



ASD CONNECT

October 2018

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Parent Conferences



Parent conferences are a valuable tool in the education of any child. During conferences, the teacher and parent/guardian have the opportunity to talk about important information that will help the student throughout their education. Communication between home and school is one of the best ways to ensure that a child's school experience is successful.

A Message From Our Superintendent



Dear families and friends,

Happy windy Wednesday. As I have been out to schools, I want to share how overwhelmed I am by the great things you make happen in ASD. I want to take this time and space to highlight a few to celebrate the success of our people - students, staff, and community partners.

Recently, history was made, as Marty Lang former principal of Eagle River High states, "After 13 seasons of varsity play, the football team is headed to state for the first time." We have super

Conferences are scheduled for Oct. 24-25. School schedules and student-release times vary.

[Parents are able to schedule their conferences online now.](#)

School Bus Safety Week



The School Board approved a resolution to recognize the week of October 22-26 as School Bus Safety Week during their Oct. 8 Meeting. During this designated week, the District will enhance its educational programs by instructing students on how to maintain healthy lifestyles, how to handle emergencies, and to be aware of traffic and their surroundings on city streets.

Currently, the District transports approximately 21,000 students on 231 routes, to and from school, on a daily basis. Our buses cover more than 1,500 routes daily and will travel three million miles annually, providing more than three million passenger trips each year.

Web Accessibility and the ADA

Do you experience hearing loss or vision loss? When navigating the internet, do you rely on captioning or use a screen reader? If so, the District requests your input on the accessibility of its website. Individuals who rely on screen readers and/or captioning to access website content are encouraged to visit the school and department pages of the District's website and to provide feedback regarding their experience.

After visiting the District's [website](#), please email any input and suggestions related to website accessibility to EEO@asdk12.org.

stars in other activities as ASD holds the top spots around our state in many sports, music, robotics, writing, and arts competitions. Nice job girls and boys of fall!

Last Friday I was emotionally moved by the opening of the Anne Frank exhibit at the Anchorage Museum, where our students from Bartlett and East spoke to community, state, and world leaders on the "exhibit walk." I was stirred by Mayor Ethan Berkowitz's speech referencing his family's flight out of Nazi territory. The exhibit is a partnership with the Netherland Consulate and is traveling to Chugiak, East, and Bartlett over the next three weeks. The program is running nationwide; ASD is fortunate to be a part of something so great.

Thank you to the staff, students, and families of Denali Montessori School. While we never want to hear the words I heard early Wednesday morning, "There has been a shooting at a school," I want our whole District to celebrate the staff, particularly our front office support and classroom teachers who acted swiftly to care for the students in their charge. The staff put to use the ALICE safety training in an exceptional manner. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. The day was not an easy one, but as I watched dismissal of the day and the happy, cheerful, smiling faces of students - I knew that Denali had shown its greatness.

So many wonderful things happen each day in our schools, classrooms, trails, fields, and facilities that make ASD such a great place to learn. Thank you again for all you do.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deena Bishop".

Deena Bishop

ASD Has Two Finalists for Alaska Teacher of the Year



Danielle Riha and Jacob Bera (between Dr. Bishop and Starr Marsett)

The Anchorage School District is thrilled to have two of the five finalists this year nominated for Alaska Teacher of the Year--Jacob Bera and Danielle Riha.

Jacob Bera has been teaching art in the Anchorage School District for 15 years. He works as the Fine Arts Department Chair at Eagle

ADHD Awareness



Cassidy, Ochadleus, South High Senior

Nationally, October is recognized as ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) Awareness Month. Cassidy Ochadleus, an ASD student at South High School, hopes to encourage the Anchorage School Board to adopt October as ADHD Awareness Month for the sake of those students affected by the disorder.

In an email to Superintendent, Dr. Deena Bishop, Cassidy writes, "The **ADHD Awareness Coalition** promotes its mission by providing information and tools for those wishing to raise awareness. Through the coalition and with our own efforts, ADHD awareness could be raised in ASD to help educate students for success in life. With the right tools and support, students with ADHD can be exceptional students. I was given those tools by a few fabulous ASD teachers and my parents. I want to help empower other students to be successful."

Fill Up at Chevron to Help Local Schools



Chevron's [Fuel Your School](#)

River High School, building a comprehensive visual arts program that serves students of all abilities, including those in a successful AP Studio Art program. Bera organizes the annual Fine Arts Cabaret, an event that allows students from art and music programs to showcase their work to the community.

