



NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

DRAFT

ANNUAL REPORT SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

Nunaqatiivut Savaqatigigivut: Working with our Communities

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**FY24 MESSAGE FROM
BOARD PRESIDENT ROBYN NIAYUQ BURKE &
SUPERINTENDENT DAVID ANDIK VADIVELOO**

Picture of David and Robyn

“We are honored to live and work on these lands and waters and be trusted to strengthen and support the educational journey of our students.”

Paġlagivuk iljavut,

The learning journey of our students takes place in homes, schools, on the tundra and on the ice. In such a culturally rich environment it's crucial that as a school district we are able to respond quickly and in a culturally appropriate manner to the learning needs of all our students. By listening and working together with families, students, and our North Slope partners, we place ourselves in the best possible position to support our students, whether they seek vocational, subsistence, or academic pathways.

Our School Board and our Administration are deeply focused on ensuring that NSBSD staff members, across all sites, hold high expectations for all students, creating a stable educational environment. Since we live and work in Iñupiat Country, we want to empower our students by integrating the culture into our academic program. But make no mistake, we are not teaching culture - we are simply doing what the best educational systems do worldwide - we are anchoring our academic program into the culture in which it lives.

Through our Nunaqatiivut Naalaġnigivut initiative, the administration spent our first fifteen months visiting and listening to all of our North Slope communities. The focus of these trips was to consult, repair, rebuild and deliver an academic transformation in K-12 education on the North Slope. After listening carefully to our communities we have spent the past twelve months focused on the theme of this year's report—**Nunaqatiivut Savaqatigigivut**, *Working Together with Our Communities*.

Over this past year our administration and Board have brought families, community stakeholders and partnering organizations into our planning process and into our schools. This has resulted in important and exciting changes to the way we operate and deliver education including:

- **Increased student attendance:** With a renewed focus on student attendance our families and communities have stepped up to the plate, delivering a 2% increase in attendance—from 74% to 76% districtwide. We are aiming for 80% minimums across the Slope and are excited to see our students and families working to help us achieve this goal. Increased school attendance increases opportunities for learning growth in every child.
- **Agreements Supporting Community Expectations:** Community School Expectation Agreements (CSEA's) were developed school by school together with families, students, teachers, SAC members and school administrators. These

community-tailored statements express behavioral and academic expectations for every school on the North Slope, as expressed by community members. Our CSEA's will guide us throughout the year and then be reassessed at the start of each school year.

- **Uqautiluna Iñupiatun, *Speak to me in Iñupiaq*:** Supported by the expert guidance of Elders, Iñupiat educators, language experts, parents and committed staff members, the first year K3/4 class of our new Iñupiaq Immersion Program successfully launched at Ipalook Elementary School. With more parents asking to enroll their children, the second year Kindergarten classroom is now up and running and we will continue to offer the program to every village willing to work with us on identifying potential Iñupiaq immersion teachers.
- **Piloting a Literacy Intervention Program:** To address the learning loss caused by COVID, the District piloted reading interventionists at a number of village sites. These interventionists are specialist teachers trained to find the areas where students have academic gaps and get them caught up to grade level. After one year, the resulting academic growth for students, presented to the Board in December 2023, was so strong that the Board decided to make the intervention pilot a districtwide program for school year 2024-25. This will see at least one position for an interventionist at every school site. With the support of the Board it is the intention of this Administration to further increase the number of interventionists next year to maintain much needed academic growth for our students in core academic areas.
- **Ensuring Student wellbeing:** Recognizing the need to support the whole student, our District is working closely with the North Slope Borough and with Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit to find more support for student wellbeing. Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit, *New footprints of our communities*, is a quadrilateral organization looking to improve education. It's driven by the North Slope Borough, ICAS, Iḷisaḡvik College and the School District. This year, led by the new NSB Administration, the Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit Steering Committee created a new working group on Student Wellbeing. Through this, NSB and the NSBSD have signed an MOA to support the delivery of behavioral health services within our schools. In addition, the boards of Iḷisaḡvik College and NSBSD have signed a resolution resolving to focus, jointly, on student wellbeing.
- **First Districtwide Student Council Created and AASG Conference:** The first district wide representative voice for students was launched in school year 23-24 when student delegates from across the Slope joined over 200 delegates from other Alaskan schools to attend the Alaska Association of Student Governments (AASG) Conference, hosted in Utqiagvik for the first time in over 20 years.
- **Budget hearings involving all School Advisory Councils (SAC's):** For the second year running the Administration invited SAC Presidents to participate in the budget hearing process along with site Principals to ensure the SAC advisory voice is included in budget planning.

- **Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center:** In its first year of full operation, the new Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center (QLC) in Utqiāġvik saw the participation of over 300 students from across the district, offering trainings not available in individual village schools. The QLC program is focused on career exploration and on bringing more Vocational Education opportunities to the villages. This program continues to be strengthened by partnerships with Iḷisaġvik College and Alaska Excel. In school year 24-25 we are aiming to work with the NSB on pathways leading students to the Harry K Brower Technical Training Center (HKBTTTC) in Prudhoe Bay.
- **Tumitchiat Sivunmun, *New pathways to the future:*** Throughout the year the administration consulted with departments, families and students to develop a draft Tumitchiat Sivunmun Plan (TS Plan) that will be driven by parent/guardian and student collaboration. These plans will be tailored specifically to each student's strengths and needs and will travel with them on their educational journey. By the end of school year 2026 every student, from Kindergarten through 12th grade, will have the beginnings of a TS Plan to support their learning growth and career goals.
- **Iḷisaurriġuqta! *Let's be teachers!*** In the past school year, four paraprofessionals joined certificated pathways to become teachers via our Iḷisaurriġuqta program. This program operates through partnership with Iḷisaġvik College, UAF, Arctic Slope Community Foundation and UAA. The Iḷisaurriġuqta initiative grew from the desire of North Slope residents to see more local teachers in our schools. It is a direct response to Eben Hopson Sr.'s famous Address on Education, delivered over 50 years ago.

PULL OUT QUOTE:

“We want to empower our students by integrating the culture into our academic program. But make no mistake, we are not teaching culture - we are simply doing what the best educational systems do worldwide - we are anchoring our academic program into the culture in which it lives.”

Charting Our Future: At the December 2023 Board of Education retreat in Anchorage, School Board members finalized a new NSBSD Strategic Plan for 2025-2029. Anchored by the District's new Manġuqput foundation statement—on the front page of this report—the Board framed a clear and accountable five-year plan for the Administration.

The four critical focus areas of the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board in August 2024 are:

1. Literacy and mathematics interventions.
2. Iñupiaq Immersion classrooms in all schools and Iñupiaq language instruction pre-K through 12.
3. Enhanced vocational education and CTE pathways.
4. Increased supports for the social emotional wellbeing of students.

To our community, our families and our stakeholder organizational partners we thank you for your support as we continue to repair, rebuild and revitalize. With the clear direction provided by the Board of Education and a renewed engagement with our communities, families and students, it's an exciting time to be part of the North Slope Borough School District.

With our community coming back into our schools we will continue to focus on growth and high expectations for all, both students and staff. We are honored to live and work on these lands and waters and be trusted to strengthen and support the educational journey of our students.

Quyanaqpak,

Robyn Niayuq Burke

David Anjik Vadiveloo

Picture and Name of Elizabeth Holingsworth

“One of the things I've always valued is to make sure that parents are involved with their children's education. It was instilled in me from early in life that if you want to be involved, you need to be bringing solutions rather than being a hindrance.”

VALUE: Piqpakkutiqaḡniq sulī qīksiksrautiqaḡniq utuqqananun allanullu/Love and respect for our elders and one another

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Between December 2023 and August 2024, the Board of Education and Administration undertook an extensive review, development and drafting of the new NSBSD Strategic Plan, 2025-2029.

This process continued our comprehensive overhaul of District operations and strategic direction as the Board and Administration remain focused on repairing, rebuilding and revitalizing our District.

The new plan is built on our Maṅṅuqput, our foundation and purpose, and framed in the Iñupiaq values which guide our behavior. It includes District goals with strategic priorities embedded in each goal. It also includes annual initiatives and ongoing measurement to ensure accountability. It includes a Pedagogy plan to guide the way in which we teach. And, most importantly, it was designed, first and foremost, for our students.

The new plan will:

- Promote community ownership by being explicit and transparent,
- Be fully integrated into our educational program.
- Guide decisions within a clear framework.
- Be embedded into District policy to maintain progress regardless of leadership changes
- Provide accountability through measurement metrics and tracking.

Emerging from the plan is a series of milestones and outcomes, the priorities that will guide us year to year.

