

Administrative Report

Superintendent David Vadiveloo

Utuqqanaavut kisuigukkitka – sivullit utuqqanaallu, paŋmami utuqqanaagiravullu, utuqqanaaġugumaaqtuallu. Quyanaaġitka paŋmamuraglaan aullatimmagit savaktivut iġiññaqtuagiravullu. Nalunaġuŋmigiga sulii iñuuniġuutilaaqput savaguutilaaqpullu nunañiñi iñupiat. Iġliqtitchirauvluta miŋuaqtuġviñnik kamasuuttaġigikput ikayuiyumiñaqapta tamatkunani nunani.

Members of the Board and community, welcome back after the holiday break. We began the new year at our Winter retreat by hearing from Elder Martha Stackhouse who reminded us very clearly of the significant responsibilities we have to nearly 2,000 children. Martha Stackhouse in every regard represents the strength of our education system and the critical importance of our elders. She has spent her career, even in retirement, working for the betterment of our community; teaching children, teaching adults and now guiding us as an elder to ensure we maintain our focus on the maintenance of language as well as the growth and wellbeing of the whole child. Our administration acknowledges all Elders past, present and emerging, for entrusting us as partners in the education and growth of their children. And with that in mind I'd like to present to the Board and our community the following highlights by way of an update on District operations mapped against our new Strategic goals and objectives.

Domain: Family & Community Collaboration

Goal: Prioritize and implement intentional and purposeful partnerships.

CHRISTMAS GAMES: Another year and another round of successful Christmas games. This event represents a significant partnership with the NSB each year and thanks go to our District HR and M&O staff who helped recruit and facilitate these games in multiple villages, keeping venues open and ensuring our schools were available for all to enjoy this vital event in the community calendar. Special thanks to Tomi Philip for once again anchoring this event in Utqiagvik.

NYO EVENT: The inaugural Big Bob Qiŋaqtaq Games commence today in Utqiagvik. This event, featuring over 60 students from every village, represents a commitment from the District to amplify and support Iñupiaq games and further entrench the values and culture of the Iñupiaq community in our schools. The event also reflects our commitment to partnering with community and other stakeholder groups as we join and support the Artic Exposure Traditional Games organization who have prepared and facilitated the event for all NSBSD students.

KIVGIQ: The district continued this month to work alongside the NSB to prepare for Kivgiq in February. M&O are working to ensure logistics align with school schedules and our instructional team are working to ensure all students have materials to focus on Kivgiq themed projects in the weeks leading up to the event.

ATTENDANCE RATES & TRUANCY: Attendance at school has a direct impact on the achievement of our children and our communities have responded strongly to initiatives to increase attendance. Several schools are very close to achieving the Board minimum of 80% district wide attendance which is great news but most have work to do to reach the stated goal of 90%. At our Winter retreat the administration have discussed with the Board a plan to bring the community into a dialogue for the next 6 – 9 months to consider calendar changes that would better reflect the Iñupiaq cultural calendar and better serve the learning needs of our students while also addressing the attendance issues we are seeing year-round at most schools.

Domain: Culturally Responsive Instruction

Goal: All students perform at or above grade level

MODELING AND DEMONSTRATING EXCELLENCE: Our model classroom at Ipalook is now in the RUS Grant Distance Learning Suite. This room has multiple cameras and ceiling microphones to ensure that we are able to capture audio and video in a way that is unobtrusive to learning, and is at a quality that allows for a bank of teaching videos to be created. During Semester 2, the focus will be on having existing teaching staff watch live demo lessons. With the success of this pilot program we're now planning for a model classroom to be placed in each village so that all staff and students can benefit from high fidelity, culturally responsive instruction being modeled in their school.

CURRICULUM & RRR: The grant funded Repair, Rebuild, Revitalize curriculum project continues on a positive path to updating and re-aligning our North Slope Science and History courses. The review and mapping of the courses are well underway and our instructional teams are also exploring other resources including additional language resources that could be updated to help build out Iñupiaq Grammar and Conversational Iñupiaq courses.

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

CTE & VOC ED: November and December were busy months with CTE/Qatqiññaġvik. November saw one intensive program week in heavy equipment specifically for students from Utqiagvik, and a second week for all village students. 31 students took part in Arctic Survival/First Aid, Welding, and Video Production. December saw our first cosmetology class. As we haven't run this program before the first class was a pilot for students from Utqiagvik, but the success of the class will now see it repeated for students from all villages in the coming months.

COLLEGE PATHWAYS: We have moved to the next stage of ANSEP (Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program) returning to the NSBSD and planning is underway for a 5th grade STEM Ready 'mini-intensive'. Selected students from all villages will spend three days engaged in hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) activities at the Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center. This is currently scheduled to take place in early April.

Goal: Graduate bilingual students

IÑUPIAQ LANGUAGE AND CURRICULUM RESOURCES: To meet the district strategic plan goal of graduating bilingual students, we need to increase the fluency and proficiency of our adult speakers who teach, create materials, and provide program supports. We're very pleased to advise the board that we've recruited a fluent full-time employee who will focus solely on implementing an effective Mentor-Apprentice Program supporting our Uqautiluja Iñupiatun Immersion teachers, our Iñupiaq Language Teachers, Department Staff, and Parents of the immersion program.

