

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** NWABSD Board of Education  
Members

**DATE:** November 6, 2024

**FR:** Office of the Superintendent

**SUBJECT:** Curriculum & Instruction

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Tracy Bell, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, reports on the following:

### **Strategic Goal 2: Instructional Supports**

#### ***Objective 1: Evaluation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)***

Our team has been actively working on strengthening instructional supports across several key areas, focusing on creating a well-rounded approach to early learning, student support, and professional development. Here are three main updates:

#### **1. Early Learning Foundations**

We are focusing on early literacy and social-emotional development by launching Creative Curriculum sessions this month. This includes providing teachers with resource packets and activities to integrate social-emotional learning into the classroom. Our four cornerstones—foundational development, inclusive learning environments, family engagement, and responsive curriculum—guide this work to ensure young learners start with a strong foundation.

#### **2. Student-Centered Support and MTSS Implementation**

For MTSS, we are rolling out targeted interventions that address individual student needs across academics, behavior, and social-emotional areas. This includes developing and distributing a comprehensive intervention plan, complete with data checkpoints to track student progress. Data-informed instruction, culturally relevant education, and individualized support help us ensure every student has equitable access to the help they need to succeed.

#### **3. Professional Development and Teacher Support**

Our professional development efforts this month center around data literacy and classroom interventions, helping teachers apply assessment data effectively in their instructional planning. We conducted a needs assessment to tailor these sessions, aligning them with teachers' instructional frameworks and promoting continuous improvement. This support enables our teachers to deliver high-quality, data-driven instruction that meets our students' diverse needs.

#### **a. Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

- a. The district-level team continues to develop a workflow for the MTSS process and incorporating state-created tracking documentation and developing a data management system for MTSS.

- a IRIP System being implemented in PowerSchool to streamline compliance and documentation.
  - b MTSS documentation plug-in being pursued to streamline MTSS process outside the AK Reads Act.
- b. Students continue to receive support in the fall based on previous progress/tier and data collected by the current classroom teacher. Parents should be notified if a student enters or exits Tier II or Tier III.
  - a Middle of the Year Benchmarking begins December 2.
    - i A shift will be that any Kindergartener well-below proficient is to have a IRIP implemented.
- c. We are making significant strides in the evaluation and implementation of both the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and the Safe & Civil Schools framework. Our next steps include:
  - a **MTSS Fit and Feasibility Check:** We're continuing the assessment of districtwide MTSS alignment, focusing on resource allocation, monitoring systems, and addressing gaps. This includes developing a framework for academic, behavioral, and attendance data collection and progress monitoring. The evaluation will be complete Fall 2024, the Curriculum Department will use the evaluation to identify more specific milestones and action items.
  - b **MTSS Supports**
  - c **Safe & Civil Schools Refresh Focus:** Drafting Instructional Framework which articulates expectations

**b. Staff Development Specialist Kim Addington**

**Support Areas: MTSS & Instructional Support (All Grades)**

Kim leads our Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) initiatives, working closely with Student Services and teachers to monitor student progress and implement effective interventions. She manages the help ticket system to ensure timely support for teachers and prioritizes requests related to curriculum and instructional needs. Kim is a valuable resource for guidance on MTSS processes, documentation, and student support strategies.

**Updates**

1. Kim will begin facilitating data leads to support our MTSS process. Their objectives include:
  - a. **MTSS Alignment:** Kim will facilitate a monthly meeting to discuss NWABSD's MTSS process, focusing on the role of Data Leads in understanding RTI vs. MTSS, ensuring alignment with the district's MTSS system, and fostering collaboration with site administrators and stakeholders.
  - b. **AK Reads Act & Compliance Knowledge:** Develop a comprehensive understanding of the compliance requirements for the Alaska Reads Act and the goals of Individual Reading Improvement Plans (IRIP),

enabling Data Leads to guide colleagues in data-informed decisions that support reading interventions and track progress.

