

**Begich Middle School**  
**Notes from Building a School Community class and meeting**  
**January 9, 2007, Creekside Elementary School, 4:00-6:00 p.m.**

The following is a summary of the third session of "Building a School Community" class attended by Begich Middle School staff.

Agenda

1. Introductions, announcements and "housekeeping"

Guests were introduced and welcomed.

Staff voted on five top mascot choices and three top color choices. The principal will meet with eight to ten students from each feeder school who will also vote to narrow the choices. The final step will be for all students from our feeder schools to vote on one mascot and the school colors.

2. Description of Creekside Elementary School

Creekside has an enrollment of 400 students. Approximately 75 current fifth and sixth graders will attend Begich Middle School next year. Creekside is a Title I school which uses Reading First and Houghton Mifflin to help students improve their reading skills. Nine separate languages are spoken; Among being the most predominant after English. Creekside includes a number of monolingual students.

Other characteristics of the school include a strong PTA and student council, academic competitions and extracurricular activities for students and their families (e.g., Battle of the Books, Spelling Bee, Literacy nights, parent activities) and social emotional intelligence training through Mediator training and use of the 40 Developmental Assets program.

There is a school wide expectation system that is consistently followed.

Student decorum is strong and expectations are clear. Expectations are stated for the classroom, hallway, MPR and playground. There is an active behavior support team. The school has a site-based decision making system. The staff turnover is low with staff satisfaction at a high level.

3. Presentation by Angie Barr, Architect, Kumin Associates, Inc., Chris Lynch and John Paxton, ASD Project Managers

Principal Architect Angie Barr of Kumin Associates, Inc. described the design process for Begich Middle School which started in June, 2003. From June, 2003 through April 2004, a series of meetings were held with students, parents, school staff and community members to collect ideas, examine other schools, and identify a vision and guiding principles. From these discussions, the design team formulated a concept for the building and schematic design. On-going

approvals were sought from Anchorage School Board, Northeast Community Council, Anchorage municipal assembly, Planning and Zoning and Urban Design. The design committee worked hard to follow the required educational specifications and incorporate ideas collected from the community (e.g., building that is attractive and fits with the fabric of the community to become the "heart of Muldoon," placement of the school building on the property so that it is set away from residential areas, easy access for parent and bus drop-off, natural light and good ventilation for classrooms, and so on).

Project Managers Chris Lynch and Jon Paxton shared information about their positive experience of working with the Kumin Associates, Inc. staff and Hickel, Inc. contractors. They described the site work, including the trail system, fields, artificial turf and Creekside Center Drive, that will be completed in time for the school opening. They are pleased with the quality of materials and construction. Our school is built to last more than 50 years and not require major maintenance.

#### 4. Updates from Department Chairs and Coordinators

All department chairs and coordinators have been working with district curriculum staff to develop their respective programs. They are consulting with other middle schools for ideas and resources. Each department is working on equipment and supply orders. The Librarian is collecting materials based on specific teacher needs to supplement the library collection. The Technology Coordinator is collecting feedback from individual staff members about their technology needs.

#### 5. Working Committees

Staff members and guests divided into working committees for group discussions and planning in the following areas: activities, parent involvement, positive school climate, safety and decorum, master schedule nuts and bolts, and technology.

Our next meeting will be on January 25, 2007, at 7:00-9:00 p.m., at the Boys and Girls Club in the Muldoon Mall. We will be meeting with representatives of the Northeast and Scenic Park Community Councils. All meetings are open and all guests are welcome.

Please email Jeanne Fischer at <[fischer\\_jeanne@asdk12.org](mailto:fischer_jeanne@asdk12.org)> or call 333-5042, if you have questions or concerns.