

September Board Report 2025 Mary Donaldson, Special Education Director

**"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success."**

The Nome school district has the best special education team in the state! We have nine certified teachers, five paraprofessionals, one administrative assistant, and dedicated consultants to serve the staff and children of Nome. Our professional team has a wealth of experience and knowledge. **However, the essential quality is their dedication to our community, our children, and their families.**

Great Start to the Year

We are off to a great start with a strong staff supporting our 145 children in special education. With eight more children enrolling. We have 30 children who have intensive needs requiring extra support. Nome Elementary serves 75 children, and ACSA has nine children. Extensions have five children, and Beltz has 56 children receiving special education services. Two certified speech pathologists provide services to 42 children, with 13 children diagnosed with emotional disabilities. Our autism specialist supports twelve children who have Autism, and 68 children have learning disabilities supported by our special education teachers. Our Early Childhood Education program supports sixteen children.

Encouraging Parent Voices

We have a goal of supporting parents in special education this year with family meetings, home visits, and parent nights. Our staff is prioritizing the welcome of all and addressing any concerns, responding to families with concerns, and reaching out to provide transportation to meet their needs. As a director, an email was sent out with information encouraging calls, texts, or emails 24/7 with any issue involving their child.

Family Meetings

We have been conducting family meetings with parents to provide a smooth transition to the school year. Over 45 home visits have taken place, welcoming students to a new school year—a special shout-out to Nome Elementary Kindergarten staff for their excellent meetings with parents before school begins.

Parent Nights

One of our goals this year is to increase our parent involvement. We have six parent nights planned for the year. These events are created to improve the partnership between families and practices at school.



GOALS FOR 2025-2026

ONE

Increase parent learning involvement outside of IEP meetings through a minimum of 6 events held throughout the year.

TWO

Increase learning opportunities for special education staff and regular education staff through an established calendar of training. Topics based on a needs assessment of current special education staff and relevant to each building.

THREE

Integrate culturally relevant pedagogy through programs and practice to increase graduation rates of our students in special education.