IED have also been working on the Iñupiaq Language Textbook publication with Dr Pausauraq Harcharek, Dr. Edna MacLean, Larry Kaplan, and Gladys Nashoalook, to ensure that all dialects are supported. This textbook will allow us to have high quality materials that support all grade levels and can be a resource that we will share with each household on the North Slope. These books will allow families and adults to learn at home with their students and will have accompanying interactive language card games to go with them.

Domain: Student Social & Emotional Wellbeing

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

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SERVICES: In December the Director of Student Services, the Superintendent and the coordinator of SEL met with two schools in Anchorage to learn more about how their district are staffing and serving students with SEL content. Our SEL coordinator also met with White Wave Counseling to discuss how the school district can provide telehealth therapy for students as another source of counseling in the event that unfilled positions leave a site unsupported.

COUNSELING: Site visits to Nuiqsut & Kaktovik this past two weeks completed site visits by the counselor coordinator to all locations. Our counselor coordinator is also wrapping up assistance to all sites with their Spring 25 Master schedules.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

After weeks of preparation and team building, the Battle of the Books and the Lego robotics competition stages kick off over these next few weeks so we wish all students the best of luck!

The Mixed-6 Regional Volleyball Tournament was successfully held at Kali School in November with all seven 1A schools participating in the event. Congratulations to Tikigaq Harpooners who came back through the consolation bracket to defeat Nunamiut in the championship match. Special thanks to Board member Nageak who was involved the whole weekend as the announcer at matches and at the awards ceremony. Our IT department did an outstanding job streaming the whole event for fans and families that couldn't make the trip and we thank Bob Thomas and KBRW for delivering his play by play call. Atqasuk's Eagles won the sportsmanship team award and Kaktovik's Rams took home the Academic Award with a combined team gpa of 3.7 from last semester's grades!

Both Tikigaq and Nunamiut went to the State tournament in December but didn't make the finals. Congratulations to Tikigaq's Henry Nashookpuk and Jennifer Nash on being selected to the ASAA Mixed-6 All-Tournament Team and Jennifer Nash for being selected as the Best Server at the Tournament.

The Regional Wrestling Tournament was held in Kotzebue in December and congratulations go to the Barrow boys who won the Regional Championship and the Barrow girls who placed 2nd. Barrow boys team placed 13th out of 42 teams at State with congratulations to Norman Lilomaiaava who made it to the championship match at the 285 lb weight class but was defeated.

Staff Support & Professional Development

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

RECRUITING: A recruiting specialist has been engaged to support the District during the new hire season and the HR department is assessing 20 new H1B ECE and SPED candidates for open positions in SY2025-26. HR has also successfully engaged a recruiting agency in Canada where one new hire has been selected and is scheduled to begin on December 30.

RETENTION: To maximize our retention and provide certainty to recruiting plans, the Board will be provided today with a list of certificated teachers who will be offered a contract in our first round of offers. Contracts for Principals and other administrative and contracted staff will be offered over the coming weeks. Making these contract offers in January puts us ahead of most districts and places us in the best place to prepare for a strong recruiting push over the coming months.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: In December, HR and Business Office staff attended the Alaska Association of School Business Officials (ALASBO) conference. The staff gained valuable insights into updated State and Federal reporting requirements, enhanced their proficiency with frequently used programs through tips and techniques shared at the sessions, and were introduced to foundational applications of artificial intelligence.

Nunamiut School, as well as Harold Kaveolook School will be receiving additional targeted literacy support through CORE services for the balance of the school year utilizing grant funding. This support will include teacher training on high quality literacy strategies, as well as direct modeling in classrooms for staff.

Financial & Operational Stewardship

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

IT MANAGEMENT & EFFICIENCY : Just hours before the final payroll of December it was discovered that power outages in Utqiagvik had caused a potentially fatal tech issue in the system. Thanks to the diligent work of our IT staff these challenges were resolved, ensuring the district's operations remained on track and staff were paid during this critical time of year. As we continue to upgrade infrastructure we will ensure a more robust foundation for future growth.

FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT AND REPORTING: Finance Director Williams, Mr Niedermeyer and the Superintendent presented the FY24 clean audit to the NSB Assembly earlier in the week. Assembly members noted how pleased they were with the transparency and fiscal management of the district. The administration also delivered its preliminary budget on time to the Board in December and will meet for an informal discussion with the Mayor and his team in late January.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE UPGRADES: The scale of work being done by M&O is difficult to capture in my short overview report but a quick review of the M&O monthly report to the Board (in this packet) demonstrates how much their team is working across all sites to impact deferred maintenance and develop improved programs and systems for all students and staff.

In closing

Our winter retreat with the Board has allowed us to take stock and reflect on the hard work that all our staff, students, families and stakeholders are doing to strengthen and improve the educational journey of our students. We have seen strong growth but there is much much more work to do and we thank everyone in our community and in our staff who is putting their shoulder to the wheel to support our children to succeed. Most importantly we congratulate our students - Improved results are there for all to see and your hard work is making a difference! Quyanaq to our Board for continuing to provide clear guidance and support to the administration in our focus on the Mission of the District. We're always stronger together and as a District we're proud to work and live on the lands for Iñupiaq, walking beside you and our children every day to help make the future better for all. Atautchimukta and Pisigilugit Qitunġavut!

End report DSV