



BULLDOG BITES



Nikiski Middle/High School

September 17, 2018

FROM THE PRINCIPAL-MR. CARSTENS

Even though we've been in school for a month now, I would still like to welcome everyone back to another great year at Nikiski Middle/High School! Our year has already been off and running with all sorts of activities including Freshman Transition Night, Open House, Student Ed Camp and sporting events that see our kids as hugely successful. I hope everyone has had a chance to come in and see our kids in action in one way, shape or form.

There are many new staff members on our staff, two of which were former graduates of Nikiski High School! Our new people include:

Rustin Hitchcock – MS Social Studies and Math

Colton Anderson – MS Science and Math

Becky Cooper – MS Special Education

Kathy Hamilton – Special Education, Intensive Needs

Janell Grenier – Student Success Liaison (online support, goal setting/achieving, community placement for seniors)

Make sure to give all of our new staff a great big welcome!

We are posting all sorts of information on our website and Facebook page. If you do not regularly visit those sites, I strongly encourage you to make it a part of your daily routine to get the latest and greatest info on all of the Bulldog happenings. We also send out frequent communications via email, phone and through our Power School Bulletin.

For this upcoming week every student in grades 6 – 10 will be bringing home their results from the PEAKS (Performance Evaluation of Alaska Students) assessment; which is the state-wide test that is administered every spring, usually in April. There is a lot of information on the papers that will be coming home and if you have questions on any of it, please do not hesitate to contact us so that we can make sure you understand what the results say. This report will also be available online through Power School.

I am extremely excited to be here at Nikiski for my 14th year. It is a school where staff and students alike can achieve a high level of success both inside our walls and beyond.

VICE PRINCIPAL—MR. BOSTIC

September is Attendance Awareness Month!

Nikiski Middle High School is off and running with a strong focus on building relationships with students, monitoring individual student growth, and showing a positive school culture. To continue to do these things well, we must focus on a component that will predict success more than any other single variable: Attendance.

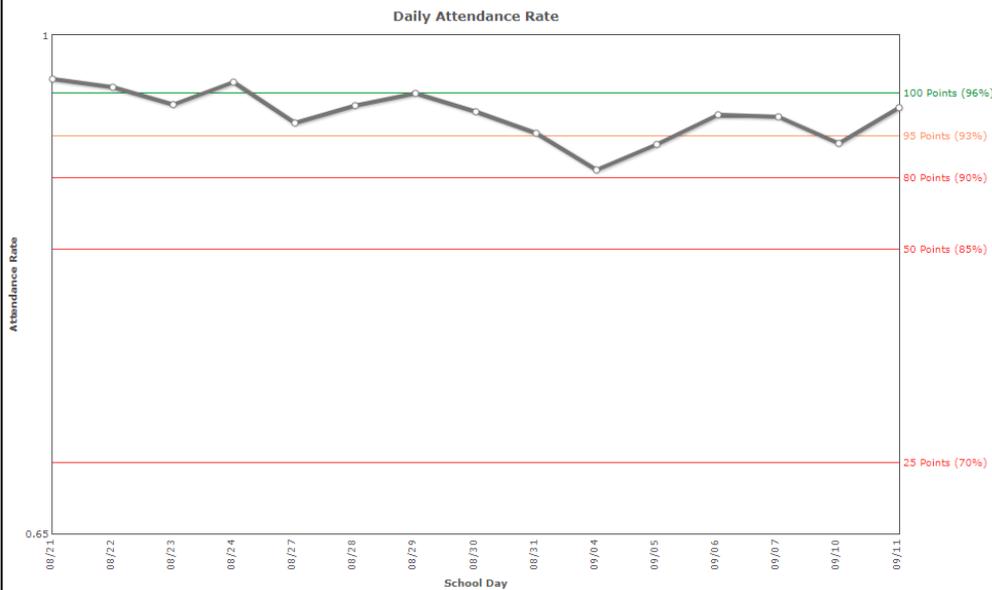
Fall 2018-2019 NMHS

Daily Attendance Rate

Values on this page are updated nightly.

Overall Attendance rate for the current school year: **94.4291%**

*All students regardless of current enrollment status



So what is the school doing to support students? In looking at the research on the indicators that have the greatest detriment on student attendance, here is what we are working on at school.

Reliable Transportation

If you have questions about school busing, please contact our front desk for bus routes. We team with Apple Bus Company to provide dependable and safe busing.

Access to Health Care

Ms. Glynnes in our nurse's office provides students with first rate care and support. Please contact her with any health related questions or support that you may have.

Proper Nutrition

Ms. Marilee in our school cafeteria serves students breakfast before school and at our extended passing period in the morning as well as a nutritious lunch that involves several choices to meet your student's dietary needs.

Student Activities

Research proves that students in extracurricular activities have better attendance, higher self-esteem, and achieve at rates greater than students who are not involved. NMHS provides many academic, athletic, and social opportunities to get involved. Please contact NMHS athletic/activities director, Mr. Hooper or our counselor, Ms. Lyke for opportunities to get involved.

