
CCSD Superintendent Report

February 2025

CCSD Appreciations

- Happy School Board Appreciation Month! Thank you to all CCSD Board Members for your dedication and service to CCSD students, staff, and community. Your leadership, hard work, and commitment to quality education make a lasting impact. We truly appreciate all that you do to support our schools!
- A big thank you to Ms. Tina Steffen for organizing Southeast Alaska's first annual Cultural Basketball Tournament. Kudos to our school staff, volunteers, and fans for their incredible support. With such a successful debut, Wrangell has big shoes to fill next year!

CCSD Finances/Budget

- The FY 2025 First Budget Revision is included in the Board Packet as an agenda item. If there are any questions in regards to the First Budget Revision, I'll be happy to answer those questions during our meeting.
- Once again I want to express my gratitude to everyone who testified in person or via email on House Bill 69 (Increase BSA). As an update, Alaska House of Representatives voted 21-18 to discharge House Bill 69 from the House Education Committee to House Finance. The first House Finance Committee Meeting is taking place as I write this report (2/20). I will continue to monitor HB 69's progress closely. However, since no funding decisions have been made at the state level, it's my recommendation CCSD's FY26 Budget be initially developed based on the statutory Base Student Allocation (BSA) of \$5,960.
- CCSD received a notice in November from CEA President, Christy House, stating Craig Education Association's (CEA's) intent to negotiate a successor agreement to the current certified contract which expires June 30, 2025. As a reminder, Board members, Hans Hjort and Julie McDonald, serve on the Negotiations Committee. All requested information has been provided accordingly, and the negotiation process may begin anytime.
- Ms. Rhonda Prowell-Kitter, CFO of the Public Education Health Trust (PEHT), provided a presentation to CCSD Staff about their insurance benefits on February 7th. That evening, she also offered an insurance presentation opportunity to two (2) Board members, Julie McDonald and Ben Page.
- One key takeaway was the potential cost savings through PEHT's Vitality Program. If eligible CCSD employees meet all program criteria by December 31, 2025, CCSD will qualify for a [2% reduction](#) in medical premiums for the 2026-2027 (FY27) school year.
 - **Updated Vitality Program Requirements (Effective January 1, 2025):**
 - **Registration:** At least 50% of the group must Register with Vitality between January 1 and December 31, 2025.
 - **Silver Status:** At least 20% of the group must achieve Silver Status or higher within the same time frame.
 - **Champs Participation:** Champs must attend at least 80% of monthly Champ meetings.
 - **Champs Communication:** Champs must send at least four written or electronic communications about Vitality to all eligible employees.
- With District and Board encouragement as well as continued staff support, I know CCSD can achieve these savings. Ms. Melinda Bass, CCSD's designated "Champ," has already started attending meetings and

distributing Vitality communications. As of February 14th, CCSD needs only **eight (8) more** members to Register and as of February 21st, **22%** of members have already achieved Silver status, so we've met the "status" goal! Thank you to those that Registered and congrats to those earning Silver status!

- Per Ms. Prowell-Kitter's insurance presentation to staff, PEHT is expecting a "double digit increase" in medical premiums for the FY26 school year. However, the 2% reduction in PEHT medical premiums for FY27 school year is well within reach!

Human Resources/Staff Updates

- On behalf of CCSD's Interview Committee, it gives me great pleasure to announce that Mrs. Christy House has been selected to fill the Craig Elementary & Middle School Principal position starting in August 2025. Please join me in congratulating Christy as she embarks on this new and exciting professional journey!
- CCSD currently has the following positions posted: Special Education (*Revised job posting to reflect that the position is Grade Flexible), PACE Administrative Assistant (Full Time Position), High School English/Language Arts Teacher (*Willingness to teach SS or Other Content Areas), Elementary Teacher (*Preference in Primary Grades), MS Social Studies Teacher, & PACE Statewide Homeschool Teacher.

