



DECEMBER ~ 2018/2019

PTARMIGAN

ELEMENTARY

Dear Ptarmigan Families,

I would like to begin this newsletter with a big thank you to the staff, students, and parents that assisted during the earthquake on November 30th. I hope your loved ones did not sustain any injuries and that your homes are safe. This just validates the importance of the school having your current phone number and email address.

Winter is finally here! The snow and cold bring new challenges for students and parents getting to school safely and on time. Our November attendance rate dropped to only 68% of the students attended 90% of the time. Let's start the 2019 year with a goal of 80% of our students attending 90% of the days. Together we can do amazing things, so parents we need your help! Along with getting students to school, please ensure that students are coming with appropriate snow gear so they can enjoy their recess without getting cold and wet. Students go outside until the temperature reaches -10 degrees. Students will not be able to use the sledding hill if they aren't wearing all of their snow gear including; coat, snow pants, boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat or hood.

Our 2nd Quarter Awards Assembly will be on January 11th. Students grades 3rd-5th will have their assembly from 9:30am-10:00am and students grades PreK-2nd will have their assembly from 10:15am-10:45am.

Before I close, I would like to highlight the importance of our **Free Breakfast and Lunch Program**. Students cannot truly learn if they are hungry, so please encourage your student to take a breakfast, a lunch, or both.

We are still having our all school holiday sing along on Wednesday, December 19th at 10:00am. Parents and family members are invited to come and sing with our students and staff. There is also no school for students on December 21st, 2018. Enjoy your holiday break and we'll see you on January 7th, 2019 for the start of 3rd Quarter!

Sincerely,

Kelly Ramey
Principal Ptarmigan Elementary

NEWS FROM NURSE BRITTANY

Just another friendly reminder to families to please ensure your students have proper snow gear, especially a coat, hats, boots and gloves when they arrive at school! On November 30th, the day of our earthquake, we had a few students that didn't have jackets while students and staff had to wait outside for our school to be cleared and safe for re-entry. Imagine if we were unable to go back into the building. Those students could have been cold for a long period of time! As always, if your family is unable to get snow gear, please let the school know. We would be happy to help if we can.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR:

DECEMBER

- **CHOIR FIELD TRIP:** 12/10/2018
- **EVENING CHOIR CONCERT @6pm:**
(Ptarmigan Gymnasium): 12/13/2018
- **CHOIR CONCERT ASSEMBLY @2:30pm:**
12/14/2018
- **SCHOOL SING-A-LONG:** 12/19/2018
- **WINTER BREAK: NO SCHOOL**
12/21/2018 - 1/6/2019

JANUARY

- **MATH FAMILY NIGHT @6pm:** 1/17/2019
- **Martin Luther Day: NO SCHOOL** 1/21/2019

Meet Ptarmigan's Kevins from Preschool

Kevin Foster

(Developmental Preschool)

Hi, I'm Kevin Foster. I have been teaching preschool for 6 years. Before Ptarmigan, I taught at Tudor Elementary and prior to that, I worked in the village of Shungnak, AK. I have lived in Alaska for 6 years and am originally from the city of Chicago. What I enjoy most about working with preschoolers are the stories I come home with on a daily basis that are heartwarming and also hilarious. Every day is different, and nothing is predictable when working with children. It keeps me young. In my spare time, I enjoy watching a wide variety of movies. I wouldn't say that I'm Roger Ebert, but many of the crew at the theater know me by name. I'm always looking for new movie recommendations!



Kevin "KC" Crowley

(Developmental Preschool & SLC Preschool)

I was born in Detroit in 1975 and first came to Alaska to teach in Nunam Iqua in the Lower Yukon School district in 1999 after receiving my bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Michigan. Over the next decade, I taught and traveled around Alaska and over to Asia, gathering two more degrees, a Master's in special education inclusion again from the University of Michigan and another Master's in special education from the University of Alaska SE. I got married and had 3 sons while living in Korea, all who are now middle and high school students within ASD. This is my first year teaching preschool after 10 years in a self-contained special education setting with the district. I love bringing my passion for literature and making art to the table when working with our youngest students.



SSRS-IE parental Winter notification:

Just a reminder that we are in the Winter screening window for our school-wide behavior screener. The teacher rating scale is used to assess various risk factors for each student in their classroom to determine students at risk for behavior. The screening will be used to identify students who may need additional support and to prevent behavior problems from escalating over time. If you have any questions, please contact your student's teacher or the principal.



"Notes" From the Ptarmigan Music Room

December, a time of many traditional celebrations, including the "Music Room Open House". We have been welcoming family members into the music room in December for the past five years. It started out as only a few parents (sometimes none) and now every class has at least 4 or five visitors to the music room. Unfortunately, due to the earthquake and having to reschedule many events, the Music Room Open House has been postponed until further notice, possibly sometime this Spring.

Did I say "traditional celebrations"? Yes, two other traditional celebrations for your child to enjoy. Ptarmigan Choir's production of "Bring on The Snow" is a silly, fun and musical look at the weather. Are we ever gonna get some SNOW? Come and hear this talented group sing and tell some great jokes about the weather. The evening concert is December 13th @ 6pm and the afternoon concert is December 14th @ 2:30pm, both in the Ptarmigan cafeteria.

Also, the Choir will be going on a field trip Monday, December 10th. They will be singing at the Education Center and at Centennial Village. We love to sing for our community.

Your children will also be doing a sing a long on Wednesday, December 19th. We will sing many holiday songs from all traditions for this event.

Music is a great way to share family and cultural traditions.

