

***Chief School Administrator - David Vadiveloo***

Utuqqanaavut kisuiġukkitka – sivulliit utuqqanaallu, paŋmami utuqqanaagiravullu, utuqqanaaġuġumaaqtuallu. Quyanaaġitka paŋmamuraglaan aullatimmagit savaktivut ilĩññaiaqtuagiravullu. Nalunaigunmigiga suli iñuuniġuutilaaqput savaguutilaaqpullu nunañiññi Iñupiat. Igliqtitchirauvluta miñuaqtuġviññik kamasuuttaġigikput ikayuiyumiñaqapta tamatkunani nunani.

Members of the Board and members of the North Slope community, let me start by saying Yay Hey Hey!! And congratulations to all the crews who are out on the ice or have been out – serving our communities and providing food and the continuation of our community’s strong whaling culture.

During our recent trip to Ulġniq for graduation I remembered the words of Elder Rossman Peetok when asked about education and our children – to which he replied (as translated by Dr Jana Harcharek) that to be successful we must start with what a child is interested in, and then build on that. At the recent graduation I had a chance to speak with several of the graduates and for those with a pathway mapped out it was clear they had found their interest, their passion, and were heading in that direction – a couple into technical trades and two into teaching. While out on the ice in Utquagvik last week I spent time with grade 8, 9 and 10 students, and as we worked on an aġvik together they shared how excited they would be to connect their subsistence hunting to their curriculum and learning through S-terms and integrated curriculum.

In that context, we once again begin by acknowledging our Elders, past, present and emerging in this community and across the slope. We thank you all for passing this knowledge on to our students and continuing to provide guidance and wisdom to our District, our staff members and all who make up our educational community.

We also acknowledge that we stand on the sovereign lands of the Iñupiaq people. We are proud as a District to be trusted to serve the community on these lands.

April was a time of great activity with spring whaling starting in some communities, students preparing to graduate, State summative assessments being completed and a District wide student council being selected. Although it is the end of the school year, our work to strengthen the District continues and this month has been a reflection of that, so with that in mind I’d like to present to the Board and our community the following update on District operations mapped against our Strategic goals and objectives.

**Strategic goal 1: Student success**

Graduations have commenced. In Ulġniq, Finance Director Stromberg and I joined Board-member Hickman and we had the great pleasure of watching our next generation of young leaders graduating. This is an event our students will cherish forever and it truly is a privilege to watch them experience that moment. We send our congratulations to all our graduating students over the next few weeks and want them to know how proud we are of the work they have done to reach this milestone.

After many months planning and a huge amount of work from Board Student representative Maggie Stringer and Student Services Director Lori Roth we’re pleased to announce that a District wide student council has been selected based on student nominations and submission of applications. The council will be introduced at the regular Board meeting tomorrow. This is an exciting development and one that reflects our Districts commitment to student voice.

Alaska Association of Student Government took place from April 28-30 and 6 of our students attended. AASG is a terrific opportunity for our students to learn about governance and leadership and with the introduction of the District Wide student council we look forward to more students attending this event in the coming years. The Student Services Department also worked with Student Councils this past

month to host events for Drug & Alcohol awareness month, leading to the first-ever district wide student councils event.

The Iñupiaq Education department have completed the Iñupiaq Language Scope & Sequence language goals across K3-grade 12. Supported by our 17 ilisaurrit these posters are already appearing in buildings and classrooms around the District and they can be seen in your Board packet.

Following on from the Admin, Board member and Elders visit to the Ilisazaqta Iñupiatun program in Nome last month, this month Michelle Kaleak and Chrisann Justice visited that program to gain exposure to an operating immersion program and solidify professional connections.

State summative Assessments were completed in the final week of April. Benchmark assessments were also given to students in grades K-2, and 11 to inform our instruction focus. We have seen good growth in math but have seen a lower level of growth in literacy, reflecting a statewide trend post-covid where the impact of limited oracy and literacy exposure will continue to impact scores. In response, we are leaning in hard to the Reads Act requirements and focusing on ways to introduce reading specialists and interventionists into our schools. The newly appointed elementary instructional coordinator will be a strong leader in that campaign.

C&I staff have also been meeting with principals to discuss a unified bell schedule for village sites. By creating shared periods we can offer our students distance delivery courses slope wide. In response to community and site feedback, our intention is to offer not only core classes, but also extension classes for many sites where staffing may not support expanded course options. Our hope is that in the fall we will begin this process with a conversational Iñupiaq class, and then expand as our capacity builds.