[Picture: Kid action shot here with faces and smiles](#)

Core Strategic Priorities for School Year 24/25:

- Continue to rebuild Harold Kaveolook School in Kaktovik
- Raise attendance districtwide.
- Institute reading and math interventions to improve academic success districtwide.
- Iñupiaq Immersion education with a focus on culturally responsive instruction
- Career and Technical Education leading to vocational pathways.
- Improve student social and emotional wellbeing.
- Introduce Tumitchiat Sivunmun Plans—individualized K-12 pathways—for every student
- Improve staff recruitment and retention
- Strengthen partnerships with all stakeholders
- Maintain transparency and accountability in all departments.

Our new plan will be made available through the NSBSD website and through a Strategic Plan booklet, available at all schools

Pedagogy Implementation Plan

The NSBSD Pedagogy Implementation Plan is a roadmap for what we need to deliver under the Strategic Plan to achieve our vision and mission. It will be adjusted each year to reflect growing needs and includes: detailed sections on Financial and Operational Stewardship, Family and Community Collaboration, Student Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Culturally Responsive Instruction, and Staff Support and Professional Development.

The Pedagogy Implementation Plan can be accessed on the NSBSD website at:
<https://www.nsbsd.org/en-US/curriculum-instruction-ba7ed278/sy23-24-pedagogy-working-document-47c59c80>

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout the school year, students participated in a variety of activities that enabled student-driven advocacy and leadership, academically challenging opportunities, and the promotion of physical activity. These activities include: Elders and Youth Conference and Alaska Federation of Natives Convention, Youth Advocacy Institute, Youth Leadership Institute, Alaska Association of Student Government Conference, *First* Lego League Robotics, Battle of the Books, Band, Choir, Native Youth Olympics, Cross Country Running, Volleyball, Football, Basketball, and Wrestling.

Rewarding Student Attendance

Attendance is one of our top priorities for good reason. In order for a student to learn they need to be at school. When attendance is low, learning is low. When a student misses a lot of school over time, the gaps in the student's learning become harder and harder to fill, which in turn makes it harder and harder for the student to learn.

Picture of Student Adrienne Vincent, Aġak School (Include excerpt from principal)

PULL OUT QUOTE:

"In order for students to learn they need to be at school. When attendance is low, learning is low. When a student misses a lot of school over time, the gaps in the student's learning become harder and harder to fill."

District-Wide Student Council (DWSC)

Picture of the district wide student council (include names of student and village)

VALUE CAMEO: Paammaaġiigñiq/Cooperation

The North Slope Borough School District continues to be extremely proud of the formation of the first-ever Districtwide Student Council (DWSC) which was appointed in the 2023-24 school year. The student council established a list of district-wide goals and represented our schools locally and at statewide events. Representatives and members of the DWSC attended the following:

- A regional Board meeting.
- A 3-day workshop in Utqiaġvik.
- The Legislative Fly-in and Youth Leadership Institute in Juneau.
- The Alaska Association of Student Government Conference in Utqiaġvik.
- The Arctic Education Foundation's Future Leaders Program in Utqiaġvik.

We are proud to announce that Austin Bennett, Nuiqsut Trapper School, Frances Itta, Meade River School, Margie Dirks, Tikiġaq School, and Magdalena Stringer, Barrow High School graduated and will be continuing their lifelong journeys outside of NSBSD. We

cannot thank them enough for their courage and the pride they shared as DWSC representatives. We will miss them!

Alaska Association of Student Government (AASG)

An unprecedented number of student delegates from across the state made their way to the Utqiagvik, spending four days immersed in leadership spaces, debating and discussing their current and future roles in our State and region. Thirty NSBSD students from seven of our schools participated in the Conference which was intentionally focused on amplifying rural voices with the theme Tapurriñiq Allaqnuutauruq, *Inclusion Ignites Change*.

Students attended from Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, Bering Strait, Bethel, Alaska Gateway and many other districts. This conference was a powerful platform for students from the North Slope to share their voices, experience a large-scale event, demonstrate the leadership strength of the region and redirect the conversation about the future of the State to the North Slope and other rural areas.

All feedback from participating Districts and schools was overwhelmingly positive with many comments about the rich cultural experience and the warmth of the reception they received. Our region won the most spirited region award and Jayden Lampe, a junior from Utqiagvik was chosen to be the AASG Executive Board Parliamentarian for the 2024-25 school year.

Utqiagvik freshman Qiġaavsuk Vadiveloo wrote the best Resolution of the Conference and was named Region 1 Delegate to the Conference. Austin Bennett, a senior and District-wide Student Council president from Nuiqsut was recognized for best placard.

NSBSD thanks the Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat for recognizing the importance of holding this event on the North Slope. We want to emphasize that the AASG conference would not have been possible without the generous support of the North Slope Borough, ICAS, ASRC, BUECI, Iisaġvik College, City of Utqiagvik, City of Wainwright, UIC, Rotary and corporate sponsors ConocoPhillips and BP.

Legislative Fly-In

[Picture of students in Juneau](#)

The Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) facilitates a February Legislative Fly-in in Juneau for school districts across the State of Alaska to inform school board members, superintendents, and students about the legislative process, key educational legislative issues and bills. The event includes like-size district forums and the drafting of priorities for legislators. Our District representatives at the 2023 Fly-in were: Board President Robyn Burke and Superintendent David Vadiveloo.

Concurrent with the Legislative Fly-in, AASB also hosts a Legislative Youth Advocacy Institute Fly-In for students. In the past, the District has traveled with only one student, the Student Representative to the Board. This year, we traveled with five students: Student Representative to the Board Magdalena Stringer, Barrow High School student Marck Ortila, Meade River student Frances Itta, Nunamiut School student Jamal Hart, and Tikigaaq School student Margie Dirks.

Numerous meetings were held with Representatives, Senators, and legislative committees including committees on finance, education and early development, health and social services, tribal affairs, arctic policy, economic development and tourism, and community and regional affairs.

The NSBSD Presented the Alaska Legislature with Six Funding Priorities:

Priority 1: \$20M to support Phase II of the rebuild of Harold Kaveolook School

Priority 2: BSA (Base Student Allocation) to be increased to reflect inflation

Priority 3: Funding for culture-based curriculum, including language immersion

Priority 4: State-based initiatives to increase teacher retention

Priority 5: Funding support for student mental and emotional health

Priority 6: Improved broadband infrastructure to all North Slope villages

Robotics

Teams in Atqasuk, Kaktovik, Nuiqsut, Point Hope, Utqiaġvik and Wainwright held robotics training, learning basic programming, in Utqiaġvik preparing for the *First* Lego League Robotics season in September. Students worked to build the competition field, learned to program with Spike Prime, team building exercises, and competed in a mock tournament for the season titled Masterpiece, centered around ways that art is shared with the world. Teams worked to create an Innovation Project that answers the question: How can you use technology and the arts to help engage others or increase participation in what you love to do? Teams designed and built robots to compete in robot matches to complete as many missions as possible.

In December, we hosted NSBSD's first Regional Qualifier in Utqiaġvik with the help of many volunteers and community involvement. Teams competed and were judged in four areas: Core Values, Robot Design, Robot Game, and Innovation Project.

Aġak School's Cyber Huskies won the Core Value Award as they were able to demonstrate gracious professionalism and cooperation as they competed and worked with other teams. Nuiqsut School's Trapper Bots won the trophy for Robot Design. Eben Hopson Middle School's RoboWolves won the Championship who also secured first place in the Robot Game with a score of 250 points. Rebecca Wilkerson was awarded the Coach's Award trophy by fellow coaches. Kathleen Fisher received the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Champions: Robo Wolves (Eben Hopson Middle School)
Core Values: Cyber Huskies
Robot Game250: Robo Wolves
Robot Design: Trapper Bots
Coach Award: Rebecca Wilkerson
Volunteer of the Year Award: Kathleen Fisher

The regional champions (HMS RoboWoves) earned an invitation to the State FLL tournament in Anchorage held in January. Students appreciated the experience and learned how to better prepare for the 2024-25 season.

[Picture of HMS team, Robo Wolves](#)

The Eben Hopson Middle School team, the Robo Wolves, went on to compete at the State-wide tournament.

Battle of the Books

[Picture of the Ałak team and HMS team](#)

All North Slope schools, grades 1-12, participated in the District Battle of the Books to promote reading, the cornerstone of academic education. Below are the schools that represented our District in the Statewide Battle of the Books.

- Ałak School's 3rd-4th Grade team earned 6th place out of 32 schools.
- Fred Ipalook Elementary School's 5th-6th Grade team earned 21st place out of 33 schools.
- Eben Hopson Middle School's team earned 5th place out of 23 schools
- Barrow High School's team earned 11th place out of 19 schools

Native Youth Olympics

[Picture of Kaktovik GPA award-winning team](#)

All North Slope high schools participated in the Native Youth Olympics held on April 27, 2024 at the Alaska Airlines Center on the UAA Campus in Anchorage. Students participated in the High Kick, Arm Pull, Eskimo Stick Pull, Indian Stick Pull, One-Hand Reach, One-Foot High Kick, Scissor Broad Jump, Kneel Jump, Seal Hop, Toe Kick, Two-Foot High Kick, and the Wrist Carry.

