

# **Superintendent's Report**

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

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

**Date:** March 27, 2003

The much-anticipated Spring Break is coming up this next week, and I know teachers and students alike are looking forward to some rest and relaxation. Our faculty, staff and students have worked very hard this winter, but there is still another stretch to go to end strong.

Parent-teacher conferences are presently underway. In the event your child is being recommended for Summer School, I encourage parents to seriously consider this request. I do expect the High Intensity Summer Reading Program to be funded again this summer as the RFP's just came out. Summer school will start June 23<sup>rd</sup> and end July 24<sup>th</sup>. The results of the Terra Nova tests for grades 2, 4, 5, 7, & 9, and Benchmark Tests for grades 3, 6, & 8 will be received by mid-May and also hopefully the results of the Exit Exam at the same time. In the State's Accountability Workbook, it was mentioned they were working on developing comparable standards between the different tests to verify adequate academic skill movement through the years in preparation for the Exit Exam. Again, our students continue to do well on the Exit Exam. My hope is to see this continue yet; it is better to conduct remediation activities earlier than attempting to do this in one's Junior and Senior year. Please remember in order to receive a high school diploma; a student must pass the Exit Exam starting with the Class of 2004.

There seems to have been some confusion in terms of the FY 04 Budget and what this does to the Unangan Language & Culture Program and the Health and Physical Education classes. I have heard concerns for both of the programs. I left our last meeting with a clear understanding we would cut one certificated position. The Unangan Language & Culture Program at the elementary level would be taught by our instructional aide/LRE. The Junior High & High School Unangan Language & Culture class or classes (depending on need/numbers) would be offered as it is now, utilizing a certificated staff member. This same certificated staff member may or may not be teaching any physical education classes, as I am sure one of the other upper elementary or junior high teachers would be interested in swapping a math, science, social studies, etc. for the opportunity to teach a physical education class. I do not expect to see any changes in our physical education offerings for grades 5-8.

The major change in the Health & Physical Education offerings would be at the high school level if the Board accepts my recommendation of changes in the Graduation Requirements set in Board Policy. I will recommend we accept "X" number (my recommendation has been three) seasons in an

extracurricular sports will suffice for the ½ credit needed to meet Unalaska City School District's graduation requirements. I feel quite safe in stating at this time, many of our students have taken Health and Physical Education classes through Alyeska Correspondence School. In my discussions with students, this appears to be a very popular option. Many students find it a difficult choice at course selection time, and it appears many of the students wait until their Senior year to fulfill this graduation requirement.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Qawalangin Tribe for offering to take charge in the efforts to secure other funding sources for the Unangan Language & Culture Program. I am very optimistic we will find other funding to keep the program up and running at the level we now have, yet we should be flexible enough to see some changes in the delivery of service. It is my hope to find at least seven entities to commit \$15,000 per year, hopefully for a long-term commitment of approximately five years to fund the Unangan Language & Culture Program. At the present time, I believe we have two, and searching for five additional groups.

On a staffing issue, I am pleased to announce that Mr. Ken Sweenhart will be part of the Unalaska City School District Administrative team for the upcoming year, serving as elementary principal. I know the parents, staff, and students will be happy to see Mr. Sweenhart in this role, even though there are some who really wanted to see him continue his work as an excellent teacher. I look forward to working with him. I also want to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Probst for his years of service and I wish he and his wife, Joanie, best of luck in their new venture.