Our Qatqiñniagvik program this past month saw career exploratory programs for students from Nuiqsut Trapper and Harold Kaveolook school along with Ilisagvik Dual credit programs for students from Nuiqsut, Kaveolook and Atqasuk. I'll allow Mr Hawley to expand on these programs during his highlighted Department report but it was very exciting to see students participating in construction trades classes consisting of welding and carpentry. Heading into FY24 our soon to be appointed Director of Qatqiñniagvik, MJ Geiser is focused on dedicated recruiting of small engines carpentry and welding experts for next years programs. A report on the Qatqiñniagvik program for the past year will be provided to the Board and the NSB before the end of the school year.

Attendance across schools has continued to improve this month and during all my site visits I have been speaking with families and staff about the imperative of our 80% minimum attendance across all sites to ensure continued educational growth for our students.

This past year has seen many, many successes for our students. Across the slope we have young people who are working hard every day to achieve and grow towards their potential. We congratulate all our students this year for emerging from the challenges of covid and demonstrating their abilities and resilience. As we prepare for a new school year, we commit ourselves to their development and remind ourselves of the critically important task we have.

### **Strategic goal 2: Community engagement**

This past month I had trips to Nuiqsut and AKP with Board-member Burns and last week I was in Ulḡniq with Board-member Hickman for graduation. It was very pleasing to see the improvement in the Nuiqsut and AKP sites - a great testament to the work that has been done by the site leaders, staff and the community leaders. I spent valuable hours with community members during our town hall meetings and one on one meetings in Nuiqsut and AKP and I'm extremely grateful to all community members who took the time to attend and share their thoughts and ideas to make their schools stronger.

We have spent the month engaged in further MOU discussions with ASNA and Maniilaq with a view to strengthening those partnerships and providing better services to our students, staff and community.

In alignment with our literacy focus for FY24, we will commence our Read across the Slope program in May and this will include the delivery of free, culturally relevant books, to all ECE-5 students as well as planning for a series of literacy initiatives in the new school year.

This month we have also conducted the first budget hearing process to involve SAC presidents and representatives. This is an important part of our ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability with the community. Each site Principal and SAC was invited to meet with Director Stromberg, Asst Superintendent Geiser and myself to discuss the District financial position and the staffing allocations and other needs of sites.

### **Strategic goal 3: Staff success**

We begin our staff success report with the announcement last week of Alaska's Principal of the Year: Dr Charles TenBroeck. Dr TenBroeck has been the Principal at Hopson Middle School for five years, leading the building with passion and dedication through the challenges of covid and District instability. He is a high-expectations, student centered leader who is committed to whole-of-student growth through positivity and strength-based instruction. Dr TenBroeck has a firm belief in the ability of every student to exceed their expectations and encourages his students to extend themselves in every aspect of their life. He is also a passionate advocate for his colleagues and his staff while simultaneously honoring and promoting the mission, vision and values of the District. On behalf of our entire District, we congratulate Dr TenBroeck and are proud and fortunate to have him as an educational leader. Aarigaa Dr TenBroeck! Dr TenBroeck will move to BHS next year as Principal and we look forward to him taking this success into that building.

Replacing Dr TenBroeck at HMS will be Mr Kevin Younger. Mr Younger taught at AKP many years ago and returns to our District after a decade as a Principal and Superintendent in Oklahoma. Like all our new Principals, Mr Younger participated in a series of zoom interviews before we invited him to visit the site. He then spent two days on site, meeting students, staff and community before being interviewed by a community and staff panel who selected him as the new Principal. We are excited for Mr Younger to join our educational family and lead HMS next year.

The other big change at HMS is the movement of Assistant Principal Tracy Mulvenon into the role of Assistant Superintendent next year. Since posting the Assistant Superintendent opening earlier this year I've spent several months vetting and meeting candidates, and through all that searching, none surpassed our own Ms Mulvenon. Tracy Mulvenon is an exceptionally accomplished educational leader, serving over 15yrs as a Principal out of State and 5yrs as Asst Prin at HMS. She did her PhD studies in Special Education, has an MA as a Reading Specialist and has a career commitment to teacher growth and curriculum development and implementation. As we prepare for year two of this administration – rebuilding- we're excited to have her experience and knowledge to support the implementation of the pedagogy, our curriculum and to support all our Principals and Directors.