The High Five Academic Excellence Award given to a team of 8 or more went to Harold Kaveolook School, with a 3.61 cumulative GPA.

Eskimo Stick Pull - Girls: 4th Place went to Zadah Unutoa of Barrow.

Academic All-American by the National High School Coaches Association went to Uatahouse Tu'ifua of Barrow.

Picture(s) of NYO students

Cross Country Running

Barrow High School, Aļak School, Meade River School, Kali School, Tikiġaq School, Nuiqsut Trapper School, and Nunamiut School participated in Cross Country Running where each school had one meet on-slope and one meet off-slope, doubling the number of events from the previous school year. Barrow High School fundraised an additional trip to Anchorage for an early season meet.

1A Regionals were held in Utqiaġvik with the top 7 advancing to the State Championships in Palmer:

Females:

- 1st Place: Jennifer Nash, Tikiġaq School
- 2nd Place: Tatyana Nashookpuk, Tikiġaq School
- 3rd Place: Haley Oktollik-Nashookpuk, Tikiġaq School
- 4th Place: Zereah Henry, Kali School
- 5th Place: Amber Neakok, Kali School
- 6th Place: Stacey Oktollik, Tikiġaq School
- 7th Place: Kasey Rock, Tikiġaq School

Males:

- 1st Place: Alexander Galloso, Nunamiut School
- 2nd Place: Preston Oktollik, Tikiġaq School
- 3rd Place: Justus Mulcahy, Nunamiut School
- 4th Place: Harris Henry, Kali School
- 5th Place: Spencer Itta, Kali School
- 6th Place: Trevor Frankson, Tikiġaq School
- 7th Place: Jamal Hart, Nunamiut School

3A Regionals were held in Bethel with the top 8 advancing to the State Championships in Palmer.

Photo of Kiara Burnell and Forrest Olemaun from the championship.

Kiara Burnell, 12th Grade in Barrow High School, placing 6th place and Forrest Olemaun, 10th Grade in Barrow High School, placing 7th place.

Football

Barrow High School Whalers finished the season with a 5-2 record. The Whalers were the 2nd seed going into State and hosted Houston in the first round of the playoffs and had home field advantage. BHS beat Houston 22-18 to play in the Championship game in Anchorage versus Kenai. Kenai prevailed with a 20-8 win. Barrow finished 2nd in DIII.

The following players were selected for 1st Team All-State:

Outside Backers: Dwight Unutoa
Tackle: Norman Lillomaiava
Guards: Uatahouse Tui'fua
Defensive Backs: Ethan Goodwin
Center: Brewster Fields
Defensive Lineman: Uatahouse Tui'fua
Defensive Lineman: Norman Lillomaiava

The following players were selected for 2nd Team All-State:

Tight End: Ethan Goodwin
Half Backs: Kennedy Elavgak
Tackle: Sioeli Tui'fua
Inside Backer: Gabriel Ortilla
Defensive Backs: Eric Librado
Full Back: Gabriel Ortilla
Defensive Lineman: Alex Fruean
Kicker: Lennox Dias
Long Snapper: Lennox Dias

The following players were selected for All-State Honorable Mention:

Outside Backer: Kennedy Elavgak
Half Backs: Lennox Dias

The following players received Players of the Year:

Defensive Player: Uatahouse Tui'fua
Lineman of the Year: Uatahouse Tui'fua

Chris Battle received Coach of the Year.

Volleyball

All high schools participated in volleyball. In line with the District's stated aim to create equity of opportunity wherever possible for all villages, all village teams increased their number of events from two weekend events to five.

Tikiġaq School moved from 2A to 1A mixed-six. Meade River School hosted the regional tournament with Nunamiut School advancing to the ASAA State Tournament, receiving 4th place of 12th teams. The Barrow High School volleyball team held two on-slope events and participated in four off-slope events. The Regional Tournament, hosted in Nome, winning the Western Conference Regional Championship and received 6th place at the State Championship.

Wrestling

The Whaler wrestling program increases student participation and interest each year participating in four off-slope events and one on-slope event. Barrow High School hosted the annual Bob Harcharek Wrestling Tournament, rescheduled due to weather, and participated in the regionals held in Nome.

Girls Individual Results:

1st Place, 185: Nataliyah Vasquez-Arey
1st Place, 235: Manusiu Muti
2nd Place, 120: Leila Sundai
2nd Place, 126: Matrona Evans
2nd Place: Honey Rexford

Boys Individual Results:

1st Place, 215: Sioeli Tuifua
1st Place, 285: Uatahouse Tui'fua
2nd Place, 103: Manuluk Olemaun
2nd Place, 140: Kennedy Elavgak
2nd Place, 171: Gabriel Ortila
2nd Place: Norman Lilomaiava
4th Place, 152: Jeiden Caoile
4th Place: River Brower
6th Place, 130: John Adams
6th Place: Harold Curtis

At the State Tournament, senior Manusiu Muti won her second State Championship in a row and had an undefeated season. Senior Uatahouse Tui'fua also went undefeated this season and won his third straight State Championship!

Coach Herman took a team of five students to participate at Nationals in Virginia. Manusia is a High School All-American making the podium.

Basketball

Picture(s) of Sports

1A

In line with our commitment to equity of opportunity wherever possible for our students, 1A teams had a significant increase in basketball games this year including a number of our 1A teams playing double the games compared to 2023. In addition, at the request of 1A teams, we funded an early season 1A tournament in Utqiagvik in January and all teams traveled off slope to play games as well. The 1A Ayuktaqta “Let’s Play Ball” Tournament was hosted at HMS and BHS in January 2024. We hope to make this an annual event with Tikiqag JV joining in January 2025!

Kali hosted the regional tournament and prom in late February with the Nunamiut boys and girls team advancing to represent NSBSD at State.

Nunamiut senior Arianna Hart was selected to 2nd team all-state for 1A girls.

2A

Tikiqag School hosted the annual Rex Rock Tournament in late January with teams from Anchorage, Scammon Bay, and Nunamiut School boys team as a late edition to fill the bracket. Regionals were held in Anchorage and the girls team won the Great Alaska Conference Regional championship, advancing to represent NSBSD at State receiving 2nd place.

- Student Jennifer Nash received 2A Girls Player of the Year and received First Team All-State.
- Student Tayyana Nashookpuk received Second Team All-State.
- Student Kasey Rock was selected for Third Team All-State.

3A

Barrow High School hosted and renamed the annual Whaler Invite to the Karl Derek Ahgeak Invitational after long-time coach passed away this fall. Barrow High School also hosted the regional tournament for the first time since 2007.

For State Championships, the girls team received 2nd place and the boys team received 4th place.

- Coach Nicole Smith received 3A Girls Coach of the Year.
- Student Kiara Burnell received First Team All-State.
- Student Kimberly Wolgemuth received Second Team All-State.
- Student Alex Fruean received First Team All-State.
- Student Sasita Unutoa received Third Team All-State.

Cheerleading

Barrow High School hosted the Regional Cheerleading Competition where the Barrow Whalers received runner-up and placed 3rd overall with 12 schools participating at the State Cheerleading Competition in Anchorage.

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STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Qaġġuna Tenna Pili Graduates with a M.EdL and Type B Professional License

[Picture of Tenna Pili in cap and gown](#)

Director of Iñupiaq Education, Tenna Qaġġuna Judkins completed her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership at the University of Alaska Southeast. Qaġġuna was born and raised in Utqiagvik, graduating from Barrow High School in 2007. She follows in the footsteps of her aaka, Annie Brower, one of NSBSD's first board members. She is passionate about supporting the development of local teachers.

Paraprofessionals who passed the HQ test

[Names to be confirmed.](#)

Staff enrolled in the teacher certification programs through Iḷisaġvik College and ASCF

We look forward to the day when we will welcome these students into the North Slope Borough School District as fully certified classroom teachers.