- c. **Data-Driven Instructional Support:** Data leads will conduct site-based data team meetings each semester to analyze student progress in academics, behavior, and social-emotional development. Use these insights to collaborate with colleagues on differentiated instruction, curriculum alignment, and achieving grade-level standards through targeted scaffolding and support.

c. **Jacob Ray – Staff Development Specialist**

**Support Areas: Book Distribution & Parent Engagement**

Jacob strengthens the connection between our schools and the community by organizing events that encourage parents to engage with their children's education. He oversees the distribution of books to students and gathers valuable feedback from parents to support educational improvements. Through these efforts, Jacob helps create a welcoming and supportive environment for families, enhancing the educational experience for students.

a. **Community Based Family Literacy Night Progress:**

- i. Buckland- 114 attendees
- ii. Deering- 54 attendees
- iii. Shungnak- 30 attendees
- iv. Selawik- 49 attendees
- v. Noorvik- 67 attendees
- vi. Ambler- 21 attendees
- vii. Kivalina- 65 attendees
- viii. Kiana- 14 attendees

b. **Upcoming Visits**

- i. Week of November 11th: Noatak
- ii. December reschedule: Kobuk

d. **Kristen Woodie – Staff Development Specialist**

**Support Areas: Literacy Focused Professional Development (All Grades)**

*Kristen is dedicated to strengthening literacy instruction for students in grades K-12 across the district. She provides focused professional development, in-classroom coaching, and expert guidance on reading and writing strategies to boost student engagement and skills. As a key resource, Kristen supports educators with instructional techniques and offers valuable feedback on interventions to improve literacy outcomes.*

**Updates:**

- 1. **Focused Reading Help for Struggling Students:** Give extra reading support to K-3 students who are well below grade level, using tools like

mClass and UFLI. Expand this help to 4th and 5th graders who need it. Make sure each student gets the specific support they need, based on their reading progress.

2. **Team Up to Support Students Across Grades:** Work with Data Leads, principals, and other tutors to decide which students should attend after-school tutoring and create a plan to track who shows up and how they're doing. For middle and high school students, provide tutoring for credit recovery, independent study, or online courses (like APEX), focusing on their unique academic needs.
3. **Track Progress and Communicate with Families:** Keep records of student attendance and progress in tutoring sessions, using this data to see what's working and where adjustments are needed. Work with Data Leads and the Curriculum Department to improve support and keep parents informed, especially for K-3 students.

**e. Annivaq, Jennifer Greene – Staff Development Specialist**

**Support Areas: Iñupiaq Language Program, PK Immersion, Nuna Ilissaman Professional Learning Community**

Jennifer leads the Iñupiaq Language Program, integrating language and culture into classrooms through direct support with Ilisautrit and Pre-K immersion. Resources or guidance for incorporating Iñupiaq language or culture into curriculum. Support for culturally responsive teaching or cultural events with Ilisautrit.

**Updates**

1. Continues to support the Pre-K immersion pilot at JNES and SHG, facilitate Monday collaboratives with Ilisautri from 9-11a, and will begin traveling out to sites to support the Iñupiaq Language Program and site activities. So far she has provided on the ground support to Ambler, Kivalina, and Selawik.

**f. Zonda Martin – Staff Development Specialist**

**Support Areas: Nuna Ilissaman Place-Based Science Curriculum & Science Support**

Zonda leads our place-based science curriculum, integrating local culture and environmental knowledge into science education to make learning more relevant and engaging for students. She collaborates with the Nuna Ilissaman Pilot Sites to support educators in connecting curriculum with community values and surroundings. Zonda is a key contact for resources and guidance on incorporating place-based learning into science instruction.

**Strategic Goal 2: Instructional Supports**

**Objective 2: Safe and Civil Schools Refresh I**

NWABSD is dedicated to creating safe, inclusive, and effective learning environments. Our focus this year is on aligning the district's Safe and Civil Schools initiatives by developing an Instructional Framework to support student success across all grade levels. Here are the main goals and updates:

1. **Consistent and Culturally Responsive Framework:** The NWABSD Instructional Framework will provide a structured approach to planning and delivering high-quality instruction, aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching. This framework reinforces a safe, respectful, and culturally responsive classroom environment by setting clear standards for classroom management, engagement, and academic rigor. Teachers are implementing practices that support inclusivity and address the unique needs of every student, contributing to a safe and civil school climate.
2. **Learner Outcomes and Positive Culture Development:** We emphasize four core learner outcomes: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and growth. These guide teachers in fostering classroom communities where students feel respected and supported. By focusing on clear routines, respectful interactions, and culturally responsive teaching practices, we aim to create an equitable learning environment that promotes social and emotional development. Our instructional practices encourage every learner to achieve their full potential.
3. **Professional Development and Ongoing Evaluation:** To support the district's Safe and Civil Schools objectives, we will structure our professional development offerings in culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, and social-emotional learning. These areas, informed by ongoing evaluations and feedback, will continue to guide our professional development plans to address emerging needs and best practices. By ensuring teachers are equipped to build positive, inclusive classroom communities, we foster a school culture that promotes safety, respect, and academic growth.

