

## SAC BOARD REPORT

Uvlaaluataq. Greetings from Nunamiut School at Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska where 107 students are working with 14 classified staff and 12 certified staff in pursuit of their educational goals. At our local in-service on August 14, we welcomed our new principal, Dale Richesin, along with our new counselor, Marissa Garcia de Leon, our new 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Renee Arakaki, and our new ECE teacher, Jason Brown. We spent that day making plans, reviewing our policies and procedures, and getting familiar with our goals for the coming year.

Dale was born in Juneau, grew up in Selawik and Kotzebue, and most recently worked at Togiak. Marissa and Renee most recently were in Tucson, Arizona and Jason most recently was in Michigan.

Led by **Jason Brown** and **Minnie Szmyd**, “our Pre-K three and four-year-old students have been excited to begin learning the alphabet, letter sounds and counting. Each day we practice basic skills that will allow us to be successful in school such as: speaking and listening, writing letters and numbers, speaking in complete sentences, taking turns, walking in line, being kind and considerate, and fine-motor and gross-motor skills. We also spend time each day learning our Inupiaq language.”

Our veteran teacher, **Lillian Stone**, teaches our Kindergarten and First graders. “In my class, we have been moving right along. I am looking forward to this school year, with a small class. We spent a good month, reviewing content and solidifying the first grade reading and math skills and The Kindergarten students are ready to learn to read. They all come to school prepared and ready to learn.”

Another veteran teacher, **Susan Webb**, is leading our First and Second graders. “My first and second grade class is off to a great start this year. We have completed nearly all of our start-of-the-year assessments and, for the most part, scores have improved from last year. As a class, we are solidifying our rules and routines. We’ve even had one day of perfect attendance!”

**Rose Morris**, who was new last year, is teaching our Third and Fourth graders. She is also leading our Girl Scout troop. “The Girl Scout troop of Anaktuvuk Pass has formed, a strong troop of 20 girls ranging from the 1st-8th grades! They are excited to become Brownies and Cadettes. Over the last two meetings, the girls spoke about encouragement and empowerment for others. They created positive school climate by writing and drawing personal messages on a Motivation poster to uplift the spirit of the students. The girls created a long decorative purple chain with pink hearts in the school hallway to memorialize Ashley Johnson-Barr’s life. It has been powerful to watch this wide-ranging group of different age level girls come together as a strong sisterhood.”

**Renee Arakaki** is teaching our Fourth and Fifth graders. “The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade class is making great strides this year! We have already studied how hurricanes are formed and what impacts they can have on a city. We have also started to learn about optical illusions. We take time each

day to help each other learn. We also love receiving our Wolf Paws, which are a part of our PBIS program at our school.”

Just married this summer, **Thanhtam Nguyen** is teaching our middle school students, grades 6, 7, and 8. “In U.S History, MS students are researching and creating Glogster posters of Native American artifacts with brief descriptions of each artifact. In LA, 6th graders are learning about the importance of understanding diversity. Students are also learning about their traditional names by researching the history of their names.”

Nguyen’s new spouse, **Lee Karasiewicz**, is our secondary math teacher. “The community and school are excited about this school year. The high school math classes are having great success. The service learning class has been picking berries, making donuts and cleaning up trash around the community. the entire community is proud of their efforts and some have even helped with the clean-up project. The photograph class has been putting together monthly slide shows highlighting the students and events as they take place this year.”

Another new teacher coming back from last year is **Steven Bridwell**, who is teaching Secondary Language Arts and Social Studies. “Greetings from Nunamiut School. Here in classroom 106 we are accomplishing much. In the 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade and 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grade groups students have been reading local Anaktuvuk Pass author Rainey Hopson’s book *Eagle Drums*, a process truly entertaining. Rainey came in and talked to the classes about her work as an author and how she was inspired to become one. We’ve also taken a field trip to the Simon Paneak Museum to study more about Kivgiq and Nunamiut history.

In the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade classes, students are learning about North Slope History and Culture – primarily focusing on Nunamiut history. Whether reading unipkaat from *Nunamiut Stories* or Simon Paneak’s *In a Hungry Country*, students have read and learned much about their village’s past. Presently, they will be preparing interview questions for upcoming interviews with local elders.

This year’s MYAC (Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council) had been the biggest on record with the allowance of 8<sup>th</sup>-graders into the group. Hopefully it keeps growing. Nine students packed room 106 late Wednesday night (7-9PM) to crank out the Arctic Education Foundation/Elders Youth essay. It was a delightful sight (see attached picture). Students are excited about MYAC this year, meet every Tuesday at lunch, and are planning on hosting a local basketball tournament in the near future.

Thanks for tuning in.”

**Brooks Fry**, is our secondary health and science teacher. He also teaches PE to all grades. “*Physical Education*

During the first six weeks of school, elementary and middle school classes learned and participated in units of instruction on team handball, lacrosse and sabakiball. All are team oriented games that were selected to teach students teamwork and cooperation as well as appropriate behaviors and attitudes during group game play. High school students played those games as well as floor hockey, volleyball and soccer with similar lesson objectives and emphasizes.

### *Health*

Health education started this year with a human anatomy and physiology focus. Students have been learning the body systems starting with the skeletal, muscular and nervous systems. Recently we have started on the circulatory and respiratory systems. We also spend time each week working with the school counselor as well as taking care of our physical bodies with yoga practices.

