

Student Representative Report for October 2020
Submitted by: Brooke Singson

My name is Brooke Singson and I am a junior at BHS. I am one of three student representatives to the Board. My monthly report covers the following schools: Barrow High School, Ipalook Elementary, Meade River School and Alak School.

As a student rep to the board, I have chosen to focus on determining what electives students are interested in, in hopes of implementing them for the next upcoming school year. This month, I started by asking what electives are currently offered at each school that I'm working with.

Meade River School

The Meade River School report was completed by Frances Itta, who is in 8th grade. For the second quarter of school, the Meade River middle school and high school have switched their schedule, and have begun attending school every day for half the day. Frances said that students enjoy this new schedule, because they get more days at school and more available time to work and receive help from teachers.

Their school has also recently started Battle of the Books, and has put together their student council.

At the Meade River School, their current electives offered include small engines, P.E., engineering, OJT, home economics, weight lifting, and ATV/snow machine practicum.

Barrow High School

Due to Barrow's red status, Mr. Jenkin's, BHS's principle, submitted their report for October. Beginning with the second quarter, BHS has begun to focus more on seniors and helping them stay on track to graduate in May. They also recently implemented a Student Advisory program, where each teacher has about 15 students assigned to them. Teacher duties are still being determined, but these advisory classes will be the main contact points for students and parents, as well as a supporting students' social and emotional well-being.

BHS is planning on winter sports to begin in January, but that will be a wait and see proposition.

Currently, the elective offered at BHS include art, P.E., metals, wood shop, music production, band, and Alaska Performance Scholarship classes.

Alak School

The Alak School report was completed by Addyson Nayakik, who is in 11th grade. For the second quarter, their school moved into yellow status, where students are now required to follow social distancing and wear masks at school. They also had a Halloween parade and costume contest for students in October, and are planning more student activities for November. Addyson said that the student body is handling things well, and that the new yellow status is not interfering much with their ability to get all their work completed.

The Alak School current has computer keyboarding, computer technology, P.E., and personal finance offered for electives.

Fred Ipalook Elementary School

The October report for Ipalook Elementary School was submitted by Audrey de Guzman and Alexa Toledo, who are 5th grade co-presidents, with help from their advisor, Jessica Kalvig. Alexa said that her first quarter of school was mostly review from the previous school year, but the second quarter has been more focused on learning new 5th grade skills. Audrey said that her class has a specific zoom time that they meet for, and that most of their learning comes from watching videos of her class lessons. She said that she enjoys watching them, and that they are helpful to learn from. Mrs. Kalvig included that the teachers are learning right along with the kids, and adapting as they go, and the kids are handling everything really well.

For activities in the month of October, Ipalook hosted a coloring contest for students where the lower and upper grades competed against each other. Winners were announced during their Zoom Halloween Parade, which was hosted on October 30th. They had over 114 people connected at one point. In many houses, multiple children were one, so we estimate around 200 participants in the parade. Along with that, their student council made decorations for the senior center, and asked the community to make pumpkins at home and hang them in windows so that families were able to drive around and search for them like a scavenger hunt.

I also asked the students to compare what they liked most about distance learning, and what they wish they could change. Alexa told me that she really enjoys being able to choose what activities/work she wants to do, what order she completes them in, and being able to work independently. She also said she loves being able to stay comfy while doing work in her pajamas! However, she definitely missed seeing her friends and teachers in person. Audrey told me she also enjoys working on her own time and pace, and being able to take mental breaks when needed. On the other hand, she wishes she could have more time with her teacher, and that she was able to get more work after she completes all of hers. Mrs. Kalvig also added that not being able to assess kids frequently is challenging, but believes that allowing the students to work at their own pace is very beneficial.

Lastly, Ms Kalvig said that she has never seen the teachers come together and work so hard to solve problems during all her years of teaching. Alexa also asked me to include that she is glad she can still do school work and have fun zoom meetings to see her friends at. She hopes that they can soon go back to school, because she really misses her teachers. Audrey also said that she loves that student council is still continuing during distance learning, and is grateful that she can still participate from home.