

# CRAIG HIGH SCHOOL

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*Home of the Panthers!*

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## CHS Principal's Report

February 26, 2025

Staff and students continue to work hard through what can be a tough time of year. February can be a grind, but attitudes are good and progress continues to be made.

We have a lot stacked up this month. We began with bad weather that required us to reschedule basketball games in Wrangell for Monday - Wednesday. Tina did a great job ensuring the safety of our students by being in constant communication with Muddy Waters Adventures. Their catamaran is a larger boat than we are accustomed to and the teams were very comfortable on their way to and from Wrangell.

I continue to actively participate in our policy, budget, indigenous education, hiring, calendar, and safety committee meetings. I appreciate the agendas shared by Superintendent Hanson prior to each meeting and her commitment to consistent progress. I am particularly excited that the Indigenous Education committee has scheduled a CHS/CMS Cultural Day to take place at CHS in late April.

We currently have two positions open for next school year at CHS; English Language Arts and Special Education. I have been following up with recommendations and speaking with individuals who might be interested in these positions. It's a very tough market in Alaska for educators. The Governor has not made it easy on districts - not supporting adequate funding, lack of a defined benefit retirement system (all other states have defined benefit retirement), and a general lack of support for public education make it extremely difficult to generate a pool of qualified candidates. I am optimistic that we will be able to fill our vacancies but understand that it will take more administrative effort to find qualified applicants than it has in the past.

Our student count has been in flux throughout the year. We started the year with a number of students who wanted to take another swing at completing their brick and mortar high school requirements. Some of these students have continued to find success here, while others have reflected on their circumstance and turned to PACE. We have spent time counseling all of the students who have needed academic and emotional support. We have seen two students complete requirements and graduate early. We have tried to remain as flexible and responsive as possible while still holding students to the standard set by the Board and the Community. While we have gained some and lost some, I am happy to say that we have not had any brick and mortar students drop out. There are currently 66 enrolled in CHS.

CHS participated in the **AASB Climate and Connectedness Survey** on February 18. I am eager to receive the results of this survey. My feeling is that CHS is a positive environment for both staff and students. I am looking for corroboration or a reality check! It will be valuable information either way.

Knowing that we have a significant portion of our student body who vape or consume nicotine in some way, Melissa Peavey and I met with **Liz Hall** from the **American Lung Association** to hear about the **Middle School and High School intervention and cessation programs** ALA offers. We were excited to learn that for students who complete the **INDEPTH** (Intervention for Nicotine

Dependence: Education, Prevention, Tobacco and Health) program, there is a 60% of students report reducing or eliminating their nicotine use. ALA also has a cessation program, **N-O-T** (Not On Tobacco) whose success rate is *90% for students who complete the program*. There is a \$400 fee in order to receive materials and receive training but because we have been participating in our Health Network presentations, there are scholarships available to us. Both Ms. Peavey, Shelby Beck, Spencer Beckman, and I will be enrolling in the 7-hour training. Once we have completed training, I will communicate with parents about the program and make it available to all students. We will be making both N-O-T and INDEPTH available to students who self-refer, in a non-punitive, confidential manner. I am very pleased to have *some* cessation program to offer and I appreciate Ms. Peavey, Ms. Beck, and Mr. Beckman's willingness to commit to this training and held our students address their addictions.

**Academic Decathlon** participated in the state meet in Anchorage February 20-22. I am unable to include the specific medals earned in this report but I am sure they continue to make us proud with their success.

**Parent Teacher Conferences, Homecoming**, and the final **Home Games vs. Haines** were all scheduled for the week of February 17. It was a busy week!

The **Region V Basketball Tournament** will be held in Ketchikan March 5 - 9. Both of our teams (14 players) as well as the **CHS Drumline/Pep Band** (12 members) will be attending. I will be traveling with the drum line where they will participate supporting our teams throughout tournament and participate in the Massed Pep Band and All-Star Pep Band. **Good luck Panthers!** We are all hoping that we will be sending teams to the **State Basketball Tournament** in Anchorage March 11 - 15.

**Shelby Beck** will be leaving with the 16 students in the **Washington DC CloseUp group** March 22 and returning March 31. They have been working hard for the past year to earn the funds required for this experience. I am looking forward to hearing about their trip when they get back!

There are always a number of people who need to be singled out for **recognition and thanks - Tina Steffen** dreamed up and organized the 1st Annual SE Alaska Cultural Basketball Tournament. This event highlighted our local culture through player involvement in serving elders at a CTA luncheon, partaking in an Indian taco feed, viewing a short documentary made by former CHS graduate 'Wáats'asdiyei Joe Yates about the Reggie Jackson Totem, and viewing *Carved from the Heart*, the Healing Heart documentary. When teams weren't participating in these activities, they were playing a lot of basketball. Our boy's team placed 2nd in the tournament and the girl's team took the 1st place trophy. **Ronnie Fairbanks** designed the amazing logo for the event. This was a very well received tournament and there many compliments. Wrangell told us that we set a high bar for them to meet next year!

Thank you **Jessica Priddy** for responding with medical assistance during our cultural tournament. We appreciate living in a community where people are willing to share their skills and take care of each other.

Thanks **Freddy Hamilton** for chaperoning the boys basketball team to Wrangell when Coach Benolken was out with a new baby. Congratulations Coach Karl!

Congratulations **Rachael and Brian Balcom** on the arrival of their first child, Benjamin who was born February 8! We are all excited to meet him!

Thanks **Jeannie Rogan** for the donation of coffee, creamer, tea, and sweetener for the CHS staff! A caffeinated staff is a happy staff!

Thank you to **Trooper Hargis** for assisting with the Drum Line! We appreciate the time you have dedicated to this group helping them to improve!

**Jared Grieve** is, as usual, pretty much everyone's hero but he really ironed his cape when he researched a new copy machine for the High School. He found that entering into a lease would save a significant amount of money as well as head and heartache. The machine has arrived and we are just waiting for the technician to arrive and set it up.

As always, thanks to **Daniel** and **Brent** for their responsiveness to any maintenance issues we might have, but also for providing all of the transportation they are asked to. It's amazing that two people can be in so many places at once.

Thank you **Jay Balcom** for his donation of his breathtaking transformation mask carved at CHS in 2012. We are so excited to have this mask to display. I have been working with Daniel to find the perfect spot and I am looking forward to seeing it mounted in its new home.

Thanks to **Liz Thomsen** who is taking on more and more responsibilities as she and I both get more comfortable in our positions. It is really great to work with a such a competent, friendly, and welcoming individual.