Academic Support

Academic support is available through Boys and Girls Club, NMHS counseling office, and during student's Bulldog Block.

School-Wide Attendance Plan

In supporting KPBSD Board Policy 5121, Nikiski MS/HS will be closely monitoring student attendance and addressing absences through our I-Team process. Each semester, students that reach 7 or more absences in any class period will be notified through the school office and when absences reach 15, an I-team meeting consisting of the student, parent/guardian and the I-team will convene to discuss possible intervention. Students who reach 15 absences and are unable to meet the expectation of the I-Team will lose High School credit in that class or be recommended for Middle School retention. Please contact Mr. Bostic with any questions concerning the I-Team Process.

Preparing for the 2018/2019
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
STUDENT NUTRITION SERVICES
FREE & REDUCED MEAL PROGRAM (NSLP)

Student Programs Applications for 2018/2019 SY

Households with income: Households with income are encouraged to submit a KPBSD Student Programs Application (even if income is over the Income Eligibility Guidelines), because certain Federal programs base funding on the total number of students applying for benefits. Parents can submit an application (one application per household) for their household **BEFORE** school starts - Please allow 10 working days for processing by the Student Nutrition Services Office.

2018/2019 STUDENT PROGRAM APPLICATIONS (cream with green printing) will be available for pick-up by August 14, 2018 at all Kenai Peninsula Borough Schools, Public Assistance / Job Service and KPBSD Central Office.

Households receiving Public Assistance Benefits: Households receiving Public Assistance benefits (Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance) DO NOT need to fill out a Student Programs Application IF they have received and turned in a School Meals/Direct Certification Notice from Public Assistance. The Department of Education and Public Assistance will coordinate efforts to implement the Categorical Eligibility Process by also sending names of qualifying households directly to KPBSD / Student Nutrition Services (SNS). Once your student's name has been received and processed, SNS will send you a letter notifying you that benefits are available.

30-DAY GRACE MEAL BENEFITS: Students qualifying for free or reduced meal benefits on the last serving day of the 2017-2018 School Year (May 23, 2018) may receive meal benefits for up to the first 30 school days of the 2018/2019 school year (**August 21 – October 2, 2018**). The 30 day grace period allows students to qualify for school meals while their new application, School Meals or Categorical Eligibility Direct Certification Notice is being processed. **NOTE:** If a student changes schools, a delay in receiving 30 day benefit may occur.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH PRICES: Elementary breakfast \$2.00 and lunch \$3.00. Middle/High School breakfast \$2.00 and lunch \$3.50. Students qualifying for free/reduced meals, breakfast free and lunch \$.40.

Coffee with the Superintendent

Homer <https://www.facebook.com/events/247417342586064/>

K-Bay Caffe

Monday, September 24

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

Kenai <https://www.facebook.com/events/229242644421705/>

Veronicas

Friday, October 5

9:00 - 10:00 a.m.





KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

Sean Dusek, Superintendent of Schools
148 North Binkley Street Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7520
Phone (907) 714-8888 Fax (907) 262-9132

August 2018

Dear Parent(s), Guardian(s), and Students:

Each school day close to 8,500 students attend our 43 schools. While at school, the safety and security of your child(ren) is always our number one priority. As a way to ensure this, the school district and the borough have installed security cameras at your child(ren)'s school. This letter is written to advise you that the cameras are located in public areas inside and outside of the school buildings. Please note that no cameras are placed in areas where students, staff, or community members have a reasonable expectation of privacy, e.g., a bathroom or a locker room.

School security is the main purpose for the cameras. However, recordings may be used in disciplinary proceedings. In addition, matters captured by the cameras may be referred to local law enforcement, as appropriate.

For more information, view [Board Policy 3515 School Safety and Security](#).

Please feel free to contact your school principal with questions regarding the cameras.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean Dusek".

Sean Dusek
Superintendent of Schools

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

148 N. Binkley Street, Soldotna, Alaska 99669

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Parents/Guardians/Students

FROM: David May, Planning and Operations Director

DATE: Fall, 2018

SUBJECT: **AHERA School Management Plans**

As mandated by Federal Regulation 40 CFR PART 763, known as AHERA (the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, enacted in 1987), local educational agencies must notify parents/guardians/students in writing each school year about the existence and location of AHERA School Management Plans for each school building within their jurisdiction.

Currently, copies of all AHERA School Management Plans are located at the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District's Central Office and at the Kenai Peninsula Borough Maintenance Office. In addition, a copy of the individual AHERA Management Plan for each school is kept on site in the school's administrative office. AHERA Management Plans may be inspected at any of these sites.

Your school, Nikiski Middle/High School, has been inspected for the presence of asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM), and none were found.

If you should have any questions concerning the AHERA School Management Plans or asbestos-related activities, as the designated Local Education Agency's Asbestos Coordinator, I can be contacted at the School District's Central Office or phone (907) 714-8875.



