

Scenic Park Elementary



November-December.....2015

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Greetings,

As I sit down to write this, it is snowing softly and the students are outside for recess the first time this week. We are all happy that it is warming up. I was in a classroom this week listening to the students take turns sharing something they are thankful for today. They shared things about their homes, friends, and even school. It reminded me of a time when my own children were younger and we would start every dinner this same way. They were thankful for many things over the years, from favorite toys, to our dog, to getting to have a friend stay over. As they got older, it was fun to see them thinking more about others and being thankful for less tangible things. We have gotten away from that tradition, but as we gather around our dinner table during the next week (when our oldest is home from college for the first time), I plan to ask again. It is a great way to begin dinner conversations and to share thoughts and feelings as a family. It is hard to believe that the school year is almost half over. The holiday season is an exciting one for our students, but we have a lot of learning left to do before Christmas break. Please do what you can to maintain a normal schedule at home for both sleep and homework. That truly helps your child to be successful at school.

If your child was in 3-5th grade last year, you should be receiving a copy of his or her test results from the brand new State-wide AMP Assessments we began last year. I have included a letter about our new standards and these tests from Superintendent Graff later in this newsletter. I would ask that no matter how you think the results look, that you keep in mind that a test is a small picture of your child and of their abilities in and outside of school. We are proud of all of our students and work every day to get them to levels of success in many areas. I am more than happy to get you more information and/or to talk to you more about this, if you are interested.

If I don't see you before the holidays, I wish you a very happy time with your family and friends. We are looking forward to 2016 and to the second half of an exciting and successful school year.

Take care,

Jennifer Schmitz



Anchorage School Board
Eric Croft, president
Tam Agosti-Gisler Kameron Perez-Verdia
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Pat Higgins Natasha von Imhof
Superintendent
Ed Graff

Join the

conversation

about the school budget

What do *you value* in public education?



Online

Using a group insight platform called ThoughtExchange, participants will share their thoughts, identify what is most valuable and view results of the feedback provided. The online platform will begin in November. Sign up online at www.asdk12.org/budget.



In-person

Community conversations
6-8 p.m. on the following dates:
Monday, Nov. 23 – Hanshew Middle School
Monday, Nov. 30 – Gruening Middle School
Tuesday, Dec. 1 – Wendler middle School
Wednesday, Dec. 9 – Mears Middle School



Email

- Email the schoolboard@asdk12.org
- Submit to the online budget comment box
- Communicate with legislators
 - 📧 Share a public opinion message with all legislators
 - 📧 Email the governor and legislators at gov.alllegislators@alaska.gov
 - 📧 Contact individual senators and representatives



Public testimony

Testify at Anchorage School Board meetings. Budget readings and votes are Feb. 1 and 16. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.

www.asdk12.org



Musical "Notes"

Choir Dates and Events

Our choir sounds fantastic, you can hear them perform at the events below:

Tues., Dec. 8th: Choir tour (Field Trip) 9:15-11:45 AM, singing for Providence Extended Care and AHFC.

Thurs., Dec. 10th: Choir concert 2 PM, at Scenic Park, and choir party afterwards from 2:30-3:20 PM.

Sun., Dec. 13th: Choir concert at Barnes and Noble for the Scenic Park Book Fair, 2:30-3:00 PM

See you there!
—Mrs. Congdon



FROM THE DESK OF THE Superintendent

November 9, 2015

As educators, we often ask our students what they want to be when they grow up. For most, the answer is ever-evolving, and that's a good thing.

Today's high school graduates have so many options ahead of them, and with opportunities come challenges. Our students will be competing not only with others in Alaska, but all over the world. We need to prepare them for the realities of a global economy, and make sure we equip them with the skills necessary to succeed and thrive.

At the Anchorage School District, most of our classrooms look very different than they did 20, 30 or more years ago when we were in school. Gone are chalkboards and full-day lectures. They've been replaced with small-group learning, student-led discussions and hands-on activities. Instead of sit-and-get lessons, students are engaging their learning to build a strong foundation of critical thinking and communication skills. This helps them solve more complex, real-world problems.

The workforce has changed significantly since many of us started our careers. In today's knowledge-based economy, post-secondary education and professional certificates are increasingly more important. The evolving face of technology is also changing the professional landscape.

That's why ASD adopted new standards. These new standards are more rigorous and they set the right bar to better prepare students for college and career readiness. The new standards are clear and aligned to provide a foundation for what students need to learn, while not dictating how teachers teach.

The new standards help our students move beyond memorization and push them to analyze and critique complex concepts and texts. For example, while we still expect students to memorize multiplication tables, we also give them an opportunity to work math problems in a variety of ways so they understand how the numbers work and the rationale behind the actions. This all helps them apply their learning to real-life actions.

Our test results look much different this year compared to previous years and at first glance, it's easy to get discouraged, but you shouldn't. Student achievement has not declined. The expectations of our students are higher than ever before. As students gain more experience in the standards, I'm confident scores will rise. I know that parents will value knowing their kids are performing on a set of grade-level standards that will put them on track for life after high school.

While students may frequently change their mind about what they want to be when they grow up, whatever their ultimate decision, we'll make sure they'll be ready.

Respectfully,

Ed Graff
Superintendent

Important Dates

Monday, Nov. 23 - Thanksgiving
Blessing community food distribution.

Tuesday, Nov. 24 - Algebra and world
languages materials review.

Nov. 26-27 - Thanksgiving break. All
ASD schools and offices closed.

Saturday, Nov. 28 - Police Navidad.

Thursday, Dec. 3 - Regular school
board meeting.

Saturday, Dec. 5 - Algebra and world
languages materials review.

Monday, Dec. 7 - Algebra and world
languages materials review.

Text Message Alerts from ASD

Earlier this fall, ASD launched a text messaging service for anyone who wishes to receive school closure or informational text messages from ASD or its schools.

ASD uses this service to communicate school closure information and general district news. Schools use this service to share news and updates. In addition, parents can sign up to receive a text message when school buses are excessively late. Text messages from ASD are not intended to replace existing district-to-parent or school-to-parent communications, but rather help enhance them.

Editor's note: This is an opt-in process only. Users may choose to opt-out at any time.



