

Department Reports

Iñupiaq Education – Director Qagğuna Tenna Pili

Introduction

August marked the official start of the 2026–2027 school year. The Iñupiaq Education Department (IED) focused on establishing a strong foundation for the year through instructional preparation, staff onboarding and professional development, program implementation, resource coordination, and family and community engagement. Building upon the progress and systems developed during the previous school year, our efforts remain focused on strengthening Iñupiaq language acquisition, culturally responsive instruction, and meaningful cultural learning opportunities across all schools and communities.

Family & Community Collaboration

Goal 1: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

- **Uqautiluṇa Iñupiatun:**
 - Focusing on the transition of the Uqautiluṇa Iñupiatun program, we are off to a great start with the teachers of the program. K3/K4 has remained as full immersion, both Kindergarten and 1st grade have transitioned to dual-language, and 2nd grade has transitioned to general education.
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Culturally Responsive Instruction

Goal 2: All students perform at or above grade level.

- **Classrooms on the Nuna:**
 - Continued planning and coordination for Classrooms on the Nuna programming, building upon previous implementation and strengthening opportunities for students to engage in land-based, place-based, and culturally grounded learning. Rod Lloyd flew out to Atqasuk to support Principal Skar Sato, and instructional team members Frieda Nageak, Brandy Fisher, and Erin Hollingworth all flew out for part of the week to participate and provide support.
- **Instructional Materials and Curriculum Support:**
 - Coordinated materials and resource fulfillment for general education classrooms, Culture Based Units, Iñupiaq Language classrooms, and other culturally responsive instructional programming in preparation for the start of the school year.

- Continued strengthening systems to ensure teachers have access to appropriate curriculum, materials, digital resources, and cultural supports necessary for successful implementation.

Goal 3: All students are prepared for their pathway of choice post-high school.

- **Culturally Grounded Student Pathways:**

- Continued aligning Iñupiaq Education programming with opportunities that prepare students for postsecondary education, workforce participation, and locally relevant career pathways while reinforcing Iñupiaq identity, values, language, and ways of knowing. Plans are underway by Coordinator Nageak in partnership with Qatqiññaġvik staff for two education intensives and two cultural intensives for this school year.

Goal 4: Graduate bilingual students.

- **Iñupialġusisa! Mentor-Apprentice Program:**

- Continued implementation and planning for the Iñupialġusisa! Mentor-Apprentice Program, building upon the language immersion, curriculum development, and professional learning completed during the previous school year and summer.
- Implementation for the language intensive for our Iļisaurrit Iñupiatun will take place starting next week, August 24.
- In partnership with the Mayor’s Office, are working towards launching the Iñupialġusisa Full-time Learner initiative.

- **Iñupiaq Language Teacher Support:**

- Supported the onboarding and beginning-of-year preparation of Iñupiaq Language Teachers, with emphasis on curriculum alignment, instructional expectations, language acquisition, assessment practices, and access to district resources. The early out days has allowed us to work explicitly with Iļisaurrit Iñupiatun to conduct BOY PD that will set a solid foundation for the beginning of the school year.

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District.

- **Beginning-of-Year Professional Development:**

- Designed and implemented dedicated professional development for Iñupiaq Language Teachers focused on language instruction, curriculum implementation, instructional planning, assessment practices, and preparation for the 2026–2027 school year.

- **New Hire and All-Hire Inservices:**

- Contributed to the development and implementation of beginning-of-year new hire and all-hire principal and teacher inservices, supporting the integration of Iñupiaq

language, culture, values, and culturally responsive practices into the district's opening professional learning activities.

- **ILT Onboarding and Ongoing Support:**
 - Provided targeted onboarding and individualized support for new and returning Iñupiaq Language Teachers to strengthen consistency in instructional practices and expectations across district sites.
 - **Department Capacity and Staff Support:**
 - Continued strengthening departmental staffing, internal processes, and professional learning structures to ensure IED has the capacity to effectively support schools, teachers, students, and districtwide initiatives throughout the year.
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Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations.