2018-2019 Student Council

Future Nikiski Cheerleader Camp

Nikiski High School Cheerleaders will be putting on a cheer camp, Saturday Sept 22nd at 9am, please show up in shorts, a t-shirt, tennis shoes and your hair pulled back in a ponytail, bangs out of your eyes, ready to have some fun!!!! Any questions call Coach Holly Boyle at 252-0988 or 776-9400.

Who: Ages 4-13 or grades k-8th
Where: NIKISKI HIGH SCHOOL GYM
When: SEPTEMBER 22nd, 2018
Time: 9am-11am
Cost \$25

SCHEDULE:

8:30-9:00 Registration
9:00-9:30 Warm-up, Little Susie, Jumps, Learn Cheers
9:30-9:45 Buddy Time
9:45- 10:15 Learn Dance, Stunt
10:15-10:30 Buddy Time
10:30-11:00 Put it all Together

Girls will have the opportunity to perform the cheer and routine they learn at the varsity football half-time on Saturday, September 29th. Game starts @ 2. Girls will need to meet in the commons of Nikiski High school an hour prior to start time (1pm).***What to Wear: Show up in black leggings (optional but recommended to wear a black long sleeved shirt under), and hair pulled back. A t-shirt and a bow will be provided. ~ It's a good idea to bring a jacket, earmuffs and gloves. Girls will be on the field with their buddy until after half time performance they will then be escorted to the top of stairs to sit with parents.**

Name: _____ Tshirt size _____

CHEERs to Practice:

G-O, LET ME HEAR YOU SAY GO! GO!
THAT'S RIGHT, UNITE,
LET ME HEAR YOU SAY FIGHT! FIGHT!
W-I-N, LET ME HEAR YOU SAY WIN! WIN!
NOW PUT IT ALL TOGETHER SAY, GO! FIGHT! WIN!

Come on you Bulldog fans, Stand up and clap your hands, xx, xxx, xx, xxx
Now that you've got that beat, stand up and stomp your feet, xx, xxx,xx,xxx
Now that you're in the grove, this time lets really move, xx,xxx,xx,xxx,xx,xxx,xx,xxx

Bulldogs tell me, How do you feel
I feel good, I feel so good- (grunt)



MR. HOOPER - ATHLETIC DIRECTOR/ MATH/ MS EXPLORATIONS

Bulldog Parents,

Nikiski has hosted the Nikiski Class Races, Shayna Pritchard Memorial Volleyball Tournament and 3 of our 4 home Football games for the season. Thanks to all of the volunteers that have been helping to make our games, tournaments and races a success. We are looking forward to hosting both the Middle School and High School Cross Country Running Borough Race on October 5th and September 15th respectfully. We are also preparing for Homecoming on September 29th and home Volleyball games on the 25th, 28th and 29th.

In Middle School Explorations we have been learning the basics of archery and have begun work on completing the State of Alaska's Hunter Education certification program.



MR. DOTH - MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE/AERIAL VIDEO

Middle School science is up and running for first quarter. With our first unit already behind us in the rear view mirror, it's time for the eighth graders to launch into Chemistry and the seventh graders to dive into Biology! I am hoping to try out a bunch of new materials and labs this year with both groups, so be ready for some high-powered experiments and in-depth dissections! Canvas is updated for both sections and is a great resource for extra help, video links, and printable worksheets if you misplace yours. Stay on top of things faithful readers, you don't wanna get behind!

Drones Class is flying high as we explore the principals of flight. Our small class size is allowing for lots of hands on opportunities and dynamic experiments. Right now the class is engaged in a fixed wing glider project that requires multiple prototypes, rigorous testing and CAD/CAM support. I can't wait to see what this group can produce!!!

MR. RIZZO - HS LANGUAGE ARTS / GOVERNMENT

This is an exciting year to be teaching government. Elections always make things interesting. Even though we have been in school less than a month, already, we have learned about the Bill of Rights and held our own mock congress. Here at Nikiski High we believe in learning by doing. The student house and the student senate actually passed three bills in the course of three days. That actually a better rate of creating laws than in the US Congress. Lots more to come as the students learn their civic duty. Please be a good example and get out there and vote on November 6.

MRS. ZIMMERMAN-MS SOCIAL STUDIES/LANG ARTS

I am very excited about this school year. This is the beginning of my 28th year of teaching in the KPBSD. This is my eighth year at NMHS. I truly love it here!