[Group or Individual Pictures of Students enrolled in teacher certification program](#)

Staff Learning the Iḷisaġvik Iñupiaq language

If we want to realize the Board's goal of graduating students fluent in both Iñupiaq and English, our staff must model language learning. To this end, all district employees are encouraged to take courses in the Iñupiat language. Staff members who have completed Iḷisaġvik College Iñupiaq language courses this past year include:

[Photo\(s\) of those listed below](#)

- Superintendent David Anġik Vadiveloo
- Harlee Aumaqpaq Harvey – Tikiġaq
- Jen (Iñupiaq name) Brower - Kiita
- Shannon (Iñupiaq name) Riley – Kiita

SCHOOL YEAR 23-24 INITIATIVES & PARTNERSHIPS

Nunaqatiivut Savaqatigigivut: Working with our Communities

[Photo from one of the village trips](#)

With a District wide focus on **Nunaqatiivut Savaqatigigivut** (Working with our Communities), our Administration and Board traveled to all North Slope communities, to strengthen partnerships with School Advisory Councils, local governments and Tribes, and hear the concerns and desires of each community. Communities have continued to request a focus on Instruction and Student Services, Language Immersion, Career Pathways, Facility Improvements, Food Services improvement, Staff Retention, Community/School Activities and the Harold Kaveolook School Rebuild

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- Student Engagement
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Uqautiluna Iñupiatun Speak to me in Iñupiaq
Our Iñupiaq Language Immersion Program

Uqautiluna Iñupiatun, *Speak to Me in Iñupiaq*, is the NSBSD's Iñupiaq Language Immersion Program. With the NSBSD Board of Education's newly adopted mission and the NSBSD Pedagogy, we now have accountability measures in place to graduate students who are bilingual in both Iñupiatun and Taniktun. We plan to re-institute the Iñupiaq Immersion program districtwide to support this initiative. Not only is this a district mission, it is also the desire of our elders, communities, and parents, and we want to ensure that we are working towards this as a collective goal.

In the 2023-2024 school year we completed the first year of the K3/K4 classroom at Ipalook Elementary School with great success and engagement from students and families. In school year 24-25, we will maintain the K3/K4 classroom and open a second Kindergarten classroom at Ipalook with the intention of identifying one village site ready for immersion education by December 2024.

The Uqautiluna Iñupiatun program's approach to learning and language acquisition in the immersion classroom is based on play-based learning strategies, hands-on project-based learning, and immersive language settings with repetition, routines and activities. Our primary focus is to have instruction solely in Iñupiaq. In order to ensure student success,

the language must also be used and practiced at home so we will continue working with families and parents to support their language learning in support of our students. As we move through this goal, it is imperative that we make good use of our culture and language experts across the Slope. It is our elders who will continue to guide us through this process, and our families and communities who will help foster the success of their children in a language immersive classroom setting.

[Picture of immersion teachers Jamie Patkotak and Donna Westdahl](#)

“We are proud to have teaching as immersion ilisaurrit. We look forward to finding the Iñupiaq teachers in the village who will help us make Uqautilunja Iñupiatun a districtwide program.”

VALUE CAMEO: Iñupiuraallaniq/Knowledge of our language.

Ilisaurriġuqta *Let's Become Teachers*

The Ilisaurriġuqta program is the NSBSD's grow-your-own teacher program. The program was officially rolled out in the 2023-24 school year.

Since the incorporation of the NSBSD, beginning with the earliest speeches given by Eben Hopson, there has been a strong desire and dire need to increase the number of local educators working within the District. Ilisaurriġuqta is designed to help local people seeking to becoming certified teachers succeed and join our teacher workforce as full-time professionals. Recognizing that most local people interested in becoming teachers often have existing jobs and family commitments preventing them from attending school full-time, the district has created the Ilisaurriġuqta program to accommodate the needs of local people. This past year, we had 10 local people enroll into the program. We continue to actively recruit and support participants in reaching their goals of becoming teachers or highly qualified paraprofessionals.

[Picture\(s\) of the 8-10 Paraprofessionals via Ilisaurriġuqta program](#)

Highly Qualified Paraprofessionals

During the 2023-24 school year, the North Slope Borough School District established multiple pathways or methods to allow our paraprofessionals to become highly qualified as a pathway towards becoming a teacher. For Title I schools, becoming highly qualified is a requirement.

Method 1: The para can provide evidence of completing at least two years (at least 48 semester hours or the equivalent) at a regionally or nationally accredited institution of higher education.

Method 2: The para can provide evidence of earning an associate degree or higher from a regionally or nationally accredited institution of higher education.

Method 3: The para can provide evidence of earning a high school diploma or equivalent and passing the ParaPro assessment.

Method 4: The para can provide evidence of earning a high school diploma or equivalent and passing the Paraeducator Online Training and Assessments.

Method 5: The para will have evidence of earning a high school diploma and has completed the Master Teacher online e-learning Units and passed the final assessment.

[Picture\(s\) of Paraprofessionals that completed the Master Teacher Training](#)

Congratulations to Jana Esmailka and Monique Butera for completing their Master Training and passing the required assessment to become highly qualified!

We currently have 26 paraprofessionals currently enrolled in the Master Teacher program from Tikiġaq School, Ipalook Elementary School, Nunamiut School, Kali, and Meade River School. These paraprofessionals are: Ashley Mekiana, Nunamiut School; Corazon Caoile, Ipalook Elementary School; David San Nicolas, Ipalook Elementary School; Emilia Gueco, Ipalook Elementary School; Fred Anaver, Ipalook Elementary School; Heather Minix, Tikiġaq School; Jana Esmailka, Nunamiut School; Jing Yuan, Nunamiut School; Kenneth Johnson, Ipalook Elementary School; Margaret Ahmaogak, Ipalook Elementary School; Marilou Abenoja, Ipalook Elementary School; Monique Butera, Tikiġaq School; and Ruth Pigg, Ipalook Elementary School.

Qatqiññaġvik

Qatqiññaġvik is a place designed to help high school students from villages begin the process of becoming adults by helping them gain the skills they will need to pursue careers. Located in Utqiagvik at the old Top of the World Hotel site, the 2023-24 school year was the first full year of operation for the Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center (QLC). It was a dynamic year of development and growth for the program, beginning in July with a welcoming for new-to-country teachers and concluding in May with the accommodation of students and chaperones from the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council (MYAC).

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs held at the Qatqiññaġvik Learning Center included: culinary, hydroponics, a college & career fair, artists in residence programs, robotics, and an Introduction to Construction Skills class as well as dual credit classes. Intensive Qatqiññaġvik courses were also delivered at village school sites. Those courses included: culinary, teen & sports nutrition, and an introduction to welding.

From July 21st through May 20th, Qatqiññaġvik hosted 438 NSBSD students with chaperones.

Below are the High School Intensives students earned credits in their home communities:

- Intro to Construction Trades
- Intro to Craft Trade
- Carpentry Lab

Dual Credit with Iļisaġvik

We appreciate our partnership with Iļisaġvik which gives our students the opportunity to take college classes while still in high school. During the 2023-24 school year, there were a total of 89 students who enrolled in 125 courses, earning a total of 27.16 high school credits, in addition to college credits. Through the Introduction to Construction Skills class, 21 students earned NCCER certification. This certification makes them eligible for entry level construction jobs.

Students from Aļak School, Barrow High School, Kali School, Harold Kaveolook School, Kiita Learning Community, Meade River School, Nunamiut School, and Nuiqsut Trapper School participated in the dual credit program with Iļisaġvik. Courses taken included:

Medical Terminology	Beginning Algebra
College Algebra,	Introduction to Health Information Management
Exploration in the Early Childhood Classroom	Keyboarding Skills
Elementary Probability Statistics	Integrated Reading and Writing
Topics in Iļupiaq Studies	Introduction to Health Profession
Applied Math	Iļupiaq Land, Use, Values and Resources
Fundamentals of Oral Communication	Behind the Wheel Driving
Introduction to Online Learning	US History to 1865
Introduction to Psychology	Introduction to Business
Introduction to MS Office	Introduction to Pharmacology
Library Information and Research	Introduction to Nutrition
Behind the Wheel Proctoring	Natural History of Alaska
Internet Use and Security	Introduction to Logic
Computer Presentation PowerPoint	Introduction to Microbiology
Driver's Education	

NSB PARTNERSHIP

This past year, a strong partnership was formed not only with the Borough CIPM department but also with other entities within the Borough such as Public Works, Borough Environmental Department, Housing. Through these partnerships we grew as a Maintenance and Operations Department and formed alliances that will be invaluable in the future with collaboration on housing, environmental issues, CIPM, OJT, maintenance needs and sharing of resources.

- **NSB Health (Josh/Mike)**

Nunaaqqiurat Tumitchianjit: A Quadrilateral Partnership

Nunaaqqiurat Tumitchianjit is a quadrilateral board composed of the leadership of the North Slope Borough (NSB), the North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD), Iļisaġvik College, and the Iļupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS). The purpose of Nunaaqqiurat Tumitchianjit is to improve education and increase training opportunities for

students and residents of the North Slope communities, ranging from K-12 to higher education and vocational training. Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit was named, designed, and implemented in January of 2022 and in January of 2023 all governing bodies and administrations signed a joint resolution committing to uphold the guiding principles of this work:

1. Committing to work together as one—Atautchimukta—to break down the silos that separate the four organizations, collaborating with community stakeholders and aligning resources for maximum impact and accountability.
2. Committing to use strength-based language and to assume positive intent in all communications.
3. Improving educational success and equity for residents of all ages across the North Slope, using the Iñupiaq language, culture, and values to define what success means to the people of the North Slope.

