

Date: October 27, 2023

To: LPSD School Board

From: Kacy Lou Leyba

Regarding: October Counseling Report

My big undertaking for the month of October was ensuring that the PSAT's new digital test was offered to interested sophomores and juniors. My hat is off to our technology department and the site proctors who helped to make the PSAT a possibility for these LPSD students this year. I have provided feedback to CollegeBoard about possible ways to make this digital test more accessible to students in rural Alaska, as the set up and execution of the exam was honestly quite arduous.

Denali and I have continued to try to be present at as many LSAC meetings as possible throughout October in an effort to get to know various community leaders and their visions for their students' / community's future. This time getting to better know the unique communities we serve has been a highlight of my month!

This month I also began piloting the new Everyday Speech social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum at Tanalian through a free trial from the company. After several weeks, I now feel comfortable enough with the material, scope, and sequence to expand it out to the rest of the district's elementary students and plan to begin doing Zoom lessons for all interested K-5 classrooms on Thursday and Friday afternoons in November. Additionally, I have partnered with Amber and our Pre-K program to build out a "Mindfulness Monday" lesson each week on Zoom using this SEL curriculum. These lessons play off of the "Thoughtful Thursday" lessons Amber and Elise are putting together through the current literacy grant. Our hope is to integrate mental wellness and coping strategies seamlessly into students' lives utilizing resources that are available to them everyday like picture books and body movement.

During inservice I was also able to partner with BBRCTE's Patty McCasland to present a professional development session for certified LPSD staff on SEL resources for their classrooms, as well as post-secondary (collegiate, trade school, apprenticeship, and work-force) options for our students. We are hopeful that as staff and students grow in their awareness of these resources, that we will be able to help connect them with a post-secondary path of their interest prior to graduation. In that same vein, LPSD proudly sent almost 30 students to various BBRCTE programs for the first intensive and we are planning to send 28 more students to the second intensive next week. The transition into that CTE week will be full as I am looking forward to helping host our district's mixed-3 and mixed-6 volleyball teams in Port Alsworth right before many of those students fly away to their CTE programs. I am elated that Patty will be joining us in Port Alsworth as well to help me continue to work through junior / senior meetings.

At the beginning of October I moved from .5 to .75 time and have managed to remain "booked up" with student academic check ins, mental health check ins, classroom lessons, and more. I am grateful for the extra time to work with students as there continues to be a pressing need for academic and SEL guidance in our district. As always, please feel free to email me if you have any questions or concerns.

For the kids,
Kacy Lou Leyba