



Nome-Beltz Middle High School

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Date: 07 November 2024

To: NPS Board


From: Teriscovkya Smith and Dr. Michael Akes

Subject: November Board Report

NBMHS Data:

- Current Enrollment: 273

New additions:

- *Rena Sparks*: Attendance Secretary Extraordinaire
 - An alumni of NBHS, Ms. Rena joined the Main Office team and is working tirelessly to not only learn systems, but work to improve them. Families are receiving calls, substitutes receive extra organized preparations, data is improving, and our office feels complete! Welcome to the Den, Ms. Rena!
#teamnanook
- *Subtastic!*
 - From no subs in sight, we have an incredible group of dedicated individuals who have supported our students without pause! Huge shout outs to Mark Rosario, Joy Morgan, and Jim Menard. #we loveoursubs



Student Celebrations

- Middle School
 - Tegan Oleson, 6th-grade
- High School
 - Kaya Kent, 12th-grade

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

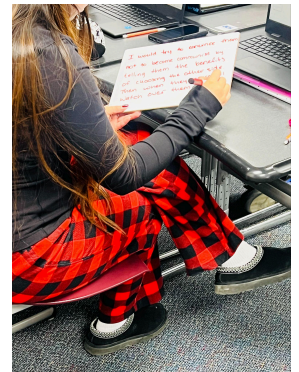
- *Vacancies*: We are still awaiting our three international hires (Mary Jane Abangan, Ruby Gomez, and Lovely Manay). While Ms. Gomez is scheduled to arrive the week of November 11, the burden of larger rosters and missing Read 180 instruction causes great concerns for student outcomes in ELA skills

acquisition. The Special Education department has incredible caseloads and obvious concerns about compliance and the success of their students.

- **Staff Morale:** While we have made great gains growing a positive teacher climate, the ongoing negotiations have distressed teachers and we worry about retention as a result. Many speak honestly about what their long-term plans look like if their salaries do not match the cost of living in Nome.
- **Cultural Arts Forward Planning**
 - Ms. Smith, Ms. Phyllis, and other members of the community have had discussions regarding the future of the Cultural Arts Program. We lost one teacher to a local entity offering a competitive salary and our beloved Phyllis Walluk will one day decide to retire - again. In conversations with Ms. Phyllis, we discussed recruitment, the possibilities of an internship that prepares a new teacher to take the helm when the time is right, and how to recruit for this unique position. We have benefited from long-time teachers who have been willing to come out of retirement to grow student cultural proficiency, but what we lack is a plan on how to bring new teachers into the fold. This is not unique to Nome; we have great concerns about the future of our program.

Growing the Den:

- **Visible Learning Gains Ground**
 - Our **Visible Learning** work in partnership with Corwin continues as teachers and staff work towards integrating Teacher Clarity, our focus this year, into their planning and instructional practices. Our October 14 Inservice included a presentation by returning Corwin trainor, Wayne Davies. Moving forward, teachers at NBMHS will work towards:
 - *Planning* with intention and making that intention accessible:
 - What am I learning today?
 - Why am I learning this?
 - How will I know that I have learned it?
 - *Consistently* evaluating where students are in the learning process
 - *Describing* the success criteria in a way that students can assess their own progress.
 - In the classroom:
 - Mr. Wharry's Systems of Government class explored Cold War Ideologies through a carefully planned lesson. Wharry, recently trained at the kagan academy, incorporated a cooperative learning strategy to promote critical thought. Students explored various aspects of the Cold War from US and Soviet perspectives. Students



Lesson Plan: Cold War Ideologies Debate

Lesson Overview

This 25-minute lesson plan involves a mock debate between U.S. and Soviet leaders, focusing on key aspects of the Cold War era. Students will role-play as leaders from both sides, arguing for their respective ideologies and policies.

Introduction (2 minutes)

- Briefly explain the format of the debate and the roles students will play.
- Divide the class into two groups: U.S. leaders and Soviet leaders.

Preparation (5 minutes)

- Give students time to quickly review their notes and discuss strategy within their groups.
- Assign specific roles within each team (e.g., President, Secretary of State, military advisor).