In January 2024, the Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit held a meeting at the Fred Ipalook Elementary School in Utqiagvik which was broadcast live on KBRW.

[Group picture of Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit leaders](#)

Quote: “Committed to working together as one—Atautchimukta!”

VALUE CAMEO: Paammaagiigñiq/Cooperation

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Iñupiaq Education

Picture of students with teachers

The Iñupiaq Education Department uses the Iñupiaq values, culture, history, language and worldview as a foundation upon which to provide instructional support aligning with the NSBSD's adopted Pedagogy. We support Iñupiat-centered orientation in all areas of instruction and aim to empower and inspire our students, parents and teachers to succeed.

The Iñupiaq Education Department has six departmental staff members, and Iñupiaq Language Iļisaurrit at each of our 11 school sites. In school year 23-24 we grew our language teaching capacity to support additional iļisaurrit at all sites to a total of 23 Iñupiaq Language teachers districtwide. We also piloted a unified 6th period Conversational Iñupiaq language course [via distant delivery?](#) for high school students. Throughout the year, we had three sites with as many as 30 students participating in this course. Our intention with the increased capacity is to give students options, allowing them to take language courses in-person or via distance delivery. This is a huge accomplishment for the department and the district as we work towards creating a system that will graduate bilingual students. As we continue to grow our Iñupiaq Language Program and the Uqautilunja Iñupiatun, our immersion program, we will place a focus on the Iļisaurriuqta program to grow our local teacher workforce in order to meet our growing needs for more teachers with emerging fluency in the language.

The NSBSD Iñupiaq Language Program is a pull-out program offering students Iñupiaq language instruction with a dedicated Iñupiaq Language Teacher. Instruction is based on Dr. Steven Greymorning's Accelerated Second Language Acquisition methodology and supported with a customized computer-based language-learning tool called IVALU— Iñupiaq Vocabulary Acquisition and Assessment Learning Units. We will continue focusing on the Iñupiaq Language Scope and Sequence, which maps out the language progression of students from K3 through Grade 12.

In the upcoming school year, we plan to send out a parent letter providing learning goals for each child. This allows parents to track learning and watch the progression of language acquisition.

We support our language teachers through professional development and training. We continue, as well, to build our language curriculum by co-creating, with our teachers, culture-based materials based on expected student outcomes and student interests.

Through the Iñupiaq Learning Framework, we are also focusing on the implementation of a culture-based curriculum through Project Mapkuq. Project Mapkuq focuses on culture-

based unit development in all academic subject areas, emphasizing reinforcing culturally responsive instruction at all grade levels. Grounded instruction in Iñupiaq ways of being is one of the primary goals of the NSBSD's pedagogy.

Iñupiaq Language Master Apprenticeship Program

We continue to recognize the importance of language revitalization efforts across the North Slope. Through partnership with the North Slope Borough Iñupiat History, Language and Culture Commission, we are working to implement an Iñupiaq Mentor-Apprentice Program which will allow adult Iñupiaq language learners to work towards language proficiency to support their practice in teaching the language to our students. It is imperative that we support this program parallel with our recruitment efforts, our Iļisaurriḡuḡta Teacher's Program and the Uḡautiḡuḡa Iñupiatun Immersion Program as we work to graduate bilingual students. Language revitalization is truly a community-wide effort, and it will take our entire region working together to ensure we can support language progression with emerging new speakers for the generations to come.

MAPKUQPOT IŃUUNIAGŃIḡMI THE BLANKET OF LIFE

Aligning our curriculum to the culture it lives in.

(INSERT MAPKUQ LOGO)

Mapkuqput IñuuniagŃiḡmi, *The Blanket of Life*, represents the Iñupiaq Learning Framework. In 2008, the Apḡusiuḡtit IļiniagŃikun, *Trailbreakers for Success*, was formed by community members and elders from each of our 8 villages. Together, they worked through the process of articulating an educational framework guided by, and deeply rooted in iñua, the Iñupiaq spirit. This framework fosters the development of spiritual, social, cultural, environmental, emotional, physical and economic connections, leading to well-grounded, well-educated individuals able to navigate effectively in a modern world.

Over the two-year community driven project, the Iñupiaq Learning Framework (ILF) was formed and adopted by the NSBSD Board of Education. The Iñupiaq Learning Framework will continue to be the foundation from which coherent Iñupiaq-based academic curricula and assessment processes will be realized. The North Slope Borough School District has developed instructional programs and practices in accordance with the Iñupiaq Learning Framework, consistent with the district curriculum alignment, integration and mapping insuring that it meets Alaska State Academic Standards, Alaska State Cultural Standards, and National Content Area Standards. The Iñupiaq Learning Framework is comprised of four realms: the Historical, Environmental, Community, and Individual realms. Intertwined through each realm are Spirituality and Language, and together all of these collective parts of the Mapkuqput IñuuniagŃiḡmi foster success for the whole child.

This past year, we have been working on publishing an Iñupiaq Learning Framework textbook that will detail the history and creation of the ILF, the Mapkuqput Iñuuniagnigmi, and the performance expectations (or standards) for all four realms and corresponding core themes. One addition we made this year was the identification of Iñupiaq Iñuagniq, *Wellness* performance expectations. Within each realm lies Iñupiaq Language and Iñuagniq standards that have been pulled out and placed in their respective sections for educators to use and apply in teaching our students. This textbook will be used as a primary resource as the NSBSD moves forward in the planning and implementation of district-wide professional development, training, and academic programming.

PULL OUT QUOTE:

“The Iñupiaq Learning Framework will continue to be the foundation from which coherent Iñupiaq-based academic curricula and assessment processes will be realized.”

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

The Curriculum and Instruction Department supports staff in implementing the NSBSD’s adopted Pedagogy. This includes classroom instruction techniques, data analysis, district programs, and school improvement plans designed to engage the whole child. We also provide library services, assessment and accountability services that include state and federal reporting, and the maintenance of student records.

NSBSD’s Digital Curriculum Guide and Increased Support for Staff

During School Year 23-24, the Curriculum and Instruction Department focused on providing support to teachers, specifically our new teachers and long-term substitutes, who came to fill vacancies. We continue to utilize and refine our digital Curriculum Guide for all new hires so they can quickly and easily learn how to access curricular materials. We also publish a set of Standard Operating Procedures to ensure that we provide consistent support to staff members and students, providing timely information to the community.

The C&I Department also added three support positions this year, including Elementary, Secondary, and Intervention staff. This doubled the amount of assistance we were able to provide on-site for our students. We will be adding two additional traveling staff for the 24-25 school year, to further expand quality instruction for all students. We are developing a strong coaching model to ensure all teachers receive coherent and high-quality support from members of our instructional team.

The expanded support will also allow us to create one or more “model” classrooms. These spaces will be created in existing classrooms. Our model classroom at Ipalook Elementary is capable of recording demo lessons, conducting lessons or observations over zoom, and providing an example of not only the physical space we expect throughout the district, but also providing models of the quality of instruction we expect.

Alaska Reads Act

Implementing and supporting the Alaska Reads Act was a large part of our work this year. The Alaska Reads Act is a State-mandated initiative designed to provide young learners with strong reading skills, setting them on a path towards success in school and life. With the goal of enhancing early literacy, this comprehensive initiative is composed of a number of components aimed at equipping educators, families, and communities with the tools they need to support our children's reading development.

Alaska Reads provides early screening and support, as well as tools for quality reading instruction. It also provides professional development for teachers and tracking information to help schools, teachers and families understand what's working in reading instruction and where there's room for improvement.

For more information please visit <https://education.alaska.gov/akreads>

EdHub

As the school year starts, we continued to provide more communication, particularly in lower elementary. We are using our data management/digital portfolio tool EdHub to increase the documentation of student successes and challenges. This documentation platform not only gives a year-on-year perspective of student growth; it also enables us to gather information on the success of our initiatives and programs. This results in a more seamless transition for students through the years and allows us to evaluate where our instructional team needs to add support for or modify existing programs.

Elementary Reading Materials

Last year, the district received a grant from the State of Alaska to support the adoption of new reading materials in Kindergarten through Grade 5. This funding allowed us to purchase Amplify CKLA, participate in Science of Reading training, and receive additional training to support the implementation of these programs. Grounded in the science of reading, Amplify CKLA provides proven, evidence-based practices to help students become strong readers, writers, and thinkers. We are adding CKLA for ECE this year, which will give our youngest students a chance to build their foundational reading skills in a developmentally appropriate way.

