

# **Superintendent's Report**

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

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

**Date:** December 18, 2003

Season's Greetings all!!!

Over the past few weeks, I have been hearing some mixed messages from a variety of legislators of Anchorage. One seemed to be suggesting we should not be withholding diplomas from students; yet should be recording scores on their transcripts only. The other legislator spoke about "teaching to the basics like reading, writing, math and passing the Exit Exam." This is not a quality education. He was responding to the shortfalls expected in districts' budgets for the next fiscal year. Although there will be a great deal of concerns in May when the results come back from the spring testing cycle. These results will come back to students approximately one week after the legislative session is to come to an end. I believe there are many folks still nervous as sensitive issues dealing with the special education and limited English proficient populations have yet to be resolved. I believe there will be some schools that will not have a student graduate with a diploma and this will bring a great deal of controversy. I am happy to report to the Board that at the present time, all students scheduled to graduate this spring, have passed all three parts of the Exit Exam. However, I am not sure if I can report this legally!!☺ I appreciate DOE at least asking for the Attorney General's opinion on the legality of reporting when we have reached the 100% goal.

Our attendance has not been good over the past month or so. Part of this is due to the flu, which has hit our schools hard, and part of it has been due to family vacations. I encourage parents to mark the week of February 16<sup>th</sup> as this is the week for the various statewide tests. This includes the Terra Nova CAT-VI for grades 2,4,5,7, & 9, the Benchmarks for grades 3,6, & 8, and the Exit Exam. There is a short window for make-ups for the Terra Nova CAT-VI and the Benchmarks. However, there are no make-ups for the Exit Exam, and students cannot be admitted late into this high stakes test. The next opportunity to take this test will be next October. Participation plays a big part in the NCLB AYP stuffs.

We did receive our AYP District information just this evening. As I have reported, we did not make AYP given our special education scores. It is my understanding there are three other districts that also were in this situation. There were 13 districts, which met AYP, 36 districts at Level 1 including UCSD, 4 at Level 2, and 2 districts at Level 3. I expect to have more specific information tomorrow for those who may be interested.

Happy Holidays and Safe Travels to All!!!! School starts back up January 8<sup>th</sup>.