I will continue to keep the Board and staff involved with this initiative informed as we move forward.

CCSD Projects

CHS New Shop/Biomass Project

- No new updates to report at this time.

CEMS Rehabilitation Project

- As the Board may recall, last month preauthorization was requested for additional electrical and controls work to install pre-action sprinkler valves at Craig Elementary School (CES), estimated at \$31,000 - \$36,000, which exceeds the Superintendent's \$20,000 limit. To date, no change order has been received for this work. In addition, we are currently reviewing additional code requirements to see if there is any way to avoid the change order.
- In regards to CEMS Rehabilitation Project updates, at CES, there are no new updates to report at this time. At CMS, drywall installation continues in the remaining spaces, and preparations are underway for flooring and ceiling installation. As rough-in work wraps up, teams will begin installing fixtures and other finish elements, bringing the project closer to completion.
- As the Board is aware, recent work and winter storms have revealed ongoing drainage issues at the rear of CMS, along with leaks in portions of the roof that were not part of the CEMS Rehabilitation Project. These conditions have affected some of the new drywall. Additionally, significant rot was discovered while framing the wall under the new vestibule on the low gym roof. The contractor has submitted a Request for Information (RFI), and the team is working to assess these issues and develop potential solutions. It is likely that addressing these conditions will result in additional costs, which will be evaluated as part of the assessment as well.
- While a temporary fix is in place for the CMS flooding, the ongoing issues highlight the need for a long-term solution to protect the facility. Although rain gutters have not yet been installed, it is possible they may not fully resolve the problem. The focus remains on identifying practical, code compliant solutions to prevent future flooding and protect the CMS. I will continue to keep the Board informed accordingly as I learn more.

Current/Upcoming District Events

- January 28th: CCSD School Board Meeting
- January 30th: CCSD Quarter 3 Staff Wellness Activity
- February 3rd: CCSD Indigenous Education Committee Meeting (4pm)
- February 5th: CCSD Budget Committee Meeting (5:15pm)
- February 9th: CCSD Policy Committee Meeting (5:15pm)
- February 12-13th: CCSD Parent Teacher Conferences (No School on 2/13)
- February 25th: CCSD School Board Meeting

*Please be sure to check CCSD's Website for specific dates of events and activities at CES, CMS, and CHS.