Site Report – Newhalen School – November, 2026

To: Superintendent Kasie Luke and LPSD School Board Members	From: Newhalen School

Photos & Description of Activities and Events

Personnel Update

(Who is teaching what levels and subjects at the start of the year or shifts in this throughout the year, classified vacancies and support in school, praise/thanks for personnel at site and across the district for your school, introduce student teachers or tutors…etc.)

Preschool/Aide- Kelsea Rychnovsky
K/1- Stephanie Barthelman
1/2 - Alexis Pursell
2/3 - Marcie Lester
4- Erik Schneider
5/6- Roy Womack
MS/HS- Megyn Reedy
MS/HS- Sydney Robertaccio
MS/HS- Kristin Moore
Special Education- Chelsea Nelson

Paraprofessionals:
Sarah John
Savannah Anelon
Katie Hanson
Henry Olympic

Janitorial Staff: Janelle Ludvick and Nathan John

Maintenance - Dean John
Head Cook- Sheena Ishnook
Assistant Cook- Nikki Anelon
Administrative Asst- Evelynn Trefon

Principal- Ed Lester
LPSD School Social Worker (In Training)- Elisabeth Ludwig
LPSD School Counselor & BBRCTE Career Guide- Patty McCasland (she/her)

Vacancies: Boys basketball coach, 3 SPED Aide positions

Classroom Highlights

(Place based projects highlighted, focus on literacy, support received, etc)

Kelsea Ryhnovsky

Preschool

We have a new curriculum this year, Pre-K on my way. We have been transitioning well with the new material. We welcomed a new student a couple days ago. Arts and crafts are super fun and we've been working on our fine motor skills and learning our names.

Steph Barthelman

Kindergarten

We are working hard at growing our brains and learning hard things! We are learning how to be good friends and what rules we follow at school. We have a new class pet named Harold, he is a Pac-Man frog who is orange. We've been having fun finding frogs for him outside during recess. We are practicing teens and shapes in math. In science we are learning about animals and their habitats! This is our last week with Mr. A in our class as he will be heading back to NY to finish up his student teaching there, thanks for all your help!

Alexis Pursell

Levels 1/2

Levels 1 and 2 have been rocking and rolling! We currently have six Level 1 students and five Level 2 students.

Reading: We have been working through CKLA and have completed Domain(unit) 1 in both levels, where students explored fables, fairy tales, and tall tales. This week, we began Domain 2, with Level 1 learning about *"From Your Nose to Your Toes: How Your Body Works"* and Level 2 exploring *"The Birthplace of Democracy: Ancient Greece."* After the first two days, we found that the Level 2 domain lacked cultural relevance and that students were having difficulty keeping up with the content. We decided to combine both groups for our domain lessons while continuing to differentiate instruction and skills at each student's appropriate level.

Math: We are currently working through Unit 2 of Every Day Math (EDM), focusing on number stories, making ten, addition facts, and strengthening our overall number sense.

Science: This month has been full of fun seasonal learning! We started by exploring apples and bats, this week about skeletons to connect with our CKLA lessons, and will finish the month with a pumpkin unit.

Other Classroom Highlights: Before interventions began, we used that time for a whole-group read-aloud of *The BFG*, which students really enjoyed! Now that interventions are underway, students are settling into their groups. We also had a wonderful time berry picking this week! We are grateful for opportunities to connect our learning to local culture and and look forward to participating in more cultural experiences throughout the school year. Quyana!

Marcie Lester

Level 3

Reading- we have two groups. Both groups are finished with unit 1. We are working on learning reading through writing words and sound combinations.
Math-I have two groups both groups finished Unit 1 and moved into unit 2 working on story problems.

Writing- we are continuing with Narrative writing. We have a completed story about something we did. We are currently working through the writing about a funny event in our life.
For science we are currently working and learning about traits.
Interventions have started and I am enjoying working with lower level students.

Erik Schneider

Level 4

This month in reading we did a lot of work on chronological ordering of events based on texts which we read. We also started a penpal partnership with a class in New York City which the kids are super excited about. In Math we have been covering the different types of angles: right, acute, obtuse, and straight; as well as, covering rounding to different place values up to one hundred thousand. For science we have been covering how the speed of an object affects the amount of energy an object has, and in social studies we went over why population centers tend to spring up where they do. Overall, it has been a good start to the year and I am looking forward to seeing my pupils grow both academically and personally over the coming year and beyond.

