

Site Report – Meshik School – February, 2021

To: Superintendent Ty Mase
and LPSD School Board Members

From: Kristin Henke, Head Teacher
Jack Walsh, Principal

Outstanding Activities and Events

The Meshik School is off to a great start in this second semester. After one week of online instruction, we came back to school on January 18 and have been in session every day. The fact that we are back in school is something we all appreciate and we are doing our best to maintain a safe environment so we can continue to stay open for the remainder of the year. We want to thank the District Covid Committee and our local Covid Committee for all the support through these challenging times. Those groups, along with our parents, students, and staff have done a great job being safe and following our safety protocols. A final shout out to our partners at BBAHC who have been developing plans to vaccinate staff and community members. That is an important need in every LPSD community.



Photos by Ms. Berman

Celebrations and Milestones

Meshik School is proud of our students, our staff, and our community. As the new semester began, one of our seniors, Severin Shangin, completed his final end of level assessments to meet the graduation requirements. Severin is someone who has worked very hard to graduate and had the support of his family, classmates, and the staff. High School graduation has always been a goal for Severin and now he has accomplished that. We know that there will be many more goals in life that Severin will achieve and we look forward to seeing where his journey takes him.

A number of students saw some incredible growth in their performance during our December MAPS testing. As a school we have been working hard to really make sure that we show our best efforts every day, on every assignment and task we attempt. Making that kind of commitment is not easy, but we know it will make a difference.

Standards Based System/Curriculum Progress

The new semester is also a time of change as we are introducing a new math curriculum and starting to have elementary students engage with Everyday Math. Teachers have received the materials and some initial training and even more training will happen in the months ahead. Because some of the teachers had used the program before they have jumped right in and are also helping colleagues learn more about the program and how it is best implemented. The photos in the last section show students using some of the new materials. We will share more on this in the months ahead.

Our staff has been working with students to focus on our Alutiiq Cultural Values as a framework to improve our school culture and to learn more about the values of our families, elders, and ancestors. With the help of our LSAC committee, we chose the values listed on an Alutiiq Museum website: (<https://www.alutiiqmuseum.org/learn/the-alutiiq-sugpiaq-people/values>) and know that as we do more to learn about and internalize these values it will us grow and get along with our friends and neighbors.

Technology Progress

Thanks to the District for upgrading many of the student laptops. In recent weeks we have seen the first wave of new replacements arriving on site and the students are really enjoying the new technology. We have always tried to get 7 years of use out of each computer and students and staff have been very responsible with this equipment. Updating computers for staff and students is an expensive effort and we are grateful for the Board support to make this happen.

Facility Update

Our school is one of, or the oldest school in LPSD and the LSAC and other community members and leaders are hopeful that the Borough and the District start making plans for a new school at a new site. Concerns about the facility are often mentioned in community meetings and there are historic concerns about the

water and terrain around the school. While we realize big projects like this are costly and take years to complete, the LSAC is considering sending a letter to the Board about this concern.

LSAC Activity

Port Heiden LSAC held several meetings in November, December, and January and they have been very active this year as advocates for students and staff at the school. LSAC Members include: Toni Christensen, Jaclyn Christensen, Miranda Shangin, Charlie O'Domin, and Billie Schraffenberger. We cannot say enough good things about this group and all they do to support our students.

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. Our LSAC and our local Covid Advisory group continue to be called on regularly to help us and they never let us down. They each contribute the greatest numbers of volunteer hours along with our staff and the many extra hours they add.

Professional Development

We continue to take advantage of the PD opportunities presented by the district, Alaska Staff Development Network, the universities, and other grants and partnerships. It has been challenging with so much online and limited times to gather with colleagues, especially from other sites. The district has a May training scheduled at Alyeska and we are looking forward to this and hopefully a return to more tradition PD opportunities in the fall.

Pupil Attendance

We continue to see attendance as a challenge we are always struggling with and yet, considering the new requirements to quarantine and isolate we have not seen a major increase in absences. We are committed to work with students and families to improve in this area. We are grateful that everyone is making the efforts they are to be at school every day.

Student and Staff Safety

We continue to see this as a top priority and whether it is our focus on cleanliness in light of the pandemic or making sure we are keeping student behaviors in check. The students and staff have started to have weekly all school meetings. We hope this helps us develop an even better and safer school culture.

Subsistence Calendar

The calendar has had some slight changes since the start of the year and there may be a few more adjustments related to the carnival or other circumstances.

Other

There were so many other good things happening at our school in the last month, it was hard to list them all. This is a short list one of the teachers shared and felt you might want to know.

Charlie O passed his End of Level for Math

- Severin was our first Student of the Week. He is currently attending emergency response training in Anchorage
- Students participated in Art Club last week. I heard good feedback.
- Shannon continues to be an excellent resource for our school
- New Math curriculum has been rolled out and most teachers have begun implementing it. It's really helping our students to become more independent problem solvers

Here's one last picture of a Port Heiden Valentine tradition- chocolate covered strawberries. Coming soon!