### *Cross Country*

Nunamiut Cross-country has a strong team of five runners this year, including 3 boys and 2 girls. Three members of the team are seniors who started running as middle schoolers back when our district allowed middle school participation in racing. They started running as 6<sup>th</sup> graders and have steadily improved over the years until they have all become top 10 racers. Four of the five members of our team also placed in the top seven at regionals qualifying for state, with the fifth missing by mere seconds. Running in the mountains together this year was a good experience for all."

**Louisa Riley** is our Inupiaq teacher. "We have been very busy this fall. Gathering leaves, identifying them and glued onto paper. Did lots of reviewing the colors, numbers, body parts and animals. Did donuts for staff, students and community why its important to serve and covered a lot of the Inupiaq Values. 3<sup>rd</sup> to Middle School are learning to write Inupiaq words, and starting the VIVA twice week. "

Our Alternative Program is led by veteran teacher, **Melinda Berg**. "She is presently serving nine students in grades nine through twelve and beyond. Alternative Education allows students to take courses over again that they may not have had success with in the past. This is referred to as *credit recovery*. Students may take a course needed to graduate that is not being offered in the general classroom this year or they may wish to take a college course online. They can do so as a regular credit course or use it as a dual-credit course. That means they get college and high school credit at the same time for one class. One class equals two types of credit. Most times, these college opportunities are offered through Ilisagvik College for free, but it is possible to take courses through UAA or UAF for a fee. Melinda is also teaching a section each of North Slope Science and Spanish.

- 97% of colleges and employers accept the GED credential
- Over 20,000,000 million graduates and counting
- GED graduates can earn on average \$9,000 more a year

Melinda is also the facilitator for GED in Anaktuvuk Pass. Residents of AKP can sign up for GED classes Mondays and Wednesday from 4-5pm or by arrangement. Classes will begin Monday, October 1. Study, practice and take the tests! You may learn more about the GED program by contacting Melinda after 4pm, by going online to [Ilisagvik College](https://www.ilisagvikcollege.edu), or <https://ged.com/>."

Our new counselor, **Marissa Garcia de Leon**, is offering special classes to all students on behavior. "Hi, my name is **Ms. Marissa Garcia de Leon**, and I am the school counselor. I enjoy reading and spending time with my dog, Sofy.

I will visit with students of all grade levels in the classroom and help them grow socially, emotionally, and academically through classroom lessons, which I call Mindset Lessons. We will explore how to manage emotions, how to use different study skills, how to interact with others, how to express thoughts and emotions in a healthy manner, and how to become resilient and strong. We will also explore different career and college options and set goals for the future in these lessons. I look forward to including the Inupiat values and culture as I learn more about the Inupiat culture and traditions in order to make it more relevant and meaningful to the students.

I also welcome any student to come and talk to me privately during drop-in office hours in my room at the back of the library, where I will listen and help brainstorm different solutions to problems, thoughts, or situations. My goal is to help, to be there for students, and to help students learn and grow.

**My drop-in office hours are:**

**Monday from 10-11am**

**Tuesday and Thursday from 12-1:30pm**

**Wednesday and Friday from 9-11am.**

Students are also welcome to make an appointment with me individually and can talk to me to make an appointment. Students can also email me at [Marissa.GarciadeLeon@nsbsd.org](mailto:Marissa.GarciadeLeon@nsbsd.org) to schedule an appointment or ask questions. Parents and family members, please feel free to email me at this email address as well or to call me at the school (907) 661-3226. I also tutor on Wednesdays from 4-5pm."

Our Special Education teacher is **Peggy Simpson**. "The special education students at Anaktuvuk Pass are back in class and busy working on their daily occupational and physical therapy goals. In addition, many are receiving weekly tele-therapy for speech and language services. Your special education team is also providing in class assistance with some resource room time as needed."

Our overall educational goals are guided by the principles of PBIS, Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies. This program is very effective at "catching kids doing something good" by rewarding them with Wolf Points which are redeemable with prizes. Once a month, four students are treated to a pizza party. Our academic priorities are directed through the RTI program, Response Through Intervention, which identifies students with academic deficits and offers specific interventions to help them. Overall, our school is using the STEPP program, (Steps Toward Educational Process and Partnership) In this program we identify specific areas of improvement that we are seeking to achieve in the coming year.

Two areas of improvement that we have identified are math and reading. To that end, we have adopted a new pilot program based on resources provided through the Edgenuity Program. This program was successfully used last year at Kaktovik and Ipalook. In late August Mark O'Brien was at our school giving us specific direction on how to implement this new program.

We have identified selected staff and community members to fulfill extra duty tasks as follows:

- Thanhtram Nguyen is our computer tech and our 8<sup>th</sup> grade class sponsor
- Lee Karasiewicz is our BLT, Building Lead Teacher, and our Mapkuq mentor.
- Brooks Fry is our Cross Country Coach, our Volleyball coach, and our NYO coach.
- Katie Fry is our Middle School Volleyball coach, our 12<sup>th</sup> grade class co-sponsor and our 5-8<sup>th</sup> grade robotics coach.
- Jason Brown is our K-4 grade robotics coach.
- Casey Edwards is our Activities Coordinator and our Student Council co-sponsor.
- Melinda Berg is our 12<sup>th</sup> grade class co-sponsor and our Student Council co-sponsor.
- Steven Bridwell is our MAYC (Mayors Advisory Youth Council) advisor and Elders Youth (AFN) Coach
- Cody Rigney is our HS Boys Basketball coach

We are still seeking to fill the following positions:

- MS Basketball coach
- Educators Rising sponsor
- Inupiat Dancing coach
- Battle of the Books coach
- Science Fair coach

We are looking forward to hosting the Regional Basketball tournament and prom this winter.