Roy Womack
Levels 5/6
In 5th and 6th grade, we've been doing CKLA; we're still in Unit 1 and approaching Unit 2. The curriculum has been a learning curve but overall pretty good! I wish teachers had a bit more training. Math has been great in some areas and still needs improvement in others. Science has been very refreshing with Mystery Science; I love the new activities they provide. The students have been good as well. I wish more of my 6th graders would do wrestling to help build accountability; however, I am seeing strong interest in basketball, so hopefully, when that comes around, my students will be fully locked in.

Megyn Reedy

Middle and High School

We have been busy in the secondary classroom. In ELA, students are reading our current novels, working on writing, and practicing how to use evidence from what they read. In Social Studies, we are moving through U.S. history with discussions, projects, and presentations. I am giving students different ways to show what they know while continuing to build their reading, writing, and speaking skills.

Kristin Moore

Middle and High School

Secondary Math:

Students in Level 7 Math have been learning about ratios and proportional reasoning. They recently completed an activity to see where proportional reasoning may be seen in the world around them,

specifically connected to life in Alaska. They will be finishing this unit this week and moving on to Integer Operations.

Students in Level 8 Math have been learning about the real number system, with special attention to the differences in rational and irrational numbers. We just finished this unit and will be moving into linear equations next.

I have two groups working in Level 9 Math. One group is new to this level this year and have been reviewing algebraic expressions and equations. They just completed the first unit and will be starting a unit on functions and linear equations next. The second group is a combined class for those who started Algebra 1 last year and will be finishing this year, along with those beginning Algebra 2. We have been reviewing various Algebra 1 skills students worked with in the past to recover skills learned prior to the summer break.

I also have a Life Skills class for 8th-9th graders this year. It varies throughout the week/month on what students are working on during this class, but class instruction and assignments will always have a connection to their technology, employability, and cultural awareness standards. So far, students have been working on typing skills, learning about their digital footprint and how to stay safe online, and on individual art entries for the Alaska Subsistence Fisheries Magazine art contest. We also participated in Fat Bear Week activities and began a project connecting how the land where we live helps shape who we are and who we become. This will be an ongoing project students will work on throughout the year.

Sydney Boone Robertaccio

Middle and High School

Lucas, Hayley, and Vera presented experiencing out projects during guest reports of the last LSAC meeting.

Physical science students have been learning about bonding of atoms and how that bonding results in different chemical molecules, and how different bonds are created depending on the types of elements involved. Last week, we did a massive lab where I gave them 6 mystery substances and they had to perform a series of tests to see what kind of bonds formed each substance.

For science 7/8, we have been learning about photosynthesis and how that is not only an important process to plants, but also to us and the rest of the ecosystem. We have also been studying the formula for photosynthesis to understand how energy can not be created nor destroyed.

Alaska studies attempted to make salmon leather last week and that was an epic fail. We aren't really sure why. Other than that, we have continually been learning about Athabaskans and how the land shaped their culture. We are writing children's story books using what we have learned about Athabaskans and the plan is to read those to elementary students.

In technology, we learned about different applications of VR (virtual reality) technology, as well as other types of technology like AR and XR. We are going to be creating videos that can be watched on a VR headset by using an Insta 360 camera that I got from a grant. With that, there is a Bristol Bay votes contest that we are going to create a video and enter into.

We are excited to collaborate with Brenda Hill in the coming weeks to have a few students be more involved in her graveyard revitalization project. A couple students are going to be involved in wood burning of plaques for graves.

Chelsea Nelson

Classroom update: Things are going well in Special Education. Vince Henry will be here next week to complete some referrals and re-evaluations. The current caseload is sitting around 26 students. Speech and Occupational therapy has started and attendance rate has been great. We have six paraprofessionals in the classrooms with the possibility of adding a couple more.