In Harmony,
Mrs. Benton
Classroom Music Specialists

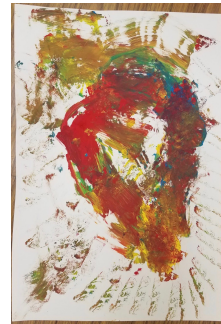


CREATIVE CORNER



Here is what we are in the process of creating right now in the art room for December & January:

Kindergarten - Learning about the primary colors, the art of Piet Mondrian, and reading "Mouse Paint" by Ellen Stoll Walsh



1st Grade - Reading "Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest" by Gerald McDermott and creating a cut paper collage.

2nd Grade - Exploring printmaking and stamping. We created a person stamp to make a winter scene. Then, we experimented with oil based clay to make stamps.

3rd Grade - Learning about Athabaskan mitten designs and drawing Alaskan nature.

4th Grade - Learning about contemporary architecture versus ancient Greek architecture and using relief printmaking to make a cityscape.

5th Grade - Exploring creative cartoon portraits, Pablo Picasso, and abstract portraits.

Feel free to contact me through email:
winkelman_katie@asdk12.org

~ Health / Social Emotional Learning ~

Beginning in December, the holiday season can sometimes bring on additional stress to families. This is a friendly reminder for children to practice the importance of eating healthy, making healthy choices, and getting sixty minutes of daily exercise. Practicing a healthy lifestyle can also build your immune system to fight off viruses, bacteria, and germs. Remember to wash your hands often with warm water and antibacterial soap.

Our winter weather, has brought to mind the importance of your children being properly dressed for **outdoor recess**. ASD policy states that children will go outside for recess until -10 degrees.

Head to Toe Winter Gear includes:

- Warm winter hat that cover their ears
- Heavy winter coat that zips, buttons, or snaps (No thin jackets or sweatshirts for outside wear this time of year). Children need long sleeve shirts for the classrooms. Please no sleeveless shirts or shorts.
- Snow pants (especially for primary grades)
- Thick winter mittens or gloves (write their names with a permanent marker). Thin stretchy gloves do not keep their hands warm.
- Winter boots (no rain boots, or dress boots; they do not keep their feet and toes warm)
- Thick socks (extra socks to keep at school for extremely cold days)!



When students come to school without winter gear, they are in danger of frostbite. Frostbite is an extremely dangerous hazard. Thank you parents for making sure your children stay safe and warm while at school.

During Health classes, students will be learning about a variety of topics according to their grade levels. The curriculum of "The Great Body Shop" is designed to assist students in answering questions relating to health issues, as well as Social & Emotional Learning (SEL) activities. We are finishing our units on nutrition. Below is a list of topics that will be taught in December and continue into January 2019:

Monthly Theme: Healthy Habits

K- Going to the Doctor and Dentist	1st Grade - How I Breathe
2nd Grade- Your Heart, Small But Strong	3rd Grade- When Bodies Have Problems
4th Grade- No Smoking	5th Grade - Love Your Lungs

Here's wishing you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season.

Ms. Anny Hunsucker - Health/SEL Specialist Email: hunsucker_anny@asdk12.org

SPIRIT WEEK in DECEMBER

12/17/18 Monday - Pajama Day
12/18/18 Tuesday - Inside Out or Backwards Day
12/19/18 Wednesday - Wear your Holiday Colors (Red, Green, Gold, White, Blue etc.)
12/20/18 Thursday - Hat Day

Helpful Resources:

Tips for Talking with and Helping Children and Youth Cope After a Disaster or Traumatic Event : A Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma12-4732.pdf>

Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//age_related_reactions_to_traumatic_events.pdf

After the Earthquake: Helping Young Children Heal

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//after_the_earthquake_helping_young_children_heal.pdf

Anchorage School Board:

Starr Marsett (President), Deena Mitchell (Vice President), Alisha Hilde (Clerk), Elisa Snelling (Treasurer), and Members Mark Foster, Dave Donley, and Andy Holleman. ASD Superintendent, Dr. Deena Paramo.

Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Tips for Parents and Educators

Adults can help children manage their reactions after a natural disaster. Follow these key reminders and visit www.nasponline.org/natural-disaster to learn more.



Remain Calm and Reassuring

Children, especially young ones, take cues from adults. Acknowledge loss or destruction, but emphasize efforts to clean up and rebuild. Assure them family and friends will take care of them and over time things will get better.



Acknowledge and Normalize Most Feelings

Allow children to discuss feelings and concerns, but don't force them to talk about the disaster. Listen, empathize, and let them know most initial reactions are normal. Be attentive to, and obtain assistance for, feelings and concerns that may suggest that the child (or anyone else) is in harm's way.



Emphasize Resiliency

Competencies

Help children identify coping skills used in the past when scared or upset.

Strategies

Encourage prosocial behaviors and good physical health.

Awareness

Highlight communities that have recovered from natural disasters.



Strengthen Peer Support

Children with strong emotional supports are better able to cope with adversity. Especially among adolescents, peer relationships can decrease isolation and supplement support from caregivers who are experiencing their own distress.



Take Care of Your Own Needs

You will be better able to help children if you are coping well. Take time to address your own reactions as fully as possible. Talk to other adults, take care of your physical and mental health, and avoid using drugs or alcohol to feel better.



Seek Help for Prolonged Signs of Distress

With the help of naturally occurring social support systems, most children will be fine. However, some may have reactions requiring professional help. Consider getting professional support for children whose reactions continue or worsen after a week or more. Your child's school can be a great source of support.