Debate (15 minutes)

Moderate the debate, addressing each question for 3 minutes:

1. U.S. Policy of Containment (3 minutes)
 - U.S. side: Argue that containment effectively limited Soviet expansion.
 - Soviet side: Counter that containment was aggressive and led to unnecessary conflicts.
2. Cold War and Decolonization (3 minutes)
 - U.S. side: Claim support for liberation movements in Asia and Africa.
 - Soviet side: Argue that decolonization was used as a tool for spreading communism.
3. Role of Ideology in Foreign Policy (3 minutes)
 - U.S. side: Emphasize democracy and free markets as guiding principles.
 - Soviet side: Highlight the importance of socialist equality and anti-imperialism.
4. Breakdown of U.S.-Soviet Alliance (3 minutes)
 - U.S. side: Blame U.S. aggression and the Marshall Plan for increasing tension.
 - Soviet side: Point to Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as the cause of the break.
5. Cuban Revolution and Power Balance (3 minutes)
 - U.S. side: Argue that Cuba's alignment with the USSR threatened hemisphere.
 - Soviet side: Claim support for Cuba as a counter to U.S. influence in Latin A

self-assessed their work and synthesized feedback in team responses. One student reported, "This class is hard because I have to really think and make sure I understand my notes *and* can use them to prove a point or share a view. I tried talking about this at home and no one knew as much as I did. I guess I get to teach them"



Round 1

U.S. Policy of Containment:

Imagine you are a USSR Diplomat in Eastern Europe, how would you feel about the United State's policy of Containment?

● *Nome Peace Corps Club*, from Ms. Liben, Science Teacher

- Last year, Mr. Wharry, Nome-Beltz high-school history teacher) brought up the topic of the Peace Corps (a volunteer program established through the United States Government in 1961 to provide international development assistance) with his students during class. A handful of excited students inquired about the prospect of establishing a school-based program that would provide Beltz youth with a similar opportunity. When students reached out over the summer to inquire about a new club, Mr. Wharry took action and the Nome Youth Peace Corps Club was born at the start of the school year. As educators, we strive to construct educational experiences that excite students in meaningful ways and inspire them to take action in their communities; it was evident we had to keep this momentum going in any way we could. After researching and discussing multiple volunteer programs, students agreed they were most interested in California-based **Projects Abroad (PA)**, a social enterprise that utilizes a business model to address social and environmental challenges all over the world. With a mission to "provide the gold standard of support and safety, so that participants can fulfill their potential, discover themselves and create positive change in the world," Projects Abroad sets to accomplish this mission by creating opportunities that empower youth to explore the world, develop authentic cross-cultural connections and engage in projects that help



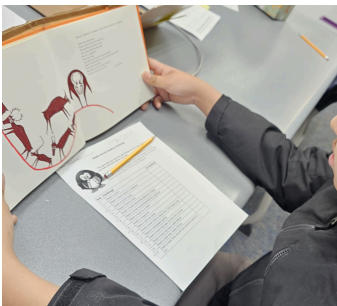
conserve the environment and support local communities. After multiple meetings and discussions with students and the Projects Abroad Director, a 2-week itinerary based in Sri Lanka was born and is scheduled for July 9-23, 2025!

- Program highlights include: promoting childhood development and learning through play, conducting outreach at a local girls' education center to raise awareness around the importance of good hygiene practices, and participate in cultural exchange activities through Alaska Native beading projects. During their free time, students will explore the sacred city of Kandy and visit the "Eighth Wonder of the World" in Sigiriya. To learn more about the local culture, students will also take part in a cooking class and traditional dance lesson.
- Parents, guardians, and students met for a Q & A session and the enthusiasm is growing for a first ever NBHS international project-based excursion. We couldn't be more proud of our teachers and students! Thank you Mr. Wharry and Ms. Liben for supporting Nanooks outside of your regular teaching day.

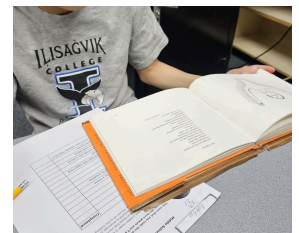
- **Report from Coach Spencer, Special Education teacher**

- *Reading Challenge Launch for SpEd and non-SpEd Students*

- Coach Spencer is thrilled to share that her Beltz team launched a unique middle school reading challenge designed to support our SpEd students in bridging academic gaps, building friendships with non-SpEd peers, and extending valuable family time beyond school hours.



- What makes this challenge truly special is that students have the freedom to select their own reading materials, encouraging a personal connection to their books. They are also invited to read alongside friends and family members, enhancing both learning and relationships. Today, we kicked off the challenge with *Poems of the Eskimo: I Breathe a New Song* – and it's already inspiring enthusiasm! One student even asked if they could read a book their mom wrote, "they proudly called a celebrity." Moments like these make this challenge extra meaningful!