NSBSD Pedagogy Implementation

Instructional team members continue to work with our District Leadership on the refinement of the NSBSD Pedagogy document which outlines the methods of teaching we use. This crucial work solidifies the District's beliefs and commitment to the education of all students, making our approach available to the public, as well, and ensuring the highest quality of instruction for every child. In the coming year, the document will grow to include supporting research as well as tips for what parents should expect to see when walking into our buildings and classrooms.

Online Enrollment

Online enrollment for returning students was instituted last year and will continue to be an option in the coming years. This minimizes the need for paper enrollment forms, creates an easy way for parents and guardians to quickly re-enroll their students, and ensures that the district maintains compliance. Paper enrollment will continue to be an option, with packets available at every school. Due to the requirements for birth certificates and immunization records, new students will still be required to use the paper enrollment forms when entering the district for the first time.

As we move into the 24-25 school year, our focus will continue to be on supporting the Pedagogy, specifically our Culturally Responsive Instruction and Tumitchiat Sivunmum plans for all students. We look forward to sharing more information throughout the year about the Alaska Reads Act, literacy strategies for all students, student and school data, and any upcoming curriculum adoptions.

Inquiry Based Learning

Inquiry-based learning is a way of teaching that sparks the child's curiosity and nurtures a natural drive to explore ideas and discover new things. At its heart, inquiry-based learning is all about asking questions, investigating, and diving deep into topics that spark the child's interest.

Drawing inspiration from traditional Iñupiaq ways of learning, inquiry-based education embraces the wisdom of cultures that have long understood the value of learning through observation, experience, reflection, and community involvement. Just as our communities have always passed down knowledge through storytelling and hands-on engagement, inquiry-based learning encourages the child to actively participate in the learning journey. Through this age-old method, the child becomes a proactive and lifelong learner who asks thought-provoking questions and seeks answers by exploration within a community context.

Through this approach, the child develops critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deep understanding of academic subjects. NSBSD has long been a proponent of this approach; in fact, teachers over the past two decades have created units of study that blend the Iñupiaq Learning Framework, the Alaska State Standards, and local stories, all in a context that not only meets students' learning needs, but also engages them.

PULL OUT QUOTE:

“Just as our communities have passed down knowledge through storytelling and hands-on engagement, inquiry-based learning encourages the child to actively participate in the learning journey.”

Climate and Connectedness Survey

The district utilizes the School Climate and Connectedness Survey by Panorama Education to gain a yearly perspective on how students, parents, and staff feel about the schools in the district.

The survey is administered every spring through an online link. School results are distributed by each school, and district level data is presented at public School Board Meetings.

In grades 6-12, students are asked questions about drug and alcohol use, delinquent behavior, family and community connectedness, social and emotional learning, cultural connectedness, community support, high expectations, caring adults, school safety, student involvement, respectful climate and peer climate.

NSBSD's greatest growth for last year was in the areas of Family and Community Connectedness. As this was a focus area for us, we are very pleased with these results. The biggest change was to a question asking, "how often do you connect activities that you do at home to what your child is learning in school?" Seventy-nine percent responded favorably to this question, an eleven percent increase over 2023.

We also received increased responses over previous years, and while we aren't where we want to be in every category, we are moving in the right direction.

PULL OUT QUOTE:

"The biggest change was to a question asking, *how often do you connect activities that you do at home to what your child is learning in school?* Seventy-nine percent responded favorably to this question, an eleven percent increase over 2023."

Student Data

The State of Alaska releases a Report Card to the Public annually. This information is provided to all parents and guardians by their school, and a link is posted on the district website. In fact, these reports go all the way back to the 2009-2010 school year!

The District Report Card and the Report Cards for each school can be accessed at: <https://education.alaska.gov/compass/report-card>.

The Alaska State Summative Assessment (AK-STAR) and Alaska Science Assessment results are made public each fall. These are shared at the building level, sent home with individual students, and shared at School Board meetings. Students in grades 3 through 9 take a math and reading test, and students in grades 5, 8, and 10 take the science assessment. District information can be accessed at: <https://education.alaska.gov/assessments/results/results2024>

NSBSD CTE:

This school year, there were CTE teachers at Tikiġaq and BHS. Other sites did not have dedicated CTE teachers because we were unable to find qualified CTE teachers, so

classes were taught at schools across the district by core instructional teachers. In addition, the QLC program provided a CTE instructor in Nuiqsut for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school year. Courses taught included:

Intro to Construction Trades	Home Economics
Intro to Craft Trades	Culinary Arts
Wood Tech	Yearbook
Technical Drawing	Media Production
Intro to CAD and FAB	Music Performance & Production
Intro to Process Tech	Auto Mechanics
Metals Tech.	Small Engines
Welding	ATV/Snowmachine Pract.
Forensics	Leadership Development
Personal Finance	Teacher Aide
Food & Nutrition	Education & Training

Alaska EXCEL

To offer our students access to those courses unavailable in villages, we partnered again with Alaska EXCEL. We had 36 students from Wainwright, Point Lay, Atkasuk, Anaktuvuk Pass and Nuiqsut participate in 50 sessions, earning a total of 14 credits. and participating in the following courses:

- Aviation Maintenance
- Career Development & Life Skills
- Drivers Education
- EXCEL Consumer Life/PLCP
- EXCEL Personal Life Skills & Job Skill,
- Intro to Career Path & Employability Skills
- Intro to Careers

Students from Harold Kaveolook School, Ałak School, Kali School and Nuiqsut Trapper School also attended the Summer EXCEL session.

Quyanaqpak to the North Slope Borough, ASRC Federal, and Conocophillips for helping make these opportunities possible for our students.

STUDENT SERVICES

The Student Services Office is responsible for those special services students need to be successful in school. These services include: special education and related services, family support, social-emotional support, Section 504 Plans, support for our District-wide Student Council and Gifted and Talented program, Student Plans, the coordination of services, and the School Counselor Program. We encourage schools and communities to reach out to the new Director, Michael Hautala, Michael.Hautala@nsbsd.org with any questions or concerns about any area of the NSBSD Student Services Program. The support provided by Student Services runs on a continuum ranging from individual to school-wide support, including:

Special Education

Student Services' primary role is to provide special education services to students with a diagnosed disability as defined by state and federal laws. Special education is a legally mandated service and requires specific teacher certification and skills. During the current nationwide teacher shortage, Special Education teachers have become increasingly difficult to recruit. To continue providing services during this challenging time, NSBSD has piloted the use of remote special education teachers. This option offers an opportunity for local paraprofessionals or teacher substitutes to work directly with the special education teacher in the delivery of the required services. This model is continuing into the 24-25 school year.

Related Services

Parents of students who qualify for a related service such as speech, physical therapy or occupational therapy services may have seen a difference in the way these services have been delivered over the last few years. Historically, we had therapists fly to the schools three times per year to train special education teachers or paraprofessionals in the delivery of services. Now with teletherapy, our therapists can provide direct services to eligible students. Because getting to know the students and their families continues to be important, our current providers still fly to the villages, but they can implement the ongoing services from anywhere in the country over the computer. Since using teletherapy, we have seen an increase in the delivery of services because external barriers such as distance, flight cancellations and weather delays have been eliminated. The Student Services Office will continue with this model moving into the 24-25 school year. The NSBSD has a full team of providers, ensuring that related services are provided to students identified as in need. We encourage schools and communities to reach out to the new Director, Michael Hautala, Michael.Hautala@nsbsd.org with any questions or concerns.

Suicide Prevention

Suicide is a deep and pervasive issue on the North Slope, one which touches every family. This is not an issue that any one organization, government or agency can solve alone. We are beginning to address this through the Nunaaqiurat Tumitchianjit quad board including leadership from NSB, NSBSD, ICAS and Ilisaġvik. We need to work with those people who have lived experience with suicide, allowing them to help us by sharing stories, brainstorming strategies, and seeking solutions. The future of suicide prevention depends on our ability, as a Slope-wide community, to listen, and act with compassion.

The Student Services Office has received a grant to provide suicide awareness activities to students and community members. For the 24-25 school year, NSBSD has out full page ads in the Arctic Sounder, purchased place-based banners for our schools, Kiita Learning Community shared student art based on "What brings us joy?"

In addition, our partnership with ASNA provides NSBSD sites the opportunity to receive school-wide suicide awareness training.

