

Whale Pass 3/13/2024 Board Report

The big news in the past few weeks is that Joseph Hillis is ranked #1 in the State Elementary Archery division, and Kelsey Toman is ranked #2 in the Middle School division. It has been a number of years since Whale Pass School has had archers ranked in the top 5 state rankings, and we are very proud of their accomplishments.

Our three Battle of the Books teams competed in the state competition during the week of February 26th. All three teams fought hard and gave a good accounting of themselves. All three teams ended solidly in the middle of their respective divisions. We are especially proud of the 3rd-4th grade team. Their competition lasted for 2 ½ hours, and they maintained their composure to the very end. The judge commented that “in twenty years she had not seen five teams that were so competitive and evenly matched”.

The middle school and high school students are now in the chemistry portion of Physical Science. They have spent several days puzzling through the Gas Laws, and observing what is known as a discrepant event involving filling a drink can with steam, and inverting it into a bowl of water (hint: nature abhors a vacuum). In Alaska History they are drawing and overlaying maps of indigenous tribal regions with bioregions, then a third layer of major resource extraction. Then they consider the effects (positive and negative) that the resource extractions have had on their social fabric and cultural practices. Then they will be asked to consider how those resource extractions have impacted and shaped our society and cultural practices.

Elementary students are starting an Environmental Science unit. They will delve into ecosystems, climate classification and the various classification systems, and the impacts of various human industrial-level activities. They are paralleling the middle school/high school Alaska Studies course by studying the indigenous cultures of Alaska. This includes several mapping activities, and will culminate in individual presentations to students and staff.

Looking ahead, Joseph Hillis will represent WPS and the district at the State Spelling Bee competition. The competition will be held at the Discovery Theatre in Anchorage on March 19th.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Cook
Lead Teacher
Whale Pass School

