

## SISD Grants and Federal Programs Board Report

November 2018

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### Dancing with the Spirit

Nick and Priscilla will be sending teachers a survey to collect feedback from teachers on this 9-week event. Jason and Stella Norris have a special way of relating to the students and succeeded in drawing out some amazing, previously undiscovered, musical talent. They worked hard setting up and moving all their instruments from site to site and enjoyed the experience at each unique school. The district is grateful for all the grants, ASC contributions and generous donations of accommodations in Port Alexander, Whale Pass, Thorne Bay and Hollis to support this wonderful event. Some sites are asking to have Jason and Stella for 2 weeks next year!



### **PreK around the district**

We have several groups that are being funded through the Pre-Elementary grant of \$50,000 this year. The goal of this grant is kindergarten readiness and teachers and administration feel this early exposure to group play and social skill development makes a big difference for children. Research says children learn best through play at this age, so supply money is being spent for activities that encourage a wide variety of skills including large motor, small motor, balance and physical activity.

Enrollment is as follows:

Thorne Bay - 5-9

Hollis – 4

Naukati – 3

Port Alexander – 3

Whale Pass – 3

Coffman Cove - 4 (coming on board this week)

Two sites are using a curriculum called Ivy Kids.

A new, larger grant opportunity will be coming out in January and we will apply for it.

**Wood Fired Boiler grant** – We are requesting an extension from Alaska Energy Authority because we have some money left over. All the projects are complete with the Fire Marshall permit for Whale Pass just approved. The reason for the extension is to be able to spend the remainder of the money on approved ‘extras’ such as expanding the woodsheds and possibly enclosing the Hollis gym. A report just recently turned in for the Thorne Bay wood-fired boiler shows that the district is saving approximately \$25,000 per year with this system, even with labor required to fill the boilers and perform maintenance.

**Small grants** applied for in the last months include “Fuel Up to Play” – gym equipment for Coffman Cove School, the State Farm grant - professional development to incorporate the gardening projects into the daily teaching schedule, and the “Budding Botanist” grant submitted by Eric Bazzett (AmeriCorps volunteer at Howard Valentine Coffman Cove School).

**Carl Perkins, Career Technical Education** – Another professional development grant is out and Nick and Priscilla will submit this before Christmas break. The professional development grant that just concluded sent Mark Gunkel to Sitka to learn more about a CAD drawing program and Raspberry Pi, and Nick Higson to a SCUBA training. Mark is already using new techniques in his Design and Fabrication class and Scuba class will be offered in 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.

**Farm to School grant (F2S)** – A food-safety training (Good Agricultural Practices – GAP) was offered to food service workers on the island and to AmeriCorps volunteers. Johanna Herron from the Division of Agriculture in

Palmer came to Thorne Bay to deliver the training at no cost to the district. SISD staff will be paid out of the F2S grant. Though not all food service workers handle lettuce or other produce from the greenhouses, they have the critical information to avoid any outbreaks of bacteria contamination.

Naomi McDonald, our Food Service Manager, has been doing a great job of connecting with Megan Fitzpatrick, greenhouse manager, to deliver local, greenhouse-grown lettuce to all the schools on the island. While we cannot compete with wholesale prices for lettuce, the district is succeeding in providing locally sourced product with much higher nutrient levels. (According to a study from University of California, Davis, spinach stored for seven days at 39 degrees Fahrenheit, lost 75% of its vitamin C!)

Some schools have been using their own fresh eggs in the school meals. Most store-bought eggs are estimated to be about three weeks old by the time we get them home and open the carton. Again, the district cannot compete with wholesale prices of eggs raised in huge factory farms. In Thorne Bay the decision was made to purchase commercial eggs and to sell the home-raised ones in the community, thereby getting closer to offsetting the cost of feed and supplies. Educational benefits for students involved in collecting, weighing, washing the eggs, caring for the chickens are skills that have no cost benefit but teach students valuable lessons in work ethic and many other life skill areas.