Picture of teacher walking down a hall \holding kids' hands (back view)

Value Cameo: Nagliktuutiqaḡnik/Compassion

Suicide Resources

Statewide/National Care Lines:

1-877-266-4357 Alaska Careline
1-800-SUICIDE National Hopeline Network
1-800-273-8255 National Suicide Prevention Line
1-800-799-4TTY National Suicide Prevention Line TTY
988 (Call or text) Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
IAMALIVE.org Suicide Crisis Chat
CrisisChat.org Online Emotional Support
907-852-0366 NSB Health Department
907 852-0261 Arctic Woman in Crisis

Recognize the Warning Signs:

- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Talking about feeling trapped or being in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious, agitated, or reckless
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawal or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Saying goodbye by giving things away or through wide scale expressions of love

Child Find

Under the law, it is the responsibility of the school district to locate students with special needs within district boundaries and determine their needs. Finding, identifying, and providing services to children with disabilities is an ongoing process. The services we provide level the playing field, ensuring that all students, regardless of disability, have access to a free and appropriate public education.

Childfind is the responsibility of everyone in a child's life. If there is a concern, referrals can be made by teachers, parents, local clinics, hospitals, infant learning programs, etc. If the child is below age 6, we may request the student participate in a DIAL screening. This screening helps us see if the child has any challenges with speech, gross motor, fine motor, and pre-academics. If the child is of school-age, we may review their current academic and social emotional progress and possibly refer them to our Response to Intervention Team while the referral is being processed. In order to refer a child for

services, we are legally required to show that interventions have been tried and have proven unsuccessful.

It is important that parents know they are a critical part of this process. We need parental permission, support, and input every step of the way. Only parents can share how their child is doing at home and how they feel school is going. Only parents can sign a Release of Information for the school district to access important records from other agencies. Parents are invaluable members of our team and their input is critical to determine the correct educational path for their child.

School Counselor Support

School Counselors fill many roles in our schools. Professional school counselors strive to provide a comprehensive school counseling program for our students. That program addresses student's social-emotional, academic, and career interests to prepare them to be successful in life. The comprehensive program may include classroom guidance lessons, individual small groups such as grief, anger management, and individual conversations to help with social-emotional skills development and short-term concerns.

In some cases, a student's concerns may need long-term specialized support. In these cases, the school counselor will help families and students access outside agencies to meet their individual needs. If a student needs mental health support, the school counselor will meet the student and parent to discuss options. If a student needs hospitalization, the school counselor is there to help and provide support.

School counselors advocate for students and families, collaborate with educational staff, and partner with families and local agencies to support all aspects of a student's life. School counselors are there to help you understand your child's strengths and needs as they progress through their educational career.

School counselors are also instrumental in establishing a working collaboration with local agencies. For example, school counselors work with ASNA, Integrated Behavioral Health, AWIC, Prevention Teams, Ilisaġvik, and others to bring in Healthy Relationship Training, Wellness Fairs, Bullying Prevention Programs, anti-vaping programs as well as drug and alcohol programs. It is not uncommon for a school counselor to help with college applications, monitor graduation plans, promote positive school climate initiatives, attendance support, and support students' research as they learn about trade schools and colleges.

They are there to help. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Staff Wellness

Post-COVID, it is globally recognized that the social emotional needs of all students, staff, and communities have suffered. In FY23, NSBSD was awarded grant funding to send 24 of our staff members to a conference focusing on the implementation of positive school climate and wellness strategies post-COVID.

The Student Services Department is working to provide wellness activities and support to all our staff. As part of this, our staff is involved in training to help individuals achieve emotional, physical, occupational, intellectual, financial, social, environmental, and spiritual goals. Research from the Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration shows that these eight dimensions are interconnected: one dimension builds on another.

MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS

M&O picture with names

The NSBSD Department of Maintenance and Operations (M&O) exists to provide and maintain the most effective learning environment possible for our students. The learning environment includes school grounds, the school building envelope and structure, grounds maintenance, operations, site and building cleanliness. We also provide teacher housing and equipment, nutritional food services, and transportation services.

The Department also identifies immediate and future educational plant and equipment needs, through Capital Improvement Projects or purchases (CIP). These recommended needs are prioritized by the affected community and its stakeholders, and School Advisory Council (SAC). Finally, these District needs are prioritized, based on community input, by a committee of the Board for presentation to the NSB Assembly, which establishes funding according to its determination which projects are of greatest need.

After a challenging 2023-24 school year, M&O has been working diligently to catch up from the COVID years where projects were delayed and rescheduled. Below you will find some highlights for M&O during this past school year.

Harold Kaveolook School:

This past year, the NSBSD project of greatest need was Phase 0 of the Harold Kaveolook School fire rebuild, which was granted \$12 million in FY23/24. An additional \$20 million was granted by the Project Review Committee (PRC) in April for FY24/25. Civil work has begun, and all permits have been secured from the State of Alaska to manage and dispose of the site's contaminated soil. Phase 0 has been completed with all pilings in place and secured and debris removed.

District-wide repairs and upgrades:

The NSB Assembly added an additional \$4.5 million to the bond election for district wide CIP upgrades and emergency repairs. By NSB Ordinance, some of this money can be used for upgrading and repairing the teacher housing units owned by the NSB. FY24/25 will be focused on projects still outstanding from 2017 to the current date.

Nuiqsut boilers:

The Native Village of Nuiqsut was gracious enough to fund the purchase of new boilers in Nuiqsut. M&O, coordinating with CIPM, will have them installed beginning October 28, 2024.

New vehicles for villages:

From previous years' funding, new pickup trucks were purchased for all village schools. Nuiqsut received a new Ford Expedition and other villages will receive new Expeditions or transit vans next year for the long-overdue replacement of old vehicles.

Point Hope:

A large security project took place in September making the school more secure where Detex alarms are installed at each entry point and a "funnel" will be installed at the front doors. This funnel will provide a video and push button secured entry to the school during school hours only. We want to thank the Tikiġaq SAC for their support of this project.

Vape detectors:

NSBSD is in the beginning of a district wide program installing vape detectors with an expected completion date by December 2024 in all school locations. The first completed site was Hopson Middle School. Barrow High School has completed their installations and M&O began installation in October for Tikiġaq School, and Aġak School.

RSA Assessments:

In May 2024, RSA Engineering began assessing each site to update an assessment performed in 2017. This assessment will provide the structure for a 10-year plan of capital improvements throughout the district focusing on infrastructure needs such as boiler replacements, HVAC, plumbing and fixtures, security, lighting, ventilation, and other infrastructure items. RSA completed their assessment and provided their findings in late July.

Partnerships:

The working relationship between NSBSD and the NSB/CIP has resulted in some important improvements and much needed maintenance work across the District. Emergency repairs and the installation of a new access ramp are just a few examples of this improved and vital relationship.

M&O NSBSD and Non-NSBSD Facility Usage

Our facilities across the Slope are essential community centers where the community gathers for sporting events, feasts and traditional games, dances and funerals. We are proud of the fact that our facilities serve the needs of many organizations for a variety of meetings and activities.

The local organizations that used NSBSD facilities in the 2023-24 school year included: Iḷisaḡvik, AEWG, ASNA, ASRC, ASTAC, BUECI, the Native Villages of Anaktuvuk Pass, Utqiagvik, and Point Hope, NSB, the cities of Anaktuvuk Pass, Nuiqsut and Point Hope, Kuukpik Corp, Nunamiut Corp, Olgoonik Corp, UIC, Rotary Club, Stuaqpak, S.U.T.T. Church, Uqaaqti Consulting, the Voice of the Arctic Iñupiaq and the Wainwright Cooperative.

Non-local organizations using our facilities included; Alaska Community on Toxins, Arctic Encounter, Audubon Alaska, BLM, Conoco-Phillips, LLC Channel 5, Maniilaq, Oil Search Alaska LLC, and UAF. In addition, our facilities were used for 47 private events in the last year such as birthday parties and dinners.

The NSBSD also has itinerant housing at most locations to allow administration and itinerant workers a place to stay while working in the villages. This is also available to non-NSBSD entities in need of housing. Last year, itinerant housing was used 499 days, across communities, by non-NSBSD organizations including AFS, Anchorage Pacific Power Group, ASNA, Boynton, Census.gov, CIPM, City of Wainwright, EarthScape Alaska, GCI, UAF, Iḷisaḡvik, Job Fair Vendor BHS, M/E Engineers, NEA Foundation, NSB Health Dept, Tuzzy Student Services, UAF, UICCS, University of Alaska, and the US Census Bureau.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management Coordinator, Ty Cunningham, has been working towards ensuring that all schools have individualized emergency plans, training, and updated flipcharts for each room and classroom with an emergency go-bag of supplies, a radio, and emergency blankets for colder weather. Emergency Management will also provide first aid and CPR classes for NSBSD staff members.

Transportation

Transportation, led by Coordinator Chris Battle, manages the fleet of vehicles district wide providing assignment, preventative maintenance, licensing, and all other regulatory requirements.