Danielle Riha has been teaching middle school for 10 years and is currently teaching at the Alaska Native Cultural Charter School, which she helped establish and develop the curriculum for. Riha taught in rural Alaska for Southwest Region School District where she engaged community elders in working with students, developed a successful reading program, and created a collaborative teacher model to support staff in rural communities.

[Learn more](#) ➔

Principal Appreciation Month

The Anchorage School Board approved the resolution to make October School Principals and Assistant Principals Recognition Month during their Oct. 8 Meeting. The Anchorage School District has so many fantastic leaders to celebrate this month. We encourage our community to support their school principals any way they can. There are numerous ways you can show support for our school's principals, some examples are:

- Write a thank you note, with specific examples of how he/she has helped you.
- Contact local businesses and ask if they might donate a gift certificate or arrange for discounts for Principals this month.
- Post to social media to spread the word and celebrate your Principal.



Principal Reed Whitmore and some of his staff were honored at the Oct. 8 Board Meeting.

Principal Reed Whitmore is just one of our many excellent principals. His school, Stellar Secondary, has been awarded as a National Blue Ribbon School for the second time since 2005. Whitmore continues to instruct the values that Stellar was built around-fostering the creation of independent young people through self-directed curriculum and raising active members of our community through humanitarian efforts.

[Learn more](#) ➔

program is back, helping Alaskans fund classroom projects across the Anchorage School District. During October, for every fill-up of eight gallons or more, Chevron will donate \$1 to projects posted on DonorsChoose.org, capping at \$100,000. Chevron has purchased more than \$569,788 in supplies for Alaska schools since 2013.

Upcoming Events

Free flu shots

Wednesday, Oct. 17

Great Alaska ShakeOut Earthquake Drill at 10:18 a.m.

Thursday, Oct. 18

Free flu shots

Thursday, Oct. 18

In-service day, no school for students

Friday, Oct. 19

Free flu shots

Friday, Oct. 19

Countdown to Kindergarten

Wednesday, Oct. 3

Regular School Board meeting

Monday, Oct. 22

Free Flu Shots

Wednesday, Oct. 24

Parent Conferences

Oct. 24-25

Free Flu Shots

Thursday, Oct. 25

Free Flu Shots

Friday, Oct. 26

Free Flu Shots

Friday, Oct. 26

Free Flu Shots

Thursday, Nov. 1

Alaska Native/American Indian Heritage Month

Nov. 1-30

Free Flu Shots

Thursday, Nov. 8

Veteran's Day

Sunday, Nov. 11

In-service day, no school for

School Start Time - Conclusion

Beginning in 2016-17, the School Board charged the Superintendent to study school start time. In early fall of 2017, Matthew Park, a West High School student began an online student petition through change.org, titled "Push start times in ASD high schools to 8:30 a.m." To date, the petition has gathered 5,439 signatures. In the appeal for signatures, Matthew wrote, "As the next school year approaches, the daunting idea of yet another year of heavy workloads and lack of sleep crosses the minds of thousands of high school students around Anchorage. With the first classes of the day starting at 7:30 a.m., students are exhausted, unfocused, and held back from performing to the best of their academic abilities."



On the heels of the student petition, the school start time issue became an initiative for the School Board. A Board directive asked ASD Administration to undertake this study to obtain feedback and provide potential start time scenarios through public input. Using unspent funds from a business process review, the District hired Western Demographics to conduct the School Start Time Change Study.

Following this very public yearlong process a recommendation was provided by the Superintendent based on public input gathered. On October 8th, after much consideration, Board members voted not to change school start times.

[Learn more →](#)

Future School Year Calendars



Also during the Oct. 8 School Board Meeting, the Board approved the calendars for the [2019-20](#), [2020-21](#), and [2021-22](#) school years. There are no new updates or changes to the calendars that families need to note. More information can be viewed on our [website](#).

Recent Headlines

[School Board Vacancy Update](#)

[Williwaw Students Participate in International Walk to School Day](#)

Anchorage School Board

Starr Marsett, President
Deena Mitchell, Vice President
Alisha Hilde, Clerk
Elisa Snelling, Treasurer
Seat A, Vacant
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Superintendent

[Dr. Deena Bishop](#)



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[Creekside Park Attendance Parade](#)

[Clark MS Informers Spread the Importance of Attendance](#)

[Eagle River Elementary Wears Blue to Raise Awareness](#)

[ASD Students Lead Anne Frank Exhibit](#)

[Northern Lights ABC Red, White, and Blue Assembly](#)

[Confidentiality in Q ParentConnection](#)