Our work on the Ilisauriguqta (Let's be teachers!) program with UAF and Ilisagvik College has generated lots of positive movement with both organizations joining us in mid-April for a series of meetings that we hope will lead to an articulation agreement and more opportunities for our students and our staff who wish to become teachers. During the April meetings, a number of staff and one student met with UAF to discuss their Alaska Indigenous Teacher Corp program, while the administration met with UAF, Ilisagvik, Conoco and the Arctic Slope Community Foundation and we're excited by the possible initiatives and support for new local teachers that is being discussed.

In other staff success news we've continued to recruit across the country, finding many new teachers and classified staff for our schools and departments. All of our Job Fairs are complete. Jacquii Lambert has continued to target the lowest 12 states in the lower 48 with FB posts and other social media outlets. We have also targeted specific Canadian regions and provinces for potential international additions as

well. We are still waiting on news of our H1B staff approvals but in the interim we have created a schedule for their arrival and onboarding as soon as they receive the final OEC stamp in the Philippines.

I will close our staff success with two big thanks - firstly a thanks to all our staff - for their commitment to our students and community. In this teacher appreciation week, we have decided to expand the week to appreciate all staff - to recognize the vital roles played by all staff in the education of our children.

To thank the staff we have arranged a gift of a swag store they can visit to choose an item of clothing.

Our second thanks is to our departing COO Mr Luthi who will leave the District at the end of this school year. I approached Mr Luthi last year when our district was understaffed and with a need for experienced hands and firm administration. As he was required to leave his family home and wife in Palmer to join us, Mr Luthi offered me one year. In that year he has provided support, wisdom, counsel and guidance to my office and provided support to numerous Principals and sites across the District. As a former Principal and Assistant Superintendent of NSBSD, Mr Luthi has given great service to this District and I want to express my gratitude personally and professionally for his continued commitment to our students, their families and our wider community. We will miss Mr Luthi but he has agreed to let us continue to call on him from time to time if the need arises.

#### **Strategic goal 4: Financial and operational Stewardship**

Yesterday the administration presented a report on the Budget meetings with all sites, Departments and SAC representatives. These meetings were held last month and are part of our continued efforts to look at ways to improve services while maintaining fiscal controls in collaboration with sites and with the awareness of the community. The District will now prepare a final proposed FY24 budget for presentation and request adoption by the Board at a June Board meeting. The final adopted FY24 budget is due to the Department of Education and Early Development by July 15, 2023.

MOA's for the Mayors supplemental grants have been submitted for execution so we await news of those being signed so we can plan for the next school year early.

Operationally we will create a new Director position next year with MJ Geiser becoming our new Director of the Qatqiñniagvik Program. We will also be meeting with all SAC Presidents early in the new school year to further strengthen that relationship. And before the end of the school year we will meet with all Principals and SAC Presidents to discuss student activities for FY 24.

The DEED audit of M&O is underway this week. All materials have been uploaded and we will wait for the DEED report. Our DEED audit of grants has been completed and we are in the process of meeting requests for further materials.

A request has been made to USDA RUS to buy 176 laptops for our Iñupiaq VIVA Labs districtwide. When approved these will ensure all students in Iñupiaq classes will have access to the important VIVA language program in the new school year.

#### **Conclusion:**

As this is our last Board meeting during the school year I'd like to express my genuine thanks to the Board for your support of our program this year. It is always an anxious time for a Board to replace the operational head of any organization. You have had many challenges over the past few years and I hope our administration have delivered the return to stability, accountability and transparency that we committed to at the start of the year.

As I said last month, it has taken us nearly a year to repair and now we begin to rebuild so we can recover the lost years of learning. To do that we must maintain rigor and focus on the growth of the whole child and this will require us to keep reaching out to the community to strengthen relationships and partnerships in our community schools.

## May 2023 Administrative Report

To all of our administrators, teachers and all of our staff – thank you. For your commitment to our students and your willingness to adopt and follow the operational plan we have put in place to reflect the vision and mission of our Board.

To our community – thank you for meeting with us, challenging us and continuing to press us to be better and improve the service to our students. Most of all, thank you for trusting us and supporting us as we rebuild our partnership and make our district a true community school partnership.

Repair, rebuild, revitalize. The work continues. Bring on school year 24!