#### **Upcoming Site Visits with Susan Isaacs**

1. **Safe and Civil Trainings Continue:** Susan Isaacs will be visiting the following sites during her travel schedule in the first semester. During these visits, she works closely with principals and staff to refine and finetune the implementation of schoolwide procedures and positive behavioral supports.
  1. **December 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Selawik, DO/ILT (Inservice Planning, FY26 PD Planning)**
  2. **January 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: Kiana, JNES, DO/ILT (Inservice Planning, FY26 PD Planning)**

#### **Other Curriculum Information:**

##### **Nuna Iljissimman Development**

The Nuna Iljissimman project is dedicated to developing a culturally and regionally relevant Physical Earth Science curriculum for Northwest Arctic Borough School District students. This course combines traditional Iñupiaq knowledge with Western science to create a curriculum that reflects local perspectives, making science more relevant and meaningful to our students.

#### **Key Progress in 2024-2025**

##### **Summer Development**

In June, Iñupiaq teachers gathered in Kotzebue for intensive curriculum development.

They conducted a page-by-page review of materials, focusing on language integration, cultural relevance, and developing 20 culturally connected science activities. These activities are being enhanced with scientific content to deepen understanding.

### **Teacher Training and Course Preparation**

In August, science teachers participated in training sessions to prepare for the curriculum launch. Training included using the Canvas course platform, working with Iñupiaq teachers, safety protocols, and understanding the course's scope and sequence. The course was loaded into Canvas, ensuring it was ready for use on day one.

### **Ongoing Collaboration**

From September through November, Monday collaborative meetings were held with science teachers to discuss pacing, course effectiveness, and collaboration with Iñupiaq teachers. These meetings help refine the curriculum, ensuring alignment with student needs and cultural goals.

### **November Professional Development (November 18-21)**

Upcoming professional development in Kotzebue will bring together Iñupiaq and science teachers. Goals include:

- Setting a monthly collaborative schedule at each site.
- Identifying community knowledge bearers and local resources for site-specific learning.
- Developing a list of culturally integrated activities and creating a template for unit lessons.
- Reviewing course content, unit objectives, and Canvas implementation to streamline resources for teachers.

### **Looking Ahead**

In late spring, we'll conduct a follow-up professional development session to review content and plan for the next steps. Key resources in development include an Iñupiaq/English Science Dictionary, Elder videos, and community-based projects.

## **Early Learning Program**

Our Early Learning Program is dedicated to fostering foundational skills and social-emotional growth for our youngest learners through a structured and quality-focused approach. Here are the key developments:

- **Expanded Access and Grant Support:** We now offer Pre-Kindergarten classes at all ten district sites, with registration open for the 2024-2025 school year. Additionally, NWABSD has been awarded the Districtwide Early Learning Program (DWEEL) state grant, providing essential funding for program improvements and supporting our goal to meet quality standards in early education.
- **Quality Standards and Continuous Improvement:** As part of the Learn and Grow program, teachers and paraprofessionals are undergoing training focused on developmental best practices and positive behavior support, aided by resources from the Alaska SEED Registry, Creative Curriculum, and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). These initiatives ensure we meet state standards for early childhood education and support individualized growth.
- **Enhanced Assessment with Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD):** We have integrated TS GOLD to observe and assess each child's development in key areas. Our first checkpoint, due November 30, will complete the fall assessment cycle. Fourteen of nineteen staff members have achieved Interrater Reliability (IRR) certification, ensuring consistency in evaluation across classrooms.

