

Superintendent's Report

To: Unalaska City School District Board of Education

From: Darrell J. Sanborn, Superintendent

Date: February 19, 2004

February is School Board Appreciation Month and this District has had a very strong Board for a very long time. Both present and past individual Board members should be very proud of the work they have done through the years. The community should be proud of the product of their labor. I should also point out that this Board through the years has not received any stipends or payment for serving. This District is one of the very few Boards in the state, which does not receive compensation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank parents for their support in getting their children to school for the testing this week. Attendance has been very, very high during this week. All students scheduled to take the exit exam were present. I believe this is a first for this District. Just as a reminder, there are no make-ups for the Exit Exam.

We have also started with our work on our Retention List. As in the past, the final decision on whether or not a student will repeat a grade will rest with the parent. Given the implications of No Child Left Behind, and the Exit Exam, I encourage parents to give serious consideration about retaining their child, especially in the younger years. Remediation efforts at the high school level are not as successful as those done in the younger years. Again, please remember the standards set by the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (Exit Exam) are not as high as the Unalaska City School District's standards.

There is much rhetoric and talk coming out of Juneau pertaining to an increase in educational funding. I really hope this becomes a reality. I want to remind folks that when SB 36 came in, these same urban districts were the big beneficiaries. This is the first year they really have had to consider cuts, unlike most of the rural districts. We have felt this "pain" long before now, and have made cuts and adjustments to our programs. I encourage folks to stay vigilant with their efforts in dealing with the various educational bills including those dealing with the exit exam and others. Again, I do believe most students should not have any problems with the exit exam, but we need to remember the special populations including the special education and limited English proficient students.

I would like to end by again, thanking folks for all of the community and parental support over the past month. Even with the busyness of "A" season, I am pleased when I see so many parents in our schools. I also thank the teachers and staff for creating the atmosphere for this to happen. We do our best work together.