Student Services
Student Services is rolling through the school year. We are actively meeting with students in 1on 1 meetings, class lessons and district wide Social Emotional Learning lessons. We have implemented several program improvements this year. One of those improvements is our Secondary Student Services Spotlight where the student services team is able to meet with all the secondary students and talk about things like: post-secondary options, resources available to them, and interpersonal skills. We have already had more Kicks for Kids applications this year than the last two years combined. I haven't seen any of those shoes come in yet. But given the huge influx of applications, I am hopeful that it just took them a while to get organized. We have had several people reach out about winter gear, and I am actively looking for donations for coats and snow pants. As of right now, the only organization that we are partnered with for coats and winter gear is One Warm Coat, and they are completely donation based. So, someone
would have to drop off coats and gear specifically for Lake and Peninsula School District at one of their drop off locations in Anchorage.

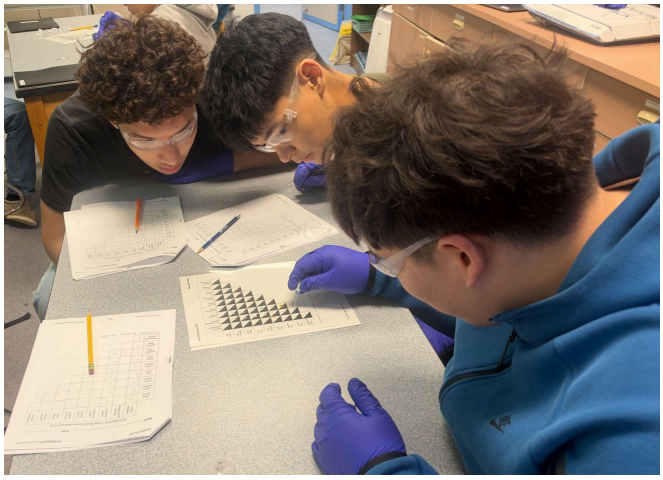
From Patty regarding BBRCTE last week:
What a whirlwind of a week for BBRCTE! It was one of my favorite intensives to date in Dillingham. I just wanted to let everyone know that all of our students were rock stars this week. Our lead in Naknek personally called me and shouted out the LPSD students for stepping up throughout the week, offering to help clean up, never having behavior challenges, and being great role models. One of the instructors from one of the Dillingham classes said that our students were more engaged and respectful than the college students he teaches regularly. I was the lead in Dillingham and I was blown away by how respectful, responsible, and engaged our students were. We even had a couple students this week rethink their post secondary plan as a result of the classes and had one student specially invited to continue on with the welding pathway. Glimmers like that happened all throughout the week and made my heart just so
proud of our kids.
I wanted to thank everybody for the work that you all put in day in and day out to support our youth. It really is apparent how much they are supported and uplifted in our district and I hope that you are able to see the incredible work that you are all doing.
Quyanavaa for all your support with our BBRCTE programming!

One thing we were wondering from our LSAC is if there were any ideas for family engagement events, or parent trainings people would like to see. For example, healthy routines, internet safety, or youth mental health first aid.

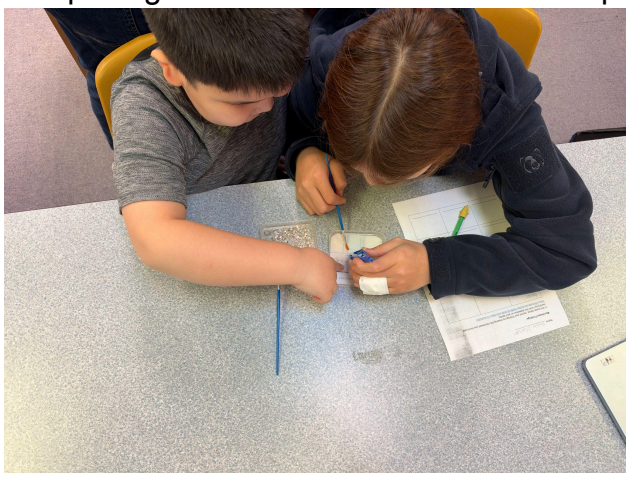
Newhalen has three projected seniors this school year. We are working with seniors to support their post secondary plans. The FAFSA opened up October 1st and students who are pursuing any post secondary plan are encouraged to apply for the FAFSA. The FAFSA is not only for college and trade school, it is a requirement for many scholarships, and it is also a requirement to receive funding through the Department of Labor.