- **Resource Logistics & Fulfillment:**
 - Coordinated procurement, organization, and distribution of instructional materials for Culture Based Units, Iñupiaq Language classrooms, general education classrooms, immersion programming, and other IED initiatives in preparation for the beginning of the school year.
 - **Instructional Resource Management:**
 - Continued utilizing and refining department systems for inventory management, resource checkout, materials fulfillment, and distribution to improve accountability and ensure equitable access to instructional resources across sites.
 - **Program Implementation & Coordination:**
 - Coordinated beginning-of-year schedules, materials, staffing supports, and logistics across IED programs to establish clear implementation expectations and support a successful launch of the 2026–2027 school year.
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Conclusion

The Iñupiaq Education Department has begun the 2026–2027 school year with a continued focus on strengthening the systems, partnerships, and instructional practices necessary to advance culturally responsive and bilingual education throughout NSBSD. Building upon the progress made during the previous school year, our priorities remain centered on language acquisition, culturally grounded curriculum and instruction, staff development, family and community partnerships, and effective operational support.

As we move forward throughout the school year, the department will continue working collaboratively across schools and communities to create meaningful learning opportunities that

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strengthen academic achievement while sustaining Iñupiaq language, identity, values, and ways of knowing for future generations.

Photos from Meade River School's Classrooms on the Nuna, courtesy of Coordinator of Iñupiaq Education, Tigigluk Frieda Nageak



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Curriculum & Instruction - Michele Brown

Family & Community Collaboration

Goal 1: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

Culturally Responsive Instruction

Goal 2: All students perform at or above grade level

We have started a literacy intervention focus for grades 4-8. With the growth we've seen in K-3, we are shifting focus to continued support for K-3 while expanding our explicit intervention program to 4-8. We have purchased Phonics for Reading and Third Quest, which are student-facing materials with direct instruction components delivered by teachers. These programs are not independent computer-based programs, but rather explicit, direct-teach instructional tools. Direct-teach instruction ensures students receive explicit, teacher-led guidance rather than relying solely on independent or computer-based practice, allowing teachers to model skills clearly, check for understanding in real time, and adjust instruction immediately based on student response. This leads to stronger skill mastery and faster intervention when a student is struggling.

Goal 3: All students are prepared for their pathway of choice post-high school

Tumitchiat Sivunmun Plan (TSP) time has evolved with more focus on individual student interests and goals. Working across departments, Curriculum & Instruction and CTE have partnered to develop unique pathways to guide students along their journey. We will be utilizing AKCIS and AER as partners to make this career exploration tailored to Alaska and the North Slope Borough.

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

Four Instructional Specialists joined the team this year: two supporting secondary and two supporting elementary. We've already seen great success with our specialists supporting teachers as they prepare for students, from training and familiarizing staff with curricular materials, to helping set up classrooms and diving into data to plan for students' return.

New Hire Inservice provided face-to-face training to all new NSBSD teachers, focused on nuts-and-bolts onboarding with a hands-on approach to prepare incoming staff for the classroom.

All Hire Inservice moved to an online training approach this year, allowing NSBSD staff across all eight communities to participate without travel disruptions.

Curriculum & Instruction staff, including Instructional Specialists, the Coordinator, and the Director of Curriculum, traveled to provide direct site assistance across all NSBSD schools, ensuring every site was up and running with the support they needed.

We are looking forward to upcoming CORE and Attuned site visits in support of teachers and site administrators, with Attuned Partners beginning their visits in early September. These outside service providers will spend time at each of our sites providing direct coaching and modeling for staff, helping them solve instructional challenges, and helping fine tune teaching to meet the needs of every child.

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

Student Services - Michael Hautala

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District.

Staff has been busy recruiting and interviewing. The Summer has not brought much change in hiring. Staffing requirements as we start the new year are 3 SPED teaching positions (2 Barrow High School and 1 Wainwright), and 3 Counselor positions district wide (Counselors at IPK and Wainwright, and Pt. Hope). The \$7500 retention/recruiting bonus for Special Education before the NSBSD school board has sparked a lot of interest from candidates helping fill many of our SPED positions; we are currently situated in a good place.

Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Goal 5: Facilitate & maintain culturally, emotionally, and physically safe learning Environment.

Counseling

Counselors continue to be a focus for hiring. Looking to refine the Tumitchiat Sivunmun Plan period as well as establish consistent processes for monitoring graduation eligibility.

Social Emotional

Dr. Sharon Lemmert has been working with Huddle Up and Community partners to ensure continuity for school start. Renewing our MOA with Maniilaq for mental Health in Tikigaq. Also, working with NSB IBH to efficiently utilize their school-based clinicians.

Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center / Career & Technical Education - Kent Mingneau

Family & Community Collaboration

Goal 1: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

Successfully hosted the North Slope Borough School District Principals' In-Service at the Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center (QLC), providing an opportunity to showcase the facility, strengthen collaboration with district leadership, and highlight the expanding opportunities available through Career & Technical Education.

Partnered with the **National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)** by hosting expedition students and staff at the QLC before and after their 10-day Arctic expeditions. The QLC also served as the location for the students' graduation ceremony, recognizing the successful completion of their expedition experience.

Continued collaboration with school administrators, industry partners, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations to expand educational opportunities for students throughout the district.

Ongoing coordination with schools to identify and recruit students for upcoming CTE intensive programs, career exploration opportunities, and workforce development initiatives.

Culturally Responsive Instruction

Goal 2: All students perform at or above grade level

Career & Technical Education programming continues to provide students with engaging, hands-on, project-based learning experiences that reinforce academic skills while developing technical competencies.

Instruction integrates real-world applications, employability skills, and career readiness while supporting student engagement and success.

Programs emphasize leadership, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and professional expectations to prepare students for success in college, careers, and life.

Goal 3: All students are prepared for their pathway of choice post-high schoolThe department has several Career & Technical Education intensive courses scheduled throughout the fall semester, providing students with opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications, dual credit, and valuable hands-on career experiences.

The QLC will once again host multiple high school intensive programs that provide students with exposure to high-demand career pathways while supporting regional workforce development.

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This fall marks the launch of the district's **first-ever Middle School AMPED on Energy Intensive**, introducing middle school students to careers in the energy industry through engaging, hands-on learning experiences and early career exploration.

Planning continues with industry, postsecondary, and community partners to expand student access to career pathways and workforce training opportunities.

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

The Career & Technical Education Department is pleased to welcome **Brandy Fisher** as the new **Career & Technical Education Manager**. Brandy will play an integral role in supporting district CTE programs, instructors, students, and the continued growth of Career & Technical Education across the North Slope Borough School District.

Continued collaboration with school administrators, instructors, and district departments to support the successful implementation of Career & Technical Education programming.

Coordinated planning with instructors and community partners to ensure readiness for upcoming intensive courses, student housing, logistics, and instructional delivery.

The department remains committed to supporting staff through collaboration, communication, and continuous improvement of CTE programming across the district.

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

Continued planning and coordination of QLC operations to support student housing, transportation, facility readiness, and instructional programming for the upcoming semester.

Ongoing efforts to strengthen operational procedures, improve communication, and ensure efficient, student-focused operations.

Initiated review of Residential Learning Center funding opportunities and program requirements to support long-term program sustainability and maximize available resources.

Continued coordination with district departments to ensure the QLC remains a safe, efficient, and welcoming learning environment that supports student success

Human Resources - Earl “Dimple” San Nicolas

Family & Community Collaboration

Goal 1: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

The HR Department, together with the Business Office, continued to work with Valliant, and we are in the final stages of the compensation study.

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

August 2026

The District hired 49 new teachers and 7 new administrators. Thirty-nine newly hired teachers attended the 2-day in-service in Utqiagvik, and it was successful. Continued support and training were provided via Zoom to new and returning teachers at their sites.

The HR Department, together with the Site Principals, the Districtwide Activities Coordinator, Steve Zanazzo, and the Districtwide Activities Manager, Jeremy Arnhart, began hiring for Added Duty Contract positions. We strongly urge the community to take part in these activities, and the vacancies are posted in Workable for interested individuals to apply.

Business Office - Megan Williams

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

Information Technology - Reginald Santos

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

IT completed a districtwide Apple device refresh in preparation for the new school year. New student laptops and iPads have been distributed to school sites, and teachers and admin staff received new M5 MacBook Airs.

A dedicated backup generator has also been installed at the Utqiagvik main data center. This will help maintain critical technology operations during extended power outages while the district awaits the larger CIP-funded generator anticipated in summer 2028.

IT also partnered with MAO, CIP, and Arctic Fire and Security to install and configure modern intercom systems at Hopson Middle School and Kali School in Point Lay. These systems provide the same design and functionality as the system at Ipalook Elementary School.

Additionally, new high-resolution cameras were purchased for the Hopson Middle School gym. They will replace obsolete, low-resolution cameras and provide clearer footage to support incident investigations.