In 6th grade Language Arts, your student will complete a weekly Reading Log in class. If students do not finish their Reading Logs in class, the logs must go home so students can complete them. The next day, students need to hand in their work. Students are to write the due date at the top of the log to keep things straight. Students are **REQUIRED** to read for 50 minutes each week and log their minutes along with reacting or summarizing what they have read. I will be providing a writing prompt in order to focus students as they read. Every morning your student comes into my classroom; s/he is required to fill out their daily planners which are graded weekly on Fridays. The information they need is on the board all week. Students are presented a lesson on a particular part of speech or grammar rule, then complete a Grammar Handbook with a definition and example. This is an activity done *IN CLASS*. Students are then given a worksheet as independent practice on whatever lesson was presented for the day. Students are also required to check their grades every Friday and record them into their planners. This quarter in writing workshop, our focus is writing *narratives*. Ask your student for his/her schedule if you do not already have it! If you do NOT have your parent code for POWER SCHOOL, call the office. Power School is a powerful tool and is full of useful information for parents and students. You can set Power School up so you received a weekly or daily email with your child's grades. If you are not familiar with Power School, have your son or daughter show you how to navigate it. I've also posted as much as I can on Power School for parents and students as well as in Canvas for students. I emailed each one of my classes a step by step set of directions on how to print from Power School.

In 7th grade World History, we just took a test on Core Concepts Part 1 and have started Core Concepts Part 2. Students are required to fill out their planners when they come into class. The information they need is on the board all week. I've also posted as much as I can on Power School for parents and students as well as in Canvas for students. Each day in World History, students watch a video connected with the day's reading. We review the captions and questions for the day's reading assignment, then students have an opportunity to get a jump start on their work, generally 30-40 minutes of class time. Work not completed in class needs to be finished as homework and handed in the next day. We correct our assignments in class, so students can understand the information better. These assignments entail reading a section and filling out a T-chart to organize the answers to the section questions as well as filling out their KUD which is vocabulary. ***KUD's along with section assessments and the Topic Assessment will be handed in the day of the test.*** Please check Power School for posted assignments, schedules, and of course, grades. Our first test for P1 is September 13 and for P3 September 14.

➡ If you are going on vacation, your student needs to pick up a *PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCE FORM* at the office. Students then take the form to each teacher and teachers write down what is expected of the student while gone. If you have any questions or concerns, please address them with me immediately. DO NOT wait to address a concern. I am looking forward to a great year!



MS. NIEMCZYK-MIDDLE SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS

7th grade:

Hello and welcome to a new school year. These first few weeks of school have flown by and I have enjoyed getting to know each of my students. We are well into our first unit—narrative stories with a focus on poetry. The students are reading a variety of poems that will help them discover how word choice influences meaning and how poets develop a theme.

Unlike in previous years, students do not have weekly reading logs, unless they are absent from school on a Wed. or Thur. Instead, we are doing the 25-book challenge this year. We read for a portion of each class and students will be completing an in-class reading log that is specific to the skills/strategy that students is working on. Students do need to be reading at home 2-3 times a week for 25-40 minutes. Please encourage your student to be reading and ask them how they are doing on their book report. Their first quarter book report is due by Oct. 14.

Students are graded on the State standards. Much of their classwork is to allow them to practice the standards and skills being taught with the majority of their grade coming from final essays, projects and reports that let you, your student, and myself know exactly what material/skills have been mastered and which still need practice. This allows for me to ensure that each student works on the skills they need.

The students are finishing their MAP testing (Measures of Academic Progress), similar to the old Ed Performance, that provides a base line or starting point for reading and writing skills. Results are used to help develop and create reading and writing goals for the quarter. This allows me to personalize each student's instruction and ensures that each student is being challenged.

8th Grade:

What a great beginning to the year we have had. The students have dived right in and gotten back into the rhythm of our classroom. Our first unit of study is the Hero's Journey and Archetypes. Students are exploring archetypes that are found in literature regardless of culture or time period. This is an easy unit to hook students into because they all relate to superheroes and quest adventures.

I feel that it is important for students to have as much choice and control in their education as possible. They must always have something that they are reading—a book, magazine, play or poetry. The choice of what to read is up to each student. We are working on reading strategies that evaluate the story in terms of plot, character, and literary devices, as well as using foreshadowing and tone to make predictions. Students do need to be reading at home 2-3 times a week for 25-40 minutes. Please encourage your student to be reading and ask them how they are doing on their book report. First quarter book report due Oct. 14th.

Students are being assessed on the State standards in what is known as standards based grading. Students know that they need to be keeping track of their progress and growth with each standard. Much of their classwork is to allow them to practice the standards and skills being taught with the majority of their grade coming from final essays, projects and reports that let you, your student, and myself know exactly what material/skills have been mastered and which still need practice.

The students are finishing their MAP testing (Measures of Academic Progress), similar to the old Ed Performance, that provides a base line or starting point for reading and writing skills. Results are used to help develop and create reading and writing goals for the quarter. This allows me to personalize each student's instruction and ensures that each student is being challenged.

MRS. BARROWS— MS STUDY SKILLS / READING

Students in Language Arts Fundamentals are off to a great year! We just completed testing to be sure they all have been placed into the correct class. Language Arts Fundamentals is designed to help students who may struggle in either reading or writing to improve their skills before they get to high school. We have begun working through the curriculum and finished getting all of the baseline data that will be used to assess their progress as we progress through the year. For this class, students **will not** regularly have homework. However, it is important that they are reading at home each day!