### **Inupiaq Language Program**

Our Inupiaq Language Program is focused on creating a comprehensive pathway for language fluency and cultural knowledge, with the goal of strengthening and expanding Inupiaq language instruction. Here are the key initiatives underway:

1. **Professional Development and Curriculum Alignment:** We are conducting professional development to ensure a clear plan for meeting our students' language and cultural needs. Staff are aligning core elements of our curriculum—including Uqayusralikun, Uqapiaqta, the PK Language Program, and our Seasonal Calendar—into a unified program that supports fluency and cultural knowledge.
2. **Building an Assessment and Learning Pathway for Fluency:** A major focus this year is establishing an assessment framework that tracks students' language progress and proficiency. This learning pathway will guide students as they develop their Inupiaq fluency, providing benchmarks to support consistent growth across grades.
3. **Community and Elder Collaboration:** We are deepening relationships with local communities and Elders, documenting traditional knowledge, and incorporating it into our curriculum. Elders play a key role in our immersion programs, offering invaluable support to instructors and helping to bring authentic cultural insights into the classroom.

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program**

The Northwest Arctic Borough School District is moving forward with our comprehensive

Career and Technical Education (CTE) planning under the Perkins V guidelines, focusing on creating meaningful pathways for students that align with regional job needs and postsecondary success. Here are the key points:

1. **Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and Four-Year Plan:** Our district-wide needs assessment was completed and submitted on September 30<sup>th</sup> to evaluate student performance, program quality, access to CTE programs, and educator support. This assessment informs our Four-Year Plan, which outlines action steps and budget priorities to strengthen our CTE offerings. The CLNA helps us set SMART goals for improving student outcomes, with a focus on industry alignment and equitable access to high-quality CTE programs. Our CTE 4 Year Plan was accepted by the state.
2. **Improving CTE Pathways and Access:** The district is committed to enhancing CTE pathways to ensure they meet industry standards and provide students with hands-on, work-based learning experiences. We are expanding access to dual enrollment, internships, and soft skills training across our district, including in smaller and remote schools. Programs like REDIstar bring CTE opportunities to schools without on-site instructors, ensuring that all students have access to valuable career preparation.
3. **Support and Development for teachers of CTE Courses:** Professional development is prioritized for CTE instructors to align teaching practices with current industry standards. We will be investing in mentorship, training workshops, and certifications for educators, funded through Perkins grants, to help them deliver relevant and engaging CTE instruction. Additional support for recruitment and retention will ensure we can attract and maintain skilled educators to guide our students effectively.

**e. Curriculum Review & Purchase Cycle**

<i><b>Curriculum Area</b></i>	<i><b>Curriculum Review</b></i>	<i><b>Purchase Textbooks &amp; Materials</b></i>	<i><b>Implementation</b></i>
Inupiaq Physical Science, Biology, and Environmental Science	2020-2025	Spring 2022-25 (Development)	2023-2026
Math	2023-2024	Spring 2024	2024-2025
Social Studies/Health	2025-2026	Spring 2026	2026-2027
Science K-8, HS Physics & Chemistry	2025-2026	Spring 2026	2026-2027
English Language Arts 7-12	2029-2030	Spring 2029	2030-2031
English Language Arts K-6	2029-2030	Spring 2029	2030-2031

\*\*\*\*Supplemental resources are reviewed and purchased as needed.

**g. Help Ticket System:**

- a 08/14/2024: 49 tickets
- b 09/13/2024: 296 tickets

c 11/18/2024: 225 tickets

- **Types of Requests:** The tickets cover various areas, including Curriculum, Technology, PowerSchool, and assessment tools (e.g., ALEKS, Clear Math, and Canvas).
- **Common Issues:** Curriculum Access and Materials: Many requests involve missing or delayed curriculum materials, especially math books and resources for both students and teachers across grades. Examples include requests for Clear Math and Reveal Math books, ALEKS access, ThinkCentral, and Canvas access for specific classrooms.
- **Roster and Access Problems:** Multiple tickets pertain to issues with student and teacher access in platforms like mClass, PowerSchool, StudySync, and class rosters.
- **Technical Assistance:** Some tickets request help with software issues, such as login problems, uploading lesson plans on Canvas, or unblocking websites.
- **Pending Tickets:** Several tickets are marked pending due to reassignments or needing follow-ups.