- *Unified Bowling Tournament Success and Upcoming Events*

- NBMHS will participate in the **Unified Bowling Tournament** in Anchorage this month, and Coach Spencer notes that the Special Olympics program continues to bring amazing benefits for students both in and out of school. What started with just four athletes has now grown to nearly a dozen



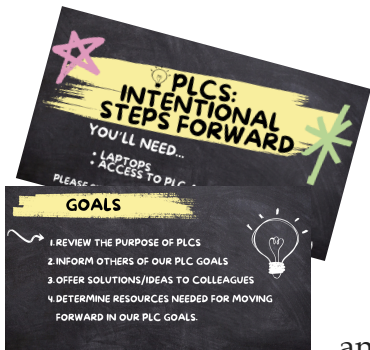
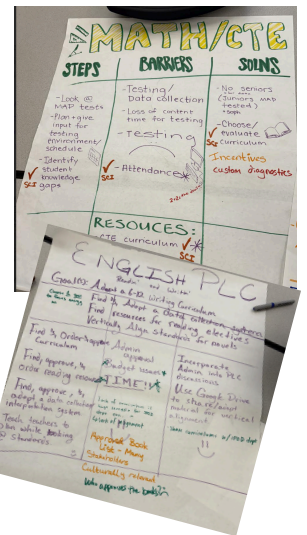
participants! This month, students from NBMHS will proudly represent both our High School and Middle School teams in the Unified Bowling Tournament.

- The students have had the opportunity to train at the Recreation Center with our dedicated volunteer coach, Walley, who has been instrumental in building their skills and confidence. More importantly, they've been developing friendships and a true sense of camaraderie that extend beyond the lanes. Once again, we're seeing SPED and non-SPED students come together, united by a shared love for sports, which continues to bridge gaps and foster lasting connections.
- Our next Unified event, Polar Bear Plunge, will take place in December, and the students continue to share continued growth and joy these experiences bring!

● **Teacher Talent Abounds**

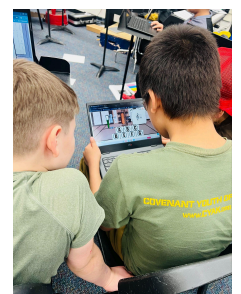
- **Administrative Intern:** Holly Harlow is slaying her administrative

internship and she is quite literally everywhere working in a plethora of contexts. While her "candle burns at both ends," Ms. Harlow works to investigate systems, improve processes, and help whenever it is humanly possible. On October 30, Ms. Harlow facilitated teacher discourse on our PLC teams and how to move forward with intention. Teams explored their respective goals, barriers, unanswered questions, potential solutions, and the resources needed to reach benchmarks. Teams completed a Carousel Feedback activity that provided possible solutions to content areas and administration. Ms. Harlow cares passionately about the Den and student outcomes and her relentless energy to move the needle is beyond impressive.



- **Music and Ninjas?**

- NBMHS won the lottery with Richard Sargent, our new Music teacher. Mr. Sargent finds alternative ways to engage students in growing their musicality. Recently, Mr. Sargent incorporated **My Ninja Music** and the students were wrapped up in moving up in levels! The program allows Mr. Sargent to track students with musical vocabulary that will soon show in the performance-related tasks that music requires. It's a tiered, and individually differentiated program. Mr.

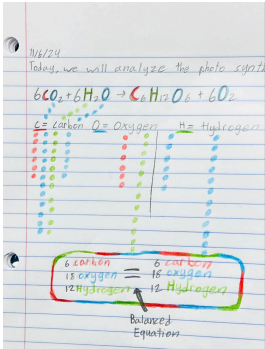


Sargent is working with Sew Far North to create color-coded artifacts for students that correspond with their level-colored belt. Nanooks could become Black Beltz (pun intended) in Music!

- **MS Science Program is Growing!**



- Mrs. Berry garners student attention through engaging exercises (and the occasional lip sync). Her 7th-grade classes recently delved into balanced equations using photosynthesis to plant the seeds of understanding (pun intended). Mrs. Berry fosters a “we can” environment with a blend of humor and solid structures and routines to grow science minded Nanooks!

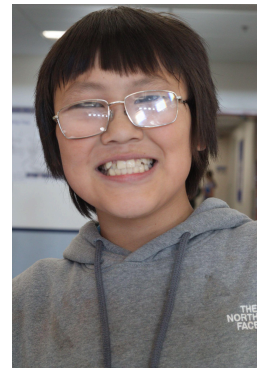


- **Cultural Connections**

- **Indigenous Peoples Day Activities**



- On October 11, the middle school held a series of workshops for students that included: NYO activities, a dance clinic, making akutaq, fry bread, and baked salmon (which students served to all NBMHS teachers and staff - even admin!), atlatl techniques, creating kuspuk pouches, and drawing animals. Counselors, teachers, and volunteers put in hours of planning to make this happen and we thank you with sincere gratitude.