Four of our Newhalen students went to BBRCTE in October. Ava went to Introduction to Outboard Systems, Adrien went to Introduction to Welding, Vera went to Workplace Technology, and Hayley went to Introduction to Healthcare Careers. Ava was on the radio talking about her class for KDLG while we were in Dillingham, it was super cool!

Next month, we will have three students going to November BBRCTE classes. Ida is going to Aluminum Welding, Dustin will be going to Navigation and Boat Handling, and David will be going to Informational Technology.



Completing a lab on chemical reactions in physical science.



Completed a lab on microfossils in science and invited younger students to dig up the fossils with older students.

Vera and David went to BBRCTE's Introduction to IT Support Specialist Class and Dustin went to BBRCTE's Boat Handling and Navigation class.

Technology Insights

(Support you are receiving, internet ups and downs in use, projects or standards being covered, etc)
Starlink has been working well.
We are still in need of a replacement copier for the large volume of coping that our site does. Our copier broken beyond repair since August.

Facility Update

(Projects happening/hung within the facility, how space is being used for unique events over the last month, concerns, etc)
Everything is going well. We are tight for classroom space with 100 enrolled students currently. Also we need more teacher housing to free up residential/community housing. LPSD is currently renting 3 off site houses to accommodate teachers, support staff, and student teachers.
Also, if we could get a heated building built for our library, we could free up an onsite housing unit. Our library is currently housed in the Newhalen house.

LSAC Activity

(Onboarding of Members (names and positions), shifts throughout the year, schedule of meetings, goals, etc.)
Evelynn Trefon- President
Dawn Wassillie- Vice President
Ayla Rickteroff- Secretary
Kelsea Rychnovsky- Member
Amanda Bybee - Member
Newhalen School LSAC Meet in October. We are working with our local clinic on a MOU for head lice. We also began the discussion of cellphones in the classroom. 2026 Elections will take place in late November/early December. Next meeting is 11/25/2026 at 2pm.

LSAC MEETING AGENDA- NEWHALEN SCHOOL
REGULAR MEETING
To 10/12/2026
Newhalen School Classroom @ 3:45pm
PARENTS/GUARDIANS/COMMUNITY MEMBERS:
IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND IN PERSON, A ZOOM LINK CAN BE PROVIDED.

/

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

I. Call to order
II. Roll call
III. Approval of Agenda
IV. Previous minutes 4/28/2026, 8/31/2026
V. Sign oath papers- KR
VI. Invited Guest Reports
VII. Principal's Report
1. School Events
2. Activities Calendar
3. Athletics
4. Facility Report
5. Food program

VIII. Teacher/Student Teacher Reports

IX. NIYAC Report
1. None

X. Student reports

XI. Old Business
1. Meal program discussion 2026-2027

XII. New Business
1. Head lice and MOU w/ SCF (Ayla)
2. Removal of cellphones from the classrooms (Evelynn)
3. Election date for LSAC- November 3? (Evelynn)
4. Club application approval- Wrestling

XIII. Public Comment

XIV. Agenda items for next meeting

XV. Next meeting date: _____, 2026 @ 3:45pm

XVI. Informational

XVII. Adjournment TIME: _____

Community Engagement

(Volunteer's names, outside entity visits, the work they are doing to support students and school, etc)
Our evening night gym volunteers have been opening the gym for 6th grade and up most evenings. This provides a safe, supervised area for our older kiddos to play.
We hosted a fun weekend of volleyball in Newhalen. Thank you LPSD for providing food for the teams.

Professional Development
(Classified trainings, Certified Inservice days, Alaska Reads Efforts/PLC, PD Mondays, On site PD, etc) Our staff went to Naknek in October for teacher inservice. We would like to request the 2027 October Teacher inservice to be in Newhalen.
Pupil % Attendance K-12
Include % attendance for overall school monthly
Student and Staff Safety
(Any safety lessons taking place? Community efforts towards safety, concerns?, etc.) Roads and walkways are becoming icy. Shoe ice gripers were provided to staff. We reminded students and staff to be sure to use their headlights with less daylight hours.
Other