CCSD Curriculum/Instruction & Professional Development/PLC Committee Updates

- The Alaska 34th Legislature is currently reviewing two (2) bills that could impact our high school courses, they are Senate Bill 22 (SB22) and Senate Bill 23 (SB23).
- In sum, **SB22** is in regard to a **Financial Literacy Program in Schools**. It would require districts to establish a literacy education program in high schools approved by DEED, equivalent to a .5 credit course. Students would need to complete the course in order to graduate. With that said there is an exception for students transferring from out of state after the 10th grade. **SB23** is in regard to **Civics Education** and would require the State Board of Education to develop a statewide government and civics education curriculum, civics assessment, and civics program-based assessment. Students would be required to complete one semester of government and civics education and pass a civics assessment or civics progress-based assessment with a score of 70% or higher in order to graduate. Students transferring from out of state after the 10th grade or students with a disability waiver would be exempt from this requirement.
- I did request Principal Andrews and Principal Mendonsa discuss these bills with staff for their insights. Principal Andrews recently met with his staff. Overall concern existed about the possibility of additional unfunded mandates. However, there were some positive opinions regarding SB22, though clarification is needed on whether the financial literacy course would count as a math credit or a standalone credit. Regarding SB23, the incorporation of civics education was supported, but concerns were noted about the inclusion of high-stakes testing. I'll continue to monitor these bills and keep our principals updated accordingly.
- I'm excited to share that CCSD will offer a valuable professional development opportunity for our staff on the April 29th In-Service Day, thanks to Title II-A Grant funding. Dr. Charles Fay, a nationally recognized educator and expert in classroom management, will be leading a 5-hour presentation focused on Love and Logic strategies. Love and Logic is a research-based approach that helps staff create a positive and structured learning environment by balancing empathy with high expectations. The goal of this professional development opportunity is to provide staff with practical techniques to implement immediately in their classrooms, improving overall student engagement and behavior management.

CCSD Special Programs

- I continue to work with our special education teachers to address the Special Education Audit Findings and ensure compliance. CCSD is very close to submitting corrected files to DEED and is ahead of the mandated timeline. The due date for all corrections is March 23, 2025.
- The state is required to report on Post-School Outcomes (Indicator 14) and Parent Involvement (Indicator 8) to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) as part of Alaska's State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report. I'm close to finalizing the necessary information/report for the state and should have that submitted soon for CCSD.
- Recently I've created a Google Spreadsheet to collaborate with our Special Education Teachers in identifying the special education-related services needed for the FY26 school year to best support our students. Itinerant services will be aligned to student service needs accordingly.

CCSD Projects

CHS New Shop/Biomass Project

- As provided in the Correspondence section of the Board Packet this month, CCSD recently received a letter from AEA regarding the Executive Order and instructions recently distributed by the federal government pertaining to funding of CHS's Biomass Boiler Project. Basically, until the federal grant funding review is complete, and AEA receives notice from the federal government to proceed, AEA cannot ensure that any work on the CHS Biomass Boiler Project will be reimbursed by the federal government.
- Given the federal 90-day pause, the originally planned CCSD Board Agenda item at the February 26th School Board Meeting to discuss next steps with the CHS Biomass Boiler Project is unfortunately a mute point right now as CCSD cannot even access grant funds for the project.

CEMS Rehabilitation Project

- On Wednesday, February 19th at 2pm, Architects Alaska received bids for the Craig Elementary and Middle School Rehabilitation Project. A total of two (2) bids were received. All bids included the required submittal items, acknowledged receipt of all addenda, and appeared to be responsive bids.
- Based on the bids received, **McG Constructors, Inc.** is the apparent low bidder with a **base bid amount of \$11,247,000**. A "Notice of Apparent Low Bidder" memo was emailed out by Architects Alaska with the bid tally sheet on Thursday, February 20th. Both of those items are included and attached with my Board Report for ease of reference.
- The next phase is a ten (10) day protest period. I would encourage a Board discussion during our meeting as CCSD needs to be prepared to award the contract to the apparent low bidder pending the conclusion of the protest period and final approval by the CCSD School Board.

Current/Upcoming District Events

- February 25th: Indigenous Education Committee Meeting
- February 27th: Curriculum Committee Meeting

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- March 3rd: Board Policy Committee Meeting
 - March 8th: CCSD School Board & POW Regional Board Training with AASB
 - March 17-21st: CCSD Spring Break (No School)
 - March 28-April 2nd: Jackie @ ACSA Legislative Fly-In

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