

Administrative Report

Superintendent David Vadiveloo

Utuqqanaavut kisuiġukkitka – sivulliit utuqqanaallu, paŋmami utuqqanaagiravullu, utuqqanaaġugumaaqtuallu. Quyanaaġitka paŋmamuraglaan aullatimmagit savaktivut iġiñiaqtuagiravullu. Nalunaigunmigiga suli iñuuniaguuutilaaqput savaguutilaaqpullu nunaniñiñi Iñupiat. Igliqtitchirauvluta miñuaqtuġvinjñik kamasuuttaġigikput ikayuiyumiñaqapta tamatkunani nunani.

Members of the Board and community, we've just finished celebrating Kivgiq 2025 and I believe each of us is feeling renewed and strengthened by this truly powerful expression of culture, community and unity. Of the many highlights, surely one of the most enduring was the presence of our elders dancing, keeping oral histories alive and maintaining the story and strength of these lands. Our administration acknowledges all Elders past, present and emerging, for entrusting us as partners in the education and growth of their children. So with that in mind, the following highlights are presented to our Community and Board by way of an update on District operations, as mapped against our new Strategic goals and objectives.

Domain: Family & Community Collaboration

Goal: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

KIVGIQ and AEWC: For 6 days Barrow HS was opened to the NSB administration and Kivgiq and the Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission. The building was filled to capacity and then more with dancers, drummers, whaling captains and hundreds of our students. Embracing this important cultural event, all schools and all students district wide were participating in Kivgiq themed lessons and projects for up to two weeks. The District encouraged all students and staff to attend the event, recognizing attendance for students who were participating and ensuring as many students as possible visited. District M&O staff and central office and BHS administration supported the event each day as we modeled and demonstrated the value we place in our role in community events such as these. Our administration was extremely proud to see so many of our staff dancing, drumming, leading and supporting young students. Another highlight was the opportunity for our administration and all principals to dance on Friday night.

BUDGET HEARINGS WITH SACS: For the third year we ran budget hearings with Principals and SAC members. These meetings are an opportunity for the SAC representative to more fully understand the budgeting process of the district and participate in conversations about staffing and services for students. This approach to budgeting ensures that our process is transparent and accessible to the advisory groups that serve on the SAC's.

MORE CLASSROOMS ON THE NUNA and A VILLAGE IMMERSION SITE: As part of the SAC budget meetings we've identified two more villages that would like to commence their school year using the successful Miñuaqtuġvik Nunami (school on the tundra) model from Atqasuk. This model will see community members participating in the first week of school while camping on the tundra. The process of budget meetings also revealed a possible new Uqautiluña Iñupiatun immersion site in one of our villages.

ANNUAL REPORT: The FY24 Annual report is complete and will be sent out to all PO Boxes over the coming weeks. This is the second annual report of the administration and is a return to this type of community engagement that was last done in 2006.

Domain: Culturally Responsive Instruction

Goal: All students perform at or above grade level

COMITMENTS TO INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE: Over the past three days the Districts Principals have been in a retreat with administration, strengthening our leadership group and making firm commitments to ensuring instructional expectations and non-negotiables are visible in all our schools. This gathering further embeds the Board's Mission and increases momentum to keep growth for students heading in the positive direction we've witnessed over the past 12 months.

ROBOTICS AND BATTLE OF THE BOOKS: In late January Lego Robotics teams from Tikigaq, Atqasuk, Ulguniq, Nuiqsut, Kaktovik, Hopson and Ipalook across the District gathered at Hopson Middle School to compete. The Champions Award and Robot Performance award went to HMS RoboWolves. The Project award went to Alak school Husky Tronics, the Robot Design Award went to Harold Kaveolook School RoboRams, the Rising All-Star went to Nuiqsuts Trapper bots, the core values award went to Ipalook Robotics and the coach and volunteer awards went to Rebecca Wilkerson and Mollie Fisher. Congratulations to all teams and special shout-out to HMS Robowolves who went on to represent the District at State. And NSBSD's winners of the Battle of the books have been decided this past month with Tikigaq taking the 3/4 grade prize, Hopson MS taking the 5/6 and Middle School prizes and BHS taking the High school prize. Congratulations to all teams for their great reading efforts!

NYO CURRICULUM: In response to Board direction and in support of expanding NYO into our schools, all PE teachers, as well as classroom teachers who facilitate their own PE have been given an instructional guideline detailing proper ways to practice NYO as well as context on the games themselves, why they were developed, and the skills and strength each game focuses on. Teachers are also using the district-developed NYO units in the existing curriculum. The guidelines were developed by Cook Inlet Tribal Council and we are now working on our own version for the North Slope.