The district also acquired Kelley Cloud Fax, powered by WestFax, to replace the previous unreliable e-fax service. Supported locally by Kelley Create—our copier and printer vendor—the new solution offers web-based faxing, automatic delivery of inbound files to shared drives, 99.99% delivery reliability, and HIPAA- and FERPA-compliant security.

Maintenance & Operations - Blake Mikesell

Family & Community Collaboration

Goal 1: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Goal 5: Facilitate & maintain culturally, emotionally, & physically safe learning environments

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal 6: Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

This report is presented to the Board to recognize and highlight the significant level of funding received through the North Slope Borough's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for fiscal years 2026 and 2027. We are pleased to report having received our highest level of Capital Improvement Program funding for 2026, totaling \$33,379,000. This historic investment by the Borough represents a significant commitment to advancing critical capital projects, improving infrastructure and supporting the long-term needs of the organization and the community it serves.

2026		
DESC.	SITE	AWARDED
KAK REBUILD	KAK	\$ 20,000,000.00
FIRE SYSTEM UPGRADES	HMS	\$ 3,379,000.00
HEATING SYSTEM UPGRADE	HMS	\$ 2,000,000.00
HVAC UPGRADES	AKP	\$ 2,500,000.00
DDC SYSTEM UPGRADES	AKP, HMS	\$ 1,500,000.00
INTERCOM SYSTEM UPGRADES	HMS	\$ 1,000,000.00
TECH REFRESH	DW	\$ 1,500,000.00
PHO KITCHEN UPGRADES	PHO	\$ 1,500,000.00

2027		
DESC.	SITE	AWARDED
KAK REBUILD	KAK	\$ 5,000,000.00
FIRE SYSTEM UPGRADES	AKP	\$ 1,500,000.00
HEATING SYSTEM UPGRADES	ATQ	\$ 60,000.00
HVAC UPGRADES	AIN	\$ 560,000.00
INTERCOM SYSTEM UPGRADES	NUI	\$ 820,000.00
TECH REFRESH	DW	
ELECTRICAL SERVICE	HMS, M&O	\$ 600,000.00
BACK UP GENERATORS	HMS, AIN	\$ 1,400,000.00

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		\$ 33,379,000.00	KITCHEN EQUIPMENT UPGRADE	AKP, NUI, AIN	\$ 240,000.00
			LIFT STATION REPLACEMENTS	PIZ, AIN, HMS	\$ 1,368,000.00
			SECURITY SYSTEM UPGRADES	NUI	\$ 200,000.00
			DW FACILITY RENOVATION UPFUND	DW	\$ 1,600,000.00
			ALAK SCHOOL RENOVATION	AIN	\$ 10,000,000.00
					\$ 23,348,000.00

For 2027, the North Slope Borough has awarded an additional \$23,348,000 for Capital Projects. Combined, the 2026 and 2027 allocations represent substantial capital funding over a two year period.

The unprecedented allocations demonstrate the strong recognition of the North Slope Borough School District's capital needs and the importance of projects being advanced. The funding will provide an opportunity to address priority infrastructure requirements, undertake major improvements and make strategic investments that will provide lasting benefits.

The additional 2027 funding further strengthens the NSBSD's ability to maintain momentum on priorities and plan responsibly for continued capital improvements.

The M&O Department will work to finalize the FY28 Capital Improvement 10 Year Plan Request by the end of September. As part of this process, we will collaborate with Principals, Plant Managers, community members, and the administration to identify and address facility needs to ensure we provide safe, supportive, and effective learning environments for our students districtwide.

Below is a list of projects by site and their current status:

PROJECT	STATUS	EST. DATES OF COMPLETION
AIN Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	NOT STARTED	TBD
AIN School Renovation Phase I	NOT STARTED	2027
AKP Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	NOT STARTED	TBD
AKP HVAC Upgrades	On track	TBD
AKP Mechanical Upgrades	NOT STARTED	TBD
AKP Structural Upgrade (Deck) Emergency Repairs	COMPLETE	
AKP Structural Upgrade (School Roof Upgrade)	NOT STARTED	BCA
AKP TRANSIT VAN	COMPLETE	
ATQ Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	On track	8/30/2026
BHS Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	Delayed	TBD
BHS Elevator Upgrades	On track	
BHS Fire Sprinkler System Upgrade	On track	9/1/2026
BHS Home Ec Room Renovation	On track	2/1/2027
DDC System Upgrades	NOT STARTED	TBD
DW Door Survey/Assessment	COMPLETE	
DW IT Technology Refresh	COMPLETE	8/6/2026
HMS Boiler and Mechanical Upgrades	On track	10/1/2026
HMS Clock Intercom Systems Upgrades	COMPLETE	8/5/2026
HMS Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	Delayed	TBD
HMS GENERATOR REPLACEMENT	NOT STARTED	
IPK Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	Delayed	TBD
KAK FFE GYM ORDER PHASE I	On track	
KAK SCHOOL REPLACEMENT PHASE II	On track	
M&O GENERATOR INSTALL	Delayed	

