

# Superintendent's Report

**To:** Unalaska City School District Board of Education

**From:** Darrell J. Sanborn, Superintendent

**Date:** February 15, 2001

It has been a busy time for all at the school over the past month, and the next six weeks will be even busier. I was so very pleased with the quality and interest in our Science Fair and our Spelling Bee. It is fantastic to see that academics are held in such high esteem by all of our students. Its good that it starts at such a young age and parents have shown great support for their children. I have not had the opportunity to get to the student art show; "Kaleidoscope" but I have heard some very good things about it. This is being displayed at The Museum of the Aleutians.

February is School Board Appreciation Month and it was time for me to reflect back on the various boards that I have worked with over my career, including not only public schools, but with the University system. Unalaska City School District Board of Education has had shown some great leadership over the years. This accounts for the high academic standards that we have. I know our Board has faced some turmoil through the years, but folks have put the kids and their education at the top of their list. I know of very few school boards that do not pay their board members a stipend of some kind, so I know that all of the Board members have done it for the good of the children. Board Members, present and past, should be very proud of their efforts and where the District is today. You all have done very well with the kids, by the kids, and most importantly, for the kids.

I indicated to you that I would give you an update of the Graduation Ceremony Speaker for the Class of 2001 by March, if at all possible. At this time, there are two speakers being considered, one is currently on the teaching staff and the other is a former teacher. This ceremony is set for June 2<sup>nd</sup> and I hope to update you as time draws nearer. I am pleased that the practices that I reported to you back in September were followed precisely.

February 27, 28 & March 1 will be real busy and important days for our students, as we will be doing our State Mandated testing at this time. For grades 3, 6, 8 & 10/11, they will be taking the benchmarks and the HSGQE. Math is scheduled for February 27<sup>th</sup>, Writing – February 28<sup>th</sup> and Reading is set for March 1<sup>st</sup>. CAT-V will be given to the off grades, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 9. THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS FOR THE HSGQE AND STUDENTS MUST BE ON TIME. Make-ups for the Benchmarks and CAT-V are allowed. We have a number of companies that will be donating healthy treats for our students. We are reminding parents to help students to get plenty of sleep that week and to start the day off nicely having a healthy breakfast. We have been talking with the students about doing their best. The Boot Camp for the Exit Exam is to be held this Saturday.

This evening I will ask you to approve a Board Policy change which will increase the Math requirements to three credits and the total credits needed to graduate to twenty-three. In my many hours of thought to come to this conclusion, I continually asked myself, “why are our students doing so well academically?” It would have been so very easy to cut the number of electives down from nine to eight, which may have been logical. I have seen our students participate in these electives and grow personally. Classes such as Band & Art teach so much more than just the subject area. Students learn responsibility, commitment, and time management; making students with better study and life skills. Although we only require one Vocational Education credit for graduation, many students take more than that during their high school years, and many learn skills that lead to jobs. I believe that these electives lead to happier and more productive lives.

Tomorrow we will issue contracts to all tenured teachers. Shortly there after we will begin to issue non-tenure contracts and will have these distributed as per the Negotiated Agreement. There are rumors out there about teachers who may be moving on, but this is no different than any other place, rumors are rumors and I think we will see the vast majority of our teachers return. There may be a few surprises, but I think that the retention rate may be higher than we expected. I am pleased to hear that many folks are thinking that this has been a good year.

Our In-service is set for February 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>. We will be focusing a great deal on our curriculum, course descriptions with syllabuses, and resources in textbooks. I would hope that anyone who is interested in this process, please stop by during these days. Again, our goal is to have these curriculums in Reading, Writing, (Language Arts) and Math to you by our May Board meeting.

We must have done good on the Immunization roundup! I understand that Marcy Custer, PHN, spent extra time here and had to request more supplies while she was here. I am very happy that parents and students see this as a priority as it does make it easier for all when we get a head start on these new regulations.

Congratulations to Tammy & Jack, on the birth of their newest addition to their family; Mary Jo, 9# 3oz., 22 inches. Mary Jo was born two nights ago. I know that Jack Jr. and Rosie will be happy to be back home real soon like.

In saying this, we are getting close to having our book and t-shirt, Class of 2019 ready for all babies born between August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2000 and August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2001. The books are here, but we are having difficulties in finding a vendor for the small t-shirts.