

School Highlight Report

October 7, 2021

Nuiqsut Trapper School

Good afternoon from Nuiqsut Trapper.

Great things have been going on here at Trapper School. As we started the year, we hosted a Day of Caring with Conocophillips. Our initial concept was for painting some stripes on the walls and sprucing the place up a bit. We were blown away with what actually occurred. Over the course of two days, we had over twenty volunteers who painted from our front doors down through our cafeteria. Our school has begun a transformation from bleak beige walls to bright green and yellow Trapper colors all around. The plan is to continue with painting the interior while also incorporating ideas such as a community hand print wall. While here the volunteers also helped with many other tasks and projects ranging from fixing and replacing lighting to building shelves and assisting with other much needed maintenance tasks.

We then began welcoming our veteran and new staff back. Twelve out of sixteen certified teachers returned giving us a strong base to continue the hard work from last year. We welcomed Matthew Brown as our new SPED teacher and Andrew Nason as our new middle/high social studies teacher. Since this time, we have also welcomed Bethany Gray for kindergarten. We are still in need of a counselor and an ILT teacher to be fully staffed.

In addition to our certified staff, we have welcomed Rosemary Ahtuangerook as our Home School Facilitator and Misty Plymale as an instructional paraprofessional. Both ladies have already brought community connections and a huge amount of knowledge and love when it comes to helping out our kids.

As the first day of school approached, we hosted a Meet the Teacher Day that was very well attended by our families. Students and family members were able to see our new improvements as well as get their schedules and meet their new teachers. We were all so happy to be starting the year in green with kids in our buildings.



We managed to stay in green for about three weeks and during that time, we had students participate in activities such as cross country, EXCEL Alaska, and student council. We began collecting data through various tests and observations so we can better differentiate instruction for all students. Students are excited to be in school and participating in the planning of more events both academic and social for the upcoming year.

On September 9th, we were informed of multiple cases in Nuiqsut causing us to go to RED. Active case numbers hit over fifty and this will keep us in red until they come back down. While in red, we are continuing to interact with our students through zoom classes and phone calls. Work packets are being delivered weekly and we now have a system in place for picking up the completed work as well. In addition to work, we are also trying to keep our kids engaged with activities for suicide awareness and character trait building. We are also hoping to begin food delivery even though we do not have a bus driver yet.

Our cultural in-service time has also been very informative and exciting this year. Our teachers have participated in activities to include but not limited to the Blessing of the Whaling crews, helping with the harvesting of whale, learning how to prepare various hides, cooking, picking berries, baleen separation, and even presentations on hunting cabins and how allotments were distributed to families. We are all looking forward to learning and doing even more.

In addition to the cultural learning, we are pushing hard for our teachers to engage in ongoing professional development to increase their pedagogy skills. Teachers are embracing new strategies for engagement and teaching while continuing to focus on trauma informed practices that support the social emotional learning skills our kids need as well. We believe students need to see us as life long learners as well and we can always learn new and different things for all parts of our lives.

Distinguished student, staff, and volunteer: All individuals will be recognized at our next SAC meeting and included in our next issue of Trapper Times.

ECE3-2nd would like to recognize Ariel Ipalook as our distinguished student. Ariel is in the second grade and is a very hard worker. She loves reading and art so much! She finishes all of her work and helps her friends whenever she can.

Grades 3-5 Teachers would like to recognize Zachary Stalker, 5th grader for these reasons:

Positive attitude, Demonstrates resiliency, Kind, helpful, willing to teach others, Active on zoom

Strong work ethic, completes his work on time, Good attendance, Positive influence on younger brother, Zachary participated in the Radio Program

Grades 6-12 would like to recognize Evelyn (Evy) Pausanna.

Evy has had perfect attendance thus far this school year. She has demonstrated a positive attitude and a depth of maturity far beyond her years – she consistently reaches out to ask for help and, in turn, helps those around her. She is goal-oriented as she aspires to become a bush pilot. Unfailingly turning in her work even while in Code Red, putting forth effort in all endeavors, and showing respect for both herself and those around her, Evelyn Pausanna has amply earned this honor.

Picking a distinguished staff member for this was impossible.

I say this because I cannot choose just one person. Due to high turnover in M&O and historically vacant positions, we came back to a school in desperate need of TLC and maintenance help. In addition to this we also had no water for almost three weeks prior to the opening of school. In this time of need, teachers, community members, outside entities as well as other villages stepped up to help us get ready for our first day. As principal, I can never truly thank these individuals enough for not only the work that they did but the love they showed our students and staff as we accomplished tasks together.

Special Thanks to

Jake Howe and James Kreilich from M&O in Utqiagvik who went above and beyond around the clock to complete everything from welding to nailing siding back on the exterior of the building.

Riley Kaleak also from Utqiagvik who cleaned, organized and trained our crew to be able to accomplish tasks on their own. His positivity was absolutely contagious as he completed task after task with a bright smile and sunny disposition.

Stephen Manuel and Bill Gustafson who left their positions in Pt. Lay to fill in for plant manager and cook. They worked continuously for the month they were here to do everything from organizing keys to training our two new custodians on the proper way to complete tasks. In addition to these two individuals I want to thank everyone at Pt. Lay who picked up the extra work on that end so they could be here with us as well as Mr. Sterling for allowing them to assist.

Nuiqsut teacher Rick Sparrow, who jumped right in to help identify issues and assist when able. Rick shampooed carpets, moved furniture and even cleaned apartments to ensure every task we were able to complete was finished.

Conocophillips Day of Caring Crew who not only painted but helped with electrical, plumbing and minor repairs with any extra set of hands that was here onboard.

Charley Taallak-Kovalsky from NUC for helping to get the boilers in the five-plex back on so our teachers have hot water and heat.