In the 2023-24 school year, the NSBSD Transportation department's buses drove 35,094 miles delivering students to and from school 11,365 times and maintained an accident free bus record.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Recruiting

We started the 2023-24 school year with 82 newly hired teachers. Of these new teachers, 24 were recruited from the Philippines with twenty-one returning for the 2024-25 school year.

Bottom line, there is a significant teacher shortage, nationwide, with no end in sight. Because of this, HR began the 2024 hiring season by moving full-force as early as possible, issuing contracts in January for tenured and non-tenured teachers and principals in order to know which positions would be vacant in the 2024-25 school year. Issuing them this early allowed us to post actual vacancies immediately, which in turn allowed us to attract the best candidates before they found other positions. We attended job fairs in Alaska, Minnesota, Iowa, Montana and Utah.

The goal of the HR Department for the 2023-24 school year was to fill all the vacancies, using as few long-term substitutes as possible. For the 2024-25 school year, our focus will be on retention of the best staff. To keep NSBSD competitive with other potential employers, the District is offering relocation assistance along with airfare as incentives designed to bring the best teachers to the North Slope.

Recruiting the Best Student Teachers

In previous years, the District developed relationships with several teacher training programs but these relationships were not maintained. As part of our strategy for finding potential applicants, we are rebuilding previous partnerships with teacher colleges and building new ones designed to bring student teachers to the North Slope for their required practicums and student teaching experiences. In the past, outstanding student teachers were offered contracts to return upon graduation to teach, as Alaska certificated teachers, for the NSBSD. This was a good model for candidates to become familiar with the students, staff and communities on the North Slope and were selected based on how well they performed with our students.

We are working with Gustavus Adolphus College, University of Alaska Southeast, and St. Olaf College for placement of their secondary teachers. In addition, partnering with the University of Montana to recruit from their outstanding counselor program. This way, we will be able to orient potential teachers to the North Slope and to the goals and expectations of the NSBSD, offering contracts only to the best and brightest.

Staff Retention

PULL OUT QUOTE:

“Consistent with our commitment to transparency, collaboration and respect, the District has worked hard with all staff members to resolve concerns at the lowest level possible. As a result, there have been no formal grievances filed in FY24.”

Consistent with our commitment to transparency, collaboration and respect, the District has worked hard with all staff members to resolve concerns at the lowest level possible. As a result, there have been no formal grievances filed in FY24. The collective bargaining groups for the teachers and administrators had all issues settled and contracts in place by the start of the 2024-25 school year.

The Board has approved standardized classified contracts and certified contracts. The classified hourly, classified contracted and contracted certificated all have newly revised handbooks, which increased the number of leave days. The classified staff were also provided an additional 2% increase consistent with the previous year. Discussions have commenced to reward longevity with bonuses.

HR Department Growth

It was a year of professional growth for everyone. Staff that previously had only dealt with specific areas of contract generation and benefits were expanding their skill set and gaining valuable experience pre-screening applicants for interview selection. Answering the phones and directing calls also morphed into verification of service and employee file research. Our ALASBO membership includes free online webinars that are valuable in gaining insight as to how others are dealing with similar challenges. Tyler University offers virtual classes for the Business Office and Human Resources and many staff members are now signing up for classes ready to better utilize Tyler.

BUSINESS OFFICE

The Business office is responsible for ensuring the vision and mission of the Board, as operationalized by the Administration, is supported within the financial means of the District. In serving the District, the Finance Department has a responsibility to meet the highest levels of transparency and accountability for stakeholders as it works to be both collaborative and responsive to the needs of departments and sites.

The focus of the Business Office throughout FY24 was transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility. The District remains extremely grateful for the strong support of the NSB and the Assembly. While inflation has caused operational costs to increase, the District has been able to cover those increased costs with funds from unfilled positions and the support of the Borough.

Despite the challenges due to changes in personnel, the District successfully commenced an overhaul of all systems as part of a process of repair that includes the Finance Department being directed to operationalize responsive and open engagement with stakeholders, staff, and the community.

Some highlights of the year include:

- FY25 budget hearings conducted with all sites with the participation and input of School Advisory Council members for the second time.
- FY25 budget delivered and passed within ordinance timeframes.
- NSB supplemental funding MOA's amended to meet community needs and submitted and approved within budget timelines.
- Monthly financial reports submitted in a timely manner to the Board of Education and the North Slope Borough.
- Clean audit reports received for FY23 and FY24 following a successful audit

- process.
- Efficient utilization of available grant monies resulting in the District expending a greater percentage of FY24 grant monies that were made available.
 - Spending plans for all grants developed before the FY25 year began, to facilitate full and efficient use of grant funding.
 - Ongoing review and standardization of all processes as the District brings all expenditures and operations into compliance with policy, handbooks and employment agreements.

(INSERT CHART - 1. INFLATION OUTPACING BSA AND NSB ALLOCATION)

2020-2024						
Revenue Category	ADM	1953	1942	1863	1860	1796
		2020 Audit	2021 Audit	2022 Audit	2023 Audit	2024 Actual
	010 City/Borough Appropriation	33,563,297	38,766,371	36,828,052	36,828,052	38,766,371
	012 City/Borough In-Kind	2,664,060	3,526,447	3,638,990	4,692,436	4,861,389
	State Appropriation	17,923,844	18,135,203	17,499,365	18,149,162	18,392,280
	Total NSB NSB+State	36,227,357 54,151,201	42,292,818 60,428,021	40,467,042 57,966,407	41,520,488 59,669,650	43,627,760 62,020,040

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

[Picture of student utilizing some type of technology](#)

The Information Technology (IT) Department provides the district with essential technological and infrastructure services. The department prides itself on delivering uninterrupted technology-assisted instruction for students and staff, clear and timely communication across the district, and collaboration among all district stakeholders.

Broadband Enhancement in North Slope Borough School District

The IT Department is pleased to report significant advancements in our district's internet connectivity. Historically, our district has faced challenges with internet speeds which were ranked among the slowest in the state. This year, transformative steps have been taken to address this issue, significantly enhancing our digital infrastructure.

With the implementation of Starlink LEO satellites and the enactment of the State of Alaska Broadband Assistance Grant 100 (BAG100), our schools are now positioned to access internet speeds of 100Mbps.

This development marks a fourfold bandwidth increase for most of our schools, ensuring a robust and efficient digital learning environment.

The new E-Rate contract with GCI, which integrates Starlink services, has been a critical component in this transformation. By adopting a fiber/LEO and GEO/LEO configuration, we have established a resilient and high-speed internet connection across all schools. This upgrade is a technical enhancement and a significant leap forward in supporting our educational goals and facilitating seamless digital learning experiences.

We acknowledge the support from the Alaska Office of Broadband and the various federal initiatives that have made this progress possible. Our commitment to leveraging these opportunities reflects our dedication to providing our students and staff with the best educational resources and infrastructure.

Live Streaming of Regional Basketball Tournaments

Event Details: The IT department played a pivotal role in the successful live streaming of the 1A and 3A Regional Basketball tournaments held at Point Lay Kali School and Barrow High School.

Community Engagement: With over 500 viewers on our YouTube livestream, we extended the excitement of the games to community members unable to attend in person. This initiative promoted school spirit and fostered a sense of community involvement.

Fiber Repair Project

Background: A fire at the North Slope Borough (NSB) shipping and receiving building significantly disrupted network connectivity for several NSBSD schools and buildings and severed the fiber connection to the main NSBSD data center.

Collaborative Effort: We extend our gratitude to the North Slope Borough (NSB) Infocomm leadership team—Aden Bynum and Mike Philipps—and the contractors from Tikiqaaq Conam—Frank Veith and Rick Mengel—for their invaluable support and collaboration in the rapid completion of the fiber repair.

Restoration: The repair work successfully reestablished connectivity for the Central Office, CO2, Eben Hopson Middle School, and Kiita Learning Center to the NSB Utqiaġvik

10Gig High Speed fiber network, ensuring the restoration of high-speed network services to these locations.

2023 USDA RUS DLT Grant Award

NSBSD was awarded \$1 Million, the largest grant award in the State, for the second time in a row. Through the Repair, Rebuild, and Revitalize (RRR) Initiative, the School District will purchase and implement video conferencing equipment and various Audio Video upgrades to allow multiple classrooms to participate in distance learning initiatives connecting teachers to students at remote locations. Moreover, this initiative will allow the NSBSD to develop language and culture preservation instructional programming that will be a capital asset for the district with a third-party education technology vendor.

In conclusion, the IT Department remains committed to leveraging innovative technologies and fostering partnerships to support our schools' educational and operational goals. We are proud of our recent achievements and are excited about the positive impacts these advancements will have on our students, staff, and the broader community. We look forward to continued progress and collaboration in our ongoing efforts to enhance the technological landscape of our schools.

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