MRS. SINGER—SPANISH 1 & 2

Nikiski Spanish classes are starting strong. Both Spanish 1 and Spanish 2 have begun their cultural studies by exploring the country of Peru. Students are learning about Peruvian music, holidays, food, history, Indigenous Peoples, and cultural traditions. In addition, Spanish 1 is learning greetings in Spanish, pronouns, and vocabulary pertaining to school. Spanish 2 is reviewing how to conjugate verbs in Spanish, as well as building their vocabulary by learning more AR, IR, and ER verbs. Both classes have organized themselves into “familias” which are cooperative working groups. Each has a unique story complete with individual and family names in Spanish. All in all, our Spanish classes are building a solid understanding of the Spanish language and culture.

MS. VRANIAK-MATH/COMPUTER PROGRAMING

This is my third year at Nikiski Middle High and I'm so glad to be back! This year I am teaching 8th Grade Math, Algebra I, Geometry and Intro to Computer Programming. I am also the National Honor Society Advisor again, and I am looking forward to a new year full of fun service projects! Please contact me at MVraniak@kpbsd.k12.ak.us if you know of any needs in the community, or if you need volunteers for a community event! The NHS members and I would be happy to help! Also, applications for new inductees have been sent out to students who are eligible, and are due on the 21st of September. Please encourage your student to apply!

Another exciting thing going on again this year is Middle School Coloring Crew! This was a program started by our school counselor, Ms. Lyke. We all gather in my classroom during lunch every Tuesday to color, chat and drink hot cocoa! This is a great way for students to build positive relationships with other students and staff members!

MR. SMITH—MS MATH/ MS SCIENCE/ ALGEBRA READINESS

My math classes are doing a great job working hard in our station rotations. Students are learning how to use their time effectively, transition to different activities, and ask questions when they need help. We just finished up some math fact review skills and are in the middle of our first main units of study for each math curriculum in course 1 and 2. I am very proud of how many of my 6th graders are learning to use Canvas, IXL, and my homemade math videos efficiently. We are starting to hit our stride with class routines, expectations, and the overall flow of school. We also just finished up MAP testing, which is one of three computer based tests that math students are required to take to track their growth throughout the year. Math students have been very patient in learning a new testing system and working through some minimal testing complications.

My 6th grade earth science class is finishing up a unit on the earth's surface. We are making 3-D models of mountains using our recently acquired knowledge and understanding of landforms, contour lines, and topographic maps. Students are having a blast with this project, and they also enjoyed a fun Landform Booklet project we did. Students were able to show their creativity in making colorful, informative booklets about landforms and some students even provided some cool examples of the particular landforms in Alaska. In the coming weeks, we will be getting in to rocks and minerals, where students will start performing labs. I am excited to be teaching science again after a year break from it. Year 3 at NMHS is off to a great start with both school and football.

MR. ANDERSON - MS SCIENCE/ MATH/ PE

Parents,

Things are off to a great start this school year!

Earth Science just started a new unit in map-making. Life Science is taking on the challenge of understanding what it means to be alive, and the basic needs of all living things. Course 3 Math just started a new chapter on exponents. Looking forward to a great fall season!

MS. WIDMAN-ART

Fall in the art classroom has been busy and fun. Middle school students are learning about clay and glaze, gaining a plethora of new ceramics vocabulary and procedures. Additionally, they have been sketching outdoors. Combining the two art experiences classes have been collecting leaves outside and pressing them into our clay to create natural textures.

High school students are creating ripped paper collages using a variety of fibers. All classes are learning how to plan and execute projects. Daily sketches teach the importance of persistence, improvement, and overcoming fears and creative block.

Digital Photography has been on the move learning how to shoot photographs outside of the “green” mode by exploring F-stop and shutter speed settings on their cameras. They have learned about the history of photography and had some engaging discussions. This awesome class also just completed their first “photo of the week challenge” of sunsets and sunrises.

It is my hope that all my classes will be able to critically examine visual media and carefully consider the messages they create and receive through the visual world. During a time of media saturation, understanding the visual realm is more important than ever. My personal goal for the year is to find ways to give students a voice through their visual productions and help them harness those powers of communication and self-expression. I look forward to an incredible year with amazing students.



Students work on still life sketches and ripped paper collages.



MR. KORNSTAD—CAD-CAM/MS WELDING

Hello from the Industrial Arts world at Nikiski Middle/High! We are off to an exciting start to the school year. Students in the Cad Cam shop are beginning to create products in the digital world and produce them in the physical. In the Cad Cam class students learn about safety in the shop before they are introduced to two software programs that design various projects to be run on 4 different machines. By the end of first quarter students will become proficient in utilizing some of the basic design tools in Corel Draw and Partworks to create a project on each one of the 4 machines in the shop. Projects created in Partworks will be produced on either the ShopBot or on the Plasma Cam. The ShopBot is a computerized router mounted on a large rectangular table used to engrave, mill and cutout. The plasma cam is a plasma cutter controlled by the computer and mounted to a large square table. It cuts metal designs out of steel and aluminum. Projects created in Corel Draw are produced on either the Versa Cam or on the Laser machine. The Versa Cam is a large printer that prints and cuts out designs on rolls of vinyl up to 28” wide. The Laser machine engraves, etches, burns, and cuts all kinds of materials from paper to plastic to glass to metals. Students are working hard in the shop and enjoying learning employable skills relevant to the 21st century!