ACT TESTS: All 11th and 12th grade students have the opportunity to take the ACT test at their site in the coming months. The ACT is a college readiness exam and is often used as entry criteria for post-secondary options like college or trade school. This test is provided free of charge and can be coordinated through the site counselor or site principal.

Goal: All students are prepared for their pathway of choice post-high school

CTE & VOC ED: The Qatqiññaigvik/CTE program held an intensive week in January with four classes: Cosmetology, Video Productions, Handmade qupak & atikluk Sewing and a Basketball Referee intensive. The instructor from ASAA advised that, to the best of his knowledge, this is the first time this course has been offered as a weeklong intensive for high school students. As with so many other fields, there is a shortage of certified athletic officials on the North Slope so these students will have an opportunity to provide a needed service and earn a decent wage.

CAREER AND COLLEGE PATHWAYS: Our district recently became an affiliate partner with the Alaska Maritime Education Consortium. This intentional partnership will allow us to offer students opportunities for training in maritime related careers. The administration is also exploring options for offering dedicated trade and vocational education middle college pathways

that will have students spending high school doing blocks of intensive study and earning credits for careers like construction and welding.

Goal: Graduate bilingual students

IÑUPIAQ MENTOR APPRENTICE PROGRAM: the district has recently signed an agreement to pick up an IHLC language mentor grant and has also hired a full time employee who will focus on supporting the Mentor Apprentice Program with the goal of supporting language acquisition for adult learners. Targeted professional development is critical for educators to enhance language proficiency and help us build more fluent teachers to support bilingual education and immersion programming.

Domain: Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Goal: Facilitate & maintain culturally, emotionally, & physically safe learning environments

SCHOOL CLIMATE CONNECTEDNESS SURVEY: This year's School Climate and Connectedness Survey season is commencing. The survey allows us as a district to receive information about how we are doing and to determine if our outreach activities are making a positive difference. The results also let us know where we need to go next in our buildings and communities. Students, staff and community members will be provided with opportunities to take this online survey. QR codes will be distributed in each community so that community members have access to take the survey. Results are anonymous and no identifying information is provided in the survey. We've had a great uptake in participating under this administration and we hope as many people as possible will provide feedback.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SERVICES: The administration hopes to confirm this week the recruitment of two new social emotional clinicians as part of a pilot to deliver much needed services to our students. While this role has historically been the responsibility of the NSB Health department, the Board have noted the critical importance of mental health supports for our students. The Student Services Department continues to work closely with the North Slope Borough Health Department and other mental health providers to have individual and group sessions available to students and adults in need.

COUNSELING: This months visits to villages including Tikiġaq will continue a focus on SEL programing and credit recovery.

Staff Support & Professional Development

Goal : Build and sustain a thriving workforce aligned with the mission of this District

RETENTION: We're extremely pleased to advise the Board that over 85% of teachers that were offered contracts have signed to return next year and all Principal contracts that were offered were signed, representing a level of stability we have not seen for many many years. To maximize our retention and provide further certainty to recruiting plans, the Board will be provided today with a list of certificated and classified administrative contracts.

We're also pleased to announce that today the Board will be asked to approve a significant initiative for classified local staff in our villages, representing an 8% pay rise for all village staff, matching what the NSB offers in that regard. To recognize the need for more Paraprofessionals and the load they carry the administration is also asking the Board to approve a raise in the pay rates for paraprofessional staff.

February 2025

RECRUITMENT: The District will participate in several job fairs in February and March, including: University of Alaska Southeast, University of Alaska Anchorage, University of Wyoming, Pittsburgh Education Fair, Oregon Professional Educator Fair, University of Northern Colorado, and Whitworth Education Career Fair. Our temporary Recruiting Specialist has contacted over 120 potential candidates and launched recruitment campaigns through Indeed; and is set-up and adding to our postings on other job boards through International School Services, Handshake and LinkedIn, with additional efforts underway for Facebook job postings and Education Weekly sourcing. We're also very pleased that highly experienced Alaskan HR specialist Patti Carlson has joined our team to consult on HR and recruitment best practices for our district.

