

Site Report – Meshik School – September, 2020

To: Superintendent Ty Mase
and LPSD School Board Members

From: Kristin Henke, Head Teacher

Outstanding Activities and Events

The Meshik School is off to a great start with 20 students including four pre-schoolers. The fact that we are back in school everyday is something we all appreciate and we are doing our best to maintain a safe environment so we can continue to stay open all year. The first day of school students were at school extra early and very excited to be back. The nice weather allowed us to go berry picking and to work together on an activity to support the community. We are looking forward to a great school year.





Personnel

Kitza Durkop is teaching for Katie Zimmerman during Katie's first month on maternity leave. We are happy to have Kitza's expertise and experience at Meshik again! Kristin Henke is new to Port Heiden, but not new to teaching in rural Alaska. She is happy to be in a classroom position here and serve as our Head Teacher. Returning to our staff, along with Mrs. Zimmerman are Hannah Berman and Tess McFadden. Hannah will be teaching primary and preschool students. Tess will be working with middle school and high school students (levels 6-12) after being here last spring as a tutor with some of these same students. We have a great team and know there will be some great progress and successes this year. We are lucky to have Holly returning to run our food services programs and Richard Zimmerman will continue doing our maintenance and custodial work. Due to the coronavirus we are looking for additional help in the custodial area and appreciate that there is some local interest to help. Jack Walsh will be serving as our principal again.

Standards Based System/Curriculum Progress

Students are progressing well in the first three weeks of the school year. After initial assessment teachers were able to determine what students had retained from last school year and several objectives have already been met. All four middle school students are at Level 6 or higher in ELA or Math and are therefore enrolled in at least one online course. As we begin the new year and conduct our data review we will look closely at the progress we made last year and some of the gaps that have surfaced after our extended break from instruction. We know this year will start like no other year, but in a short time we hope to be back on track with our regular activities and achieving our academic goals.

Technology Progress

We had to be patient for a week or two, but now all middle and high school students have district laptops to use for their online course work and technology objectives. We also have the other technology needed for the staff and other classrooms.

Facility Update

Our school is disinfected each evening. Teachers and students also wipe down frequently touched surfaces such as desktops, door knobs, and light switches throughout the day.

LSAC Activity

Port Heiden LSAC held the first meeting of the school year on August 31st. The community advised our school on COVID safety measures, and members of LSAC welcomed us to the school year. We are grateful to have all of the LSAC members returning again this year.

Volunteer Report

This will be a very different year and while our volunteers will return, the realities of the virus may limit some of those opportunities. We are already working with Marlene Adams and others to introduce students to lacrosse and other traditional games with the help of a partnership with members of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin. There were a lot of volunteer hours put in already by staff and community members to develop our smart start plan and prepare for the new year. Our LSAC and our local Covid Advisory group continue to be called on regularly to help us and they never let us down.

Professional Development

Staff attended District training for Reading curriculum before the beginning of the school year. Middle School and High School teachers attended training for supporting students and the distance teacher as homesite teachers. Miss Hannah has also attended professional development for preschool teaching. We have adopted a new schedule this year and on Monday mornings we will dedicate more time for professional development as a district and individual site. We know this will help us be even better prepared as a staff.

Pupil Attendance

We have four new students enrolled in Preschool. We were happy to have students back to school as soon as possible after illness with a Back to School clinic visit and documentation. Attendance is a challenge we are always struggling with and the new requirements to quarantine and isolate will add to the issue. We are committed to work with students and families to improve in this area. We hope to see improvements in this data from the first quarter on.

Student and Staff Safety

Safety is a top priority of the district and school. There are no injuries or incidents to report. Students and staff have a health screening when they enter the building each day. Other than a few students being sent

home with upset stomachs, everyone has been in good health. We also know that it is important that we maintain a school environment that is bully free and respectful of all staff and students. This is a commitment we ask of everyone and we will hold people to high expectations in this area.

Subsistence Calendar

Our students spent a half hour berry picking on the first Friday of the school year. The Level 7 Science students also learned to identify several tundra plants by their common and scientific names. fireweed: *Epilobium angustifolium*, stonecrop: *Sedum oblancoletatum*, tundra tea: *Rhododendron tomentosum*, dwarf birch: *Betula nana*, and others. Level 7 Science students made mild medicinal oil from the yarrow plant. One of our students got his first moose for feeding his family and it was a big one, 67" across the antlers!

Other

Nothing is a better message about school than the smiling faces of our students. Here's one last picture of a group of students enjoying a great time together.