MR. BAILEY—QUEST/MS GEOGRAPHY

The big challenge for 1st quarter Quest classes is this year's 'Mind A-Mazes' challenge – entitled "Marvelous Machines". Teams of students work several weeks to design, construct, test, and refine devices, which perform a variety of selected tasks using simple machines. Each task completed by the use of a different simple machine within the time frame of 1 minute will earn the team points (time bonus points as well). Teams are currently planning and preparing their devices for the district meet in Soldotna on October 13th! Working with others, listening to their ideas, finding alternative solutions, and persisting with creative problem solving through numerous obstacles are all elements of a 'Mind A-Mazes' challenge. In conjunction with Mind A-Mazes, students also designed absurd 'Rube Goldberg Devices' (sequenced chain reaction of written steps with labeled sketches) which required students to find creative, bizarre methods for accomplishing a 'simple' task in a complex and responsive reaction. Students also completed online Wordles (personality traits/interests) and attempted some spontaneous problem solving challenges in these opening weeks of the school year.

6th grade Social Studies students have been learning about the geography of North America, and have been completing North America maps with labeled Canadian provinces, states, major rivers, major mountain ranges, Caribbean islands, Central American countries, major bodies of water, and other physical features. Students are reviewing their study guide to prepare for their upcoming North America test as well. After working on the geography and key attributes of North America, we'll move on to South America later this quarter. Discussing and completing weekly geography questions is another activity students participate in throughout the year, with these first few weeks centered on such concepts as latitude, longitude, meridians, parallels, hemispheres, and grid coordinates. With this 6th grade group, we'll explore current events, complete weekly geography questions or atlas assignments, and continue the exploration of the geography and cultures of continental regions around the globe as the year progresses!

MR. PORTER—HIGH SCHOOL MATH

Calculus is doing a great job this year. We have finished our discussions on limits and it is on to derivatives. Advanced Algebra has had a hard time of things in the world of transformations. The students are going to be pleasantly surprised with this next unit when they realize that what they have learned in Unit 1 can be applied to all functions from here on out. Pre-calc is sliding into pace as well. We will be wrapping up the first Unit this week and moving on to Unit 2.

I am very excited this year to be on the Industrial Arts team. The students so far have put out some beautiful cheese boards. We are almost done with some sliding boxes and candle holders as well. I have been encouraging kids to think into the future for some gift ideas as the holidays are approaching fast!

MR. JACKSON-STUDY SKILLS/LANGUAGE ARTS

When you were in high school, how many of you completely shut down when you heard "today we are going to read poetry?" I know I did. When I was in school, I dreaded seeing that poetry unit. The worst part was feeling like everyone else knew what the poem was about, they understood the context, and it felt like they practically knew the poet.

One of my goals in teaching LA11 this year is to make reading poetry fun. There are a few different things I'm doing to facilitate this happening. The first is by introducing the author; who are they and what are they like? Another is looking at when the poem was written, and what's the reason it was written. If the poem needs historical context, I'll give it. The last thing I told my class is that it was my goal to get them to enjoy poetry by simply reading poems. Not anything else. We aren't writing poems or writing about them, we aren't discussing our feelings. We are reading and trying to understand what it's about.

So far starting early in the year we have read through Robert Service's *The Cremation of Sam McGee*, Walt Whitman's *O Captain! My Captain*, and W.H. Auden's *The Unknown Citizen*. After having read just these three poems, I have heard them using authors names and discussing poetry in other areas. I think they're going to like it.

MRS. HORNUNG - HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE

This year I'm teaching high school Physical Science, Chemistry, Engineering, and Algebra. I love these topics and its fun teaching students of all ages. Physical Science is an introduction to the world of Chemistry and Physics. We will begin the year with Chemistry and will transition to Physics after Christmas. My Chemistry class will spend all year gaining enough knowledge and skills to be proficient in a college level chemistry class. Just like last year, you can find important information on Canvas, the District's learning management system. Canvas is where I will post class notes and extra copies of handouts given during class. If you haven't had a chance yet, have your children log into Canvas and show you what's there. It will be a tool I use to allow students access to the topics we cover in class so that they can study from the notes and get extra practice from home.

MR. BJORKMAN - HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES

9th Grade Alaska Studies – Students have been learning all about Alaska's geography and the history of Alaska's natives prior to Russian contact. Students will continue to explore how Alaska's history shapes their lives.

10th Grade World History – Students have been engaged in a simulation in which they take on the role of a citizen of a fief in Feudalistic Europe. Students work in groups to make decisions about how to navigate the feudal world and work toward the best outcome for their fief while they manage the interests of opposing sides in and around their kingdom. Students will be using the knowledge they learn about the middle ages to connect to the cultural and political changes made during the Renaissance.