NUI Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	NOT STARTED	TBD
NUI Emergency Mechanical System Upgrade	On track	
PHO Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	On track	9/1/2026
PHO SCHOOL KITCHEN REMODEL	On track	9/1/2026
PIZ Clock Intercom Upgrades	COMPLETE	8/5/2026
PIZ Electrified Door Hardware, Door Alarm System	COMPLETE	8/5/2026
TRANS AKP New Ford Transit Van	COMPLETE	
TRANS PHO New Transit Van	On track	

OPERATIONS:**Work Order Reports for 2026-2027 School Year:**

SITE	Scheduled	Preventative Maintenance	Grand Total
AIN - Alak School	14	453	467
AIN - Residential	23		23
AKP - Nunamiut School	7	22	29
ATQ - Meade River School	51	33	84
ATQ - Residential	19		19
BHS - Barrow High School	68	4	72
BRW - Residential	235	6	241
CO - Central Office	22	10	32
CO2 - Central Office 2	13	8	21
HMS - Eben Hopson MS	28	10	38

IPK - Ipalook ES	2	19	21
KAK - Harold Kaveolook School	2	1	3
KAK - Kaveolook School	2		2
KAK - Residential	4		4
Kiita - Kiita Learning Community	11	4	15
M&O - Support Services	15	9	24
NUI - Nuiqsut Trapper School	21	106	127
NUI - Residential	37		37
PHO - Residential	31		31
PHO - Tikigaq School	57	479	536
PIZ - Kali School	3	191	194
PIZ - Residential	7		7
QLC - Qatqinniagvik Learning Center	9		9
Trans - Transportation	280	12	292
Grand Total	961	1367	2328

Events held during the 2026-2027 School Year:

SITE	EXTERNAL	INTERNAL	Grand Total
AIN - Alak School	49	14	63
AKP - Nunamiut School	32	13	45

ATQ - Meade River School	34	14	48
Central Office Annex		5	5
KAK - Harold Kaveolook School	19	7	26
NUI - Nuiqsut Trapper School	37	9	46
PHO - Tikigaq School	28	13	41
PIZ - Kali School	29	16	45
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/AIN -1726 A Tununig RD. Itinerant Housing		15	15
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/ATQ - Itinerant Quarters 425 #5 Kippi Street		12	12
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/KAK - Itinerant Quarters 629 6th Street		9	9
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/NUI - 1135 street plant manager house		8	8
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/NUI - Itinerant Quarters 356 Pausanna Street		7	7
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/PHO - Itinerant Quarters 1734 Qalgi Street		2	2
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/PIZ - 1029 Home EC room Quarters Qasigialik street		7	7
UTQ and Villages Itinerant Quarters/UTQ CO2 - Itinerant Quarters	1	115	116
UTQ BHS - Barrow High School	18	48	66
UTQ HMS -Eben Hopson Middle School	58	35	93

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UTQ IPK - Fred Ipalook Elementary	47	37	84
UTQ KLC - Kiita Learning Community		2	2
UTQ Maintenance & Operations		1	1
(blank)	1		1
Grand Total	353	389	742

Student Activities - Steve Zanazzo

Fall Sports are off and running...literally. Barrow has Football, Volleyball and XC Run happening with the xc run team already traveling to Homer for the first event of the season. Football has 3 home games on Aug 21, Sept 12 and Sept 26. BHS Volleyball has home matches on Sept 24-26, the 20th Annual Whaler Invite is on Oct 29-31 and BHS hosts the Western Conference Regional tournament on Nov 6-7. XC run hosts the Whaler Invite on Sept 11 and travels to Nome for regionals on Sept 26.

The 1A schools have all begun xc run and will head to Palmer meet on 5th and then to BHS on Sept 11 and Nunamiut will host regionals at BHS on Sept 15.

ASAA changed the online format for registering athletes and their sports physical to Arbiter, so we are all learning a new system together.