- On October 15, the high school held a special assembly with the following guests: Melanie Bahnke, Delilah Johnson, Cameron Piscoya, Kirsten Timbers, Oliver Hoogendorn, Crystal Toolie, Kunaq Tahbone. Topics ranged from our regional history, the importance of preserving culture and language, healthy minds and bodies, and a warning tucked within the eerie tale of the Big Mouthed Baby! Thank you to teachers, students, and volunteers for again bringing the Den to life!



- **Subsistence Ways**

- Ms. Phyllis and Ms. Liben partnered up to teach students how to process and prep salmon for the smokehouse! Yaayuk Alvanna Stimpfle, Sigvanna Topkok, and Ben Payenna joined to help. It feels like the community is pouring into our halls and this has truly made the Den feel vibrant. Thank you everyone!



- **Storytelling Gathering**

- Kunaq Tahbone graced the Den *again* and we rallied middle school students for some storytelling with life lessons tucked within. Thank you Kunaq Tahbone and Dr. Akes for bringing this to the RC - the students listened with baited breath!



- **Student Voice**

- In addition to our School Student Council President Senior Lyndsay Johnson, we have more student voices promoting change and growth. On Monday, October 28, Senior Steve Lopez was sworn in as City Council Student Representative! We could not be more proud of our students who crave advocacy and promote positive change at school and within the community.
- The NBHS Student Council invited Ms. Smith to a meeting to discuss concerns and ideas for school improvement, fundraising opportunities, and their plans moving forward. They plan to meet on a regular schedule and the council continues to share their meeting minutes and we are excited for this alliance moving forward. Some of the ideas that came up included the following:



- Cultural Week that includes a field trip to the Foster Building;
- Dividers for the boys bathroom urinals;
- Free menstrual products for the girls bathrooms;
- Fundraising ideas.

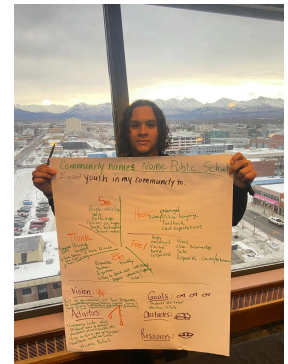
- Mr. Wharry and Steve Lopez are currently in Anchorage for the **Youth Leadership Institute**. Mr. Wharry texted right before this report was going

to press with the following: *Steve's vision is for kids in his community to feel responsible for their grades and performance by being mentally supported, hearing clear expectations, seeing a stable building, and thinking, "I have someone who cares."* We are working towards synthesizing student voices in our plans and moving forward, we hope to have student representatives at the table for school improvement dialogue and activities. Bravo gentlemen!



- **CTE Travels South**

- From October 20-25, Mr. Brown and Mrs. Badertscher traveled with students to Anchorage and surrounding areas for the annual Career Technical Education trip that is generously supported by the Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC). Ten students learned about various post-secondary options and made the following visits: AVTEC, the Sealife Center, Mastu College, Alaska Works, Alaska Laborers Training School, the APU Nursing program, ACPE, NIT in Palmer and the Cosmetology School, UAA to visit the Aviation Center, the Auto Diesel Technology Building, and the Culinary Arts kitchens.



Left to right: Travis Johnson, Christine Otten, Katie Minix, Hana Callahan, Atlas Boeckmann, Caleb Payenna, Jaiden Pennini, Ciana Akeya, Morgan Eggart, Brandon Rose.

- **You Are Not Alone (YANA)**

- Mrs. Badertscher and students have formed the YANA club, which gives students the opportunity to:
 - Help others who may feel sad or lonely
 - Encourage public awareness in preventing suicide
 - Advocate for words of kindness and healthy life habits



- On Halloween, Freshman Ayla Kavairlook and Mrs. Badertscher passed out positivity pumpkins: a sweet treat with an affirmation.
- The club meets weekly to discuss how to grow a school culture that spreads kindness, stops bullying behaviors, discourages hate, and creates safe spaces for students at school.
- **NBMHS Newsletter**
 - Please enjoy this month's NBMHS newsletter for parents and guardians. It contains more information about upcoming events and activities.
 - **NBMHS November Newsletter**

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THE DEN:

November 11	No School: Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences
November 12	Minimum Day
November 13	Minimum Day
November 28-29	Thanksgiving Break → No school
December TBD	Holiday Music Department Performance
December 2	Vision and Hearing Testing
December 23-January 3	Winter Break → No School
December 2-January 31	Winter MAP testing window
January 6	Inservice → No school
January 13-17	HS Fall Semester Review & Finals
January 17	Semester 1/2nd Quarter ends (S1/Q2)
January 20	Semester 2/3rd Quarter begins! (S2/Q3)
January 20-24	Winterim
	HS MAP testing
January 23-24	S1 report cards mailed home