11th Grade US History – Students have been learning about the causes and consequences of the Civil War. Currently students are working on a project that requires them to use at least one written resource on a topic of their choice for a self-directed inquiry into that topic. Then students must take what they have learned and present it to the class. Many students are choosing to present their new knowledge through videos and skits. The project is due on Sept 21st.

MR. NELSON - PHYSICAL TRAINING/ LIFE ACTIVITIES

The world of Physical Education has been off to a great start! In Life Activities, we just finished our softball unit, and will be heading into handball next week. We have also been playing a variety of games to spice things up! As for Physical Training, we have learned about the FITT principle and the 5 Components of Fitness, as well as some other fitness related topics. We are on our way to setting our semester goals and creating our first fitness plans to achieve those goals.



MR. MORIN—BIOLOGY / WELDING / CONSTRUCTION

The new school year is well underway. The New School Year brings new and different approaches to learning for students transitioning from Middle School to the rigors of High School. Both the students and I will be learning some of these new and different approaches as we go. However, there are some traditional modes of learning that will not change. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize a couple of requirements that are essential for all students in my classes if they are to succeed.

The first irreplaceable skill is memorization. There are myriad methods and techniques regarding effective memorization. I will teach several explicit skills to all my students. I encourage the students to use whatever method that works for their learning and thinking style. But, they must learn to memorize and this takes time.

Over my 31-year career in teaching, I have attempted to explain the necessity of HOMEWORK. Our culture has certainly changed since I've started teaching and frequently, I encounter people who believe kids should not have to spend time outside of school working on school work. This is an unfortunate and misguided belief. There is not enough time in the 170 in-school contact hours allocated for students to work through all the curriculum. Nor are these 170 hours enough for practice and drill, memorization, exploration and the other learning events, let alone exploration of the more critical thinking we need to get the kids through to have an optimal learning opportunity. Therefore HOMEWORK is expected and necessary.

I ask every parent to read through your child's science notebook. Please review and look through their textbook. It is a wonderful textbook. I ask every parent to use PowerSchool and frequently review your child's progress and grades in my class. Talk to your kids about what is happening in their science class. And please call or e-mail me if you have any concerns or if you would just like to discuss your child's progress in my class.

A few Facts from: <http://www.attendanceworks.org/>

1. Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2-4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
2. Over 7 million (1 in 7) U.S. students miss nearly a month of school each year.
3. Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent.
4. Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or be held back.
5. By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
6. Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as chronic absence.
7. Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are four times more likely to be chronically absent than others often for reasons beyond their control, such as unstable housing, unreliable transportation and a lack of access to health care.
8. When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.
9. Attendance improves when schools engage students and parents in positive ways and when schools provide mentors for chronically absent students.
10. Most school districts and states don't look at all the right data to improve school attendance. They track how many students show up every day and how many are skipping school without an excuse, but not how many are missing so many days in excused and unexcused absence that they are headed off track academically.

MS. DILLON - BAND/CHOIR/GUITAR

Hello Music Lovers!

This semester so far has been wonderful!

We have been working hard and are getting ready for our first band and choir concert of the year on October 18th at 7PM!

Coming up later this semester we may have students performing in the Borough Honor Choir October 22nd and 23rd. We have had quite a few students audition for Borough Honor Choir and All-State Choir and we should hear back in a few weeks if they made it! The Allstate Gala Concert is being held at the West Anchorage High School Auditorium on Nov 17th following three days of grueling rehearsals! It an excellent concert I hope you can join us! Finally, our winter concert is December 18th.

Can't wait to see you at our upcoming concerts and have a wonderfully musical day!

MS. STRATTON-COOPER - MS STUDY SKILLS / MS MATH

My math and study skills classes have been working on interactive notebooks for our classes. We are using colors and hands-on notes to make math fun and exciting. Students are getting into the rhythm of the school year. The year is off to a great start!

MR. HITCHCOCK - MS SOCIAL STUDIES/ MATH

We are nearing the end of our first unit already! It has been a quick start to the year. In Geography, the students are examining different types of maps, understanding the function of various tools to read maps, and writing a longitude/latitude based haiku for a mnemonic device. American History students have studied early indigenous Americans pre-European contact. One of the byproducts was a group presentation of a tribe of their choice, we even had a student do their version of a traditional Kickapoo tribal dance. Finally, Math Course 2 students have been getting familiar with various tools of instruction including: Blind Kahoot!, IXL, Khan Academy, worksheets, daily math skill building, and different sizes of group instruction. With 1/8 of the year down, here's to another great 87.5%!

MS. HAMILTON - INTENSIVE NEEDS

Greetings! By way of introduction, I'm Kathy Hamilton and I'm new to Nikiski Middle/High. My husband and I escaped the hurricanes in Florida for the tranquility of this northern paradise this past summer. It definitely was an epic move and we are thrilled to be here and to be a part of this community. I have four children, who are now adults, and five bonus children that I received when I married their dad. Yes, that's nine children.