INDIVIDUAL GROWTH: We intend to add an outboard engines maintenance/repair class to our course list next year so we want to recognize QLC Manager Kent Mingneau who was part of a group of 12 educators who completed the Yamaha Maintenance instructor training at Kenai Peninsula college this past month. Kent was also just appointed to the board for the Alaska Association of Career and Technical Education.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Our educational family at NSBSD congratulates Principal Brian Shaffer for being recognized as the Region 1 Principal of the Year by the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP)! Principal Shaffer has served as Principal of the Meade River School in Atkasuk for three years. Brian is a vocal advocate for the culturally responsive pedagogy and mission of our District and leads the Meade River School in Atkasuk with authentic community engagement. Since being appointed Principal in 2022, Mr Shaffer has worked with veteran staff and families to ensure the community of Atkasuk are actively involved in the workings of Meade River School. Mr Shaffer and his staff have been passionate in amplifying and promoting the weeklong Miñuaqtuġvik Nunami (school on the tundra) which opens each school year in Atkasuk and will eventually become a fixture in all schools on the Slope. His inclusive leadership style is also demonstrated by the involvement of certified and classified staff in the development of systems of support to address the needs of the whole child.

The Region 1 school districts include the Bering Strait, Nome City, Northwest Arctic and the North Slope. All of which make a combining total of 44 schools across Iñupiat and Yupiit land. All awardees from Alaska's 8 regions are eligible to be in the running for the statewide award.

Financial & Operational Stewardship

Goal 7: Standardize high-functioning, efficient, student-focused operations

IT MANAGEMENT & SECURITY: Over the Christmas break, the student data platform PowerSchool suffered a data breach that affected school districts across the US, and also other countries. Districts were notified in January of the breach and all schools were also reassured that the hackers had destroyed all information after a ransom was paid. Despite this reassurance the District immediately conducted an internal investigation to determine what data was compromised internally. Out of more than 7000 records, less than 10 contained Social Security numbers. All individuals who had SSNs in their records were contacted personally, and then messaging was sent out over a variety of channels to all other affected individuals, parents and guardians. While the district could not have done anything to prevent this, it is something we are taking very seriously and reminds us of the possible dangers of data breaches. For the record, the district has not collected SSNs since 2016, and when we come across them in records, we black them out (paper records), or remove the data from PowerSchool online. Our version of

PowerSchool no longer has a place to input the SSN (since 2016), and we have removed the SSNs from the records where they were listed.

In response to the fiber break, additional Starlink terminals have been added to the District network. This expansion has improved internet access for students, teachers, and administrative staff, compared to the previous situation when only a few terminals were shared, leading to high congestion and slow speeds. Due to Arctic conditions, repair operations cannot begin until late summer or early fall (around September), when the sea ice has fully melted.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING: As mentioned earlier, FY26 Budget discussions have been ongoing within administration and with the SACs. The Superintendent and Director of Finance also met with Mayor Patkotak and staff on January 28th to discuss the upcoming FY26 budget and the local contribution of the Borough. In an extremely busy month of compliance, the Business Office staff have completed the reporting for W-2s, 1099s, 1095s, 941, ESC, and State retirement reporting.

HOUSING and ONGOING MAINTENANCE UPGRADES: The bid window for the small houses RFP closed on Friday and we look forward to meeting with a Board Committee and the Board at a special meeting soon to make a decision on this important action item for housing in our villages. An Action item for replacement of furniture in District housing is also being presented to the Board today.

Student Sports:

Following on from the 1st Annual Big Bob Traditional NYO Games we have just announced that we will have an NYO regional competition on March 28-30 at BHS. All 8 schools will be participating in this event. The top 2 athletes in each of the 11 events will move on to represent NSBSD at the State competition in Anchorage on April 24 - 26.

Basketball season is now in full motion. Teams from 7 villages are participating this season. Tikigaq Harpooners recently hosted the annual Rex Rock Tournament with 8 teams attending. Barrow High School hosted the 2nd Annual Karl Derek Ahgeak tournament. And the 2nd annual Ayuktaqta (Let's play ball) tournament was held at BHS and HMS schools for all village schools. Nunamiut is the host school for this year's regional tournament on February 27 - March 1. The top team will represent the North Slope Conference at state.

In closing

Kivgiq has once again seen our community join together in strength, lifting our spirits and reminding us of the power and importance of culture in our community lives. We have seen a terrific retention rate for those staff offered contracts and this reflects a new stability in the district that starts with the clear direction and support of the Board. Like all district we still face serious challenges in recruiting teachers and staff but the stability we are building allows us to press forward with initiatives and learning expectations that are proving to deliver strong growth and achievement for your students. We're always stronger together and as a District we're proud to work and live on the lands of the Iñupiaq, walking beside our community and our children every day to help make the future better for all. Atautchimukta and Pisigilugit Qitungavut!

End report DSV