

Mikal Nelson  
Barrow High School  
Ms. Judkins and Mr. Kendall's Alaska Studies class

11/16/17

Dear North Slope Borough School District Board of Education, my name is Mikal Nelson and I am attending Barrow High School as a freshman. My fellow classmates and I are undertaking a class that allows us to discover and learn the background, and evolution of Alaska as a whole. One of those advancements include Alaskan education. As the students of the North Slope Borough School District, it is important to have a voice and a say in current progression of our district. There are many things that we are thankful for, but there is a handful of things that can be improved or included. Here are things that I have gathered up

The whole purpose of school is to get the future children ready for the world ahead of them. Our nation's school curriculum (not to mention, Alaska's school curriculum) has stayed the same ever since the mid 19th century, also known as the industrial age. This method of schooling is just outdated, and just not beneficial for students. Today's society is changing rapidly, however the school system is not. Students everyday, are given strict instructions. Like sit down, stop talking, turn to page 42. This ability of following instructions was essential for industrial age factory workers, if you listen to the instructor, you get money, simple. Fast forward a century later, young students still believe that the only way to be a successful person in today's world is to simply follow instructions from a superior, and are not handed the skills to be that superior.

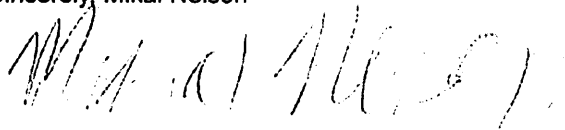
To be successful in today's world, one must communicate. If you do not understand something in class, your instinct would be to ask a peer. Once that takes place, a teacher chops off the conversation because they are in the middle of "teaching". Communicating in groups is an extremely important ability to be successful. Interacting with one another gives each person a chance to express creativity within the students. I believe that if teachers can realize that, their students can be more productive and participate more often. Learning productively in groups is called social learning.

Everyone is different, unique, special. Something that we have all heard in elementary school. A special quality that everyone has, is their way of learning. Hundreds of students go to same school, learn the same topics, at the same time of day. This completely deflates the fact that everyone is different. During a class lecture, there are some people that are engaged and actually pick up the information that the instructor is stating. These people that are engaged are called verbal learners. If you are not a verbal learner and if you do not pick up the information efficiently, you are considered a failure, when all you needed was an easier way that you can understand that same exact topic. There are visual, social, and much more ways of learning, however everyone is forced to use only one.

Students and parents are the most affected by these set-backs in the curriculum. If the students come back with bad report cards, they are scolded by the parents, when the true solution for the parents is to ask their child why they are doing poor in that topic. Every student is capable for success, but this curriculum is holding back their potential and even worse their personal standards and self esteem.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely, Mikal Nelson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mikal Nelson', written in a cursive style.