This will be my 14th year in the classroom and teaching continues to excite me! I'm fortunate to work with skilled paraprofessionals (Mrs. Seater, Mrs. Peek, and Mrs. Smith) who exude passion for student success and consistently go the extra mile to make that happen. Our classroom focuses on individual student needs as we integrate academics with independent living skills. We're looking forward to working with our students, families, and our Bulldog community to enjoy learning this year!

MRS. JENNESS - HIGH SCHOOL LANGUAGE ARTS / YEARBOOK

Mrs. Jenness's Language Arts classes are off to a great start. Sophomores are writing and illustrating their own children's books, Juniors are writing original stories based on vintage postcards, and Seniors are writing their personal essays that can be used for their Bulldog packets and other scholarships and work opportunities.

MR. ERNST - STUDY SKILLS / FRESHMAN ALTERNATIVE CLASSES

Study Skills:

My Study Skills students are working hard every class to keep their grades up and find academic success in school. Families can keep up to date on the progress of the classes of their children by using PowerSchool or Canvas on their home computers.

Alternative Algebra:

Mark Smith and I teach this standards based math course. The freshman that we have this year are doing a fantastic job producing evidence of their mastery of the state standards in mathematics, and it looks like they will all be able to successfully transition back to the regular curriculum for their sophomore year at the same level or above that of their regular education peers!

Alternative LA 9-Alternative Life Science

This is a great hybrid freshman class that combines the skills of writing and close reading that are the subject of language arts with the scientific information and investigative skills of life science. We are working on developing vocabulary knowledge to enhance close reading while learning how to write in a variety of forms and for many purposes. Throughout the semester we have been working on Language Arts standards through the IXL computer platform. Currently we are working on the narrative writing form in LA 9 and in Life Science we are reviewing taxonomy and plant identification.

MR. ANDERS - MIDDLE SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION

There is a lot happening at Nikiski Middle/High School in Physical Education for grades 6-8. Students have worked on some soccer and also their 1st mile runs of the year. Students have created their run logs and recorded their first two runs of the year. We will be outside as much as possible; students are being reminded to bring a hoodie or light jacket. In the coming weeks students will begin working on basketball skills and activities. We are also doing a variety of team and cooperative games. Students in 8th grade Strength and Conditioning are working hard, getting fit and learning form on lifts and movements.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER—MS. GAUNT

Wow! The school year is already off to an awesome start (& things are busy)!

- Coloring Crew is up and running again this year and takes place on Tuesdays in Ms. Vraniak's room. Students can come to color, drink cocoa, play games and make friends! All middle school students are welcome!
- The week of September 10th was National Suicide Prevention Week. The Counseling Team hosted a suicide prevention activity in the lunchroom for students of all ages. Students learned about the warning signs of suicide as well as resources available to help those experiencing crisis.
- September 19th we are launching Workforce Wednesday – Season 2! It's going to be so cool. LifeMed is coming and bringing a HELICOPTER! We'll have a full LifeMed crew here to tell students about how they work together as a team to help rescue people in emergency situations.
 - * Stay tuned! We also have these presentations lined up for this fall: Veterinarian, Registered Nurse, Mechanic, and US Army National Guard.
 - * More presenters will be added as the semester goes on. It's sure to be another awesome year of career exploration!
- Seniors & Parents of Seniors – keep an eye on your email as I'll be sending out lots of information about upcoming events & opportunities! This month we'll have Financial Aid Night (Sept. 18th at 6:30pm) and next month, we'll host a FAFSA Completion Event (October 4th at 6:30pm).

We're so excited to work with your students this year! Please reach out if you ever have any questions.



We had wonderful participation at our lunchtime suicide prevention week activity this month. Our school Counseling team worked with students to discuss suicide warning signs and what to do if they or a friend need help. Students also responded to the question, "What could I say if I were worried about a friend?" Our students came up with some amazingly powerful & kind things they could say to someone in crisis. Bonus - those who participated got to pick out a lifesaver because well - someday they just may be a true lifesaver!

YEARBOOKS ON SALE!
Only \$45—Until Oct. 31

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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Homecoming Week September 24-29

Tuesday — Peach Fuzz Volleyball—6:30 p.m.

Thursday — Powder Puff Football—6:00 p.m.

Friday — Bonfire—6:30 p.m.

Saturday — Volleyball vs. Redington—12:00 p.m.

Football vs. Homer—2:00 p.m.

Homecoming Dance—8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.

September 26	High School Wrestling Begins
October 8	Middle School Basketball Begins
October 9	Picture Retakes
	Academic Awards / NHS Inductions 6:00 p.m.
October 18	Fall Concert 7:00 p.m.
October 19	NO SCHOOL—End of Quarter
November 1	Parent/Teacher Conferences 8-11 a.m., 12-4 p.m., 5-8 p.m.