



Shooting Star Scoop

September 2015

The monthly newsletter for Nikiski North Star Elementary

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

nikiskinorthstar.blogspot.kpbsd.k12.ak.us



Important Dates

September 1

School Picture Day!

Sibling pictures at 2:30pm

September 3

PTA Meeting

3:45pm - Lounge

September 7

Labor Day Holiday

NO SCHOOL

September 8

5th Grade Band Begins!

September 9

Bus Evacuation Drill

3:20pm

September 14

Site Council Meeting

3:45pm - Lounge

September 16

Early Release Day

School out at 2:00pm

September 17

Volunteer Training

9:30am - Library



Principal Points

Welcome back to another school year! What a glorious Alaskan summer we had with lots of sunshine for our students as evidenced by their happy, freckled faces. Enrollment is steady with many new faces at our school. We welcome all our new families to the Nikiski North Star community.

Nikiski North Star will be implementing a new program this year. Cathy Kibling has been hired to teach a PreK program for children with special needs. Prior to this, Nikiski's special needs preschoolers were attending school in Kenai so this is such a nice addition to have this program in our local community. If you know of families who may be interested in this program or are wondering about developmental milestones for their little ones please contact our office and we can assist you with that.

Nikiski North Star has several new teachers this year. Nicole Stein has been hired to teach a multi-age classroom of 2nd and 3rd graders. Ms. Stein has previously taught this same age group of students in northern Alaska. Sarah Bressler will be teaching a 1st grade class this year. Sarah did her student teaching last year at Nikiski North Star. Laura Barrows has been hired as a half time teacher. Ms. Barrows did her student teaching at Kaleidoscope. She will focus on a 4th grade reading class and a 2nd grade reading class. Please join me in welcoming our new staff members to Nikiski North Star.

Safety is always our first priority. School dismissal time is a very busy period with much activity so please make sure that your child's after school plans are clearly understood before they begin their school day. It is very important that the classroom teacher knows what your child's normal after school plan is because it allows us to safely dismiss students at the end of the day. Please use phone calls to the office to change student plans only on an emergency basis rather than as a routine practice. Thank you so much for helping us keep your child safe.



Noah, Shane & Desmond enjoy the last days of summer.

...continued on page 2

NASAExplorerSchools

Points continued

Students at Nikiski North Star and throughout the State of Alaska took the AMP test last April. AMP stands for Alaska Measures of Progress and is the first test developed to measure how students did when tested on the new Alaska standards for math and English/Language Arts. Scores for individual schools will not be released until October after the State Board of Education meets. I will keep you posted as information is received.

Enclosed in this month's newsletter is information from KPBSD regarding procedures and information involving a school safety event. I encourage you to become familiar with the information so that if the need should arise, you are aware of what procedures we follow. Please be assured that our staff practices drills for various emergency events and we have multiple plans in place to assure student safety. If you are interested in more information regarding our emergency procedures, I would encourage to attend the Nikiski North Star Site Council meeting which will be held on September 14 @3:45 in the NNS teacher's lounge. This topic will be on the Site Council agenda for that meeting.

Another great way to get involved with your child's education is to join the PTA (Parent Teacher Association). The first meeting of the year for PTA will be held on Thursday, September 3 @ 3:45 in the teacher's lounge. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents and support our school.

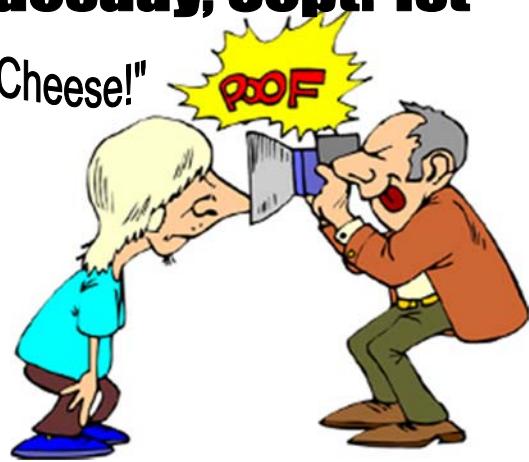
I look forward to a wonderful, productive school year with your children. If you have questions, comments, or concerns please let me know.

Margaret



Tuesday, Sept. 1st*

"Say Cheese!"



**Sibling pictures at 2:30pm*

PTA NEWS

Be on the lookout for:

- NNS Clothing Order Forms
New designs and the old!

- First meeting is -

**Tuesday, September 3
3:45pm in the Lounge**

Childcare provided!

- Join our team and enjoy our new perks!

PARENTS

WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH SCHOOL DEPARTURE

Please make end of day arrangements with your child BEFORE they come to school. Assure that your child fully understands where they are supposed to go and exactly how they will get there. The more consistent this is, the less stress there is for your child. Your child's teacher should have this information also, particularly if they are in grades PreKindergarten to 3rd grade.

Send a note to your child's teacher if arrangements change. This is especially important for younger children. If we do not receive a note from a parent or a phone message, students are required to go home their usual way. Students are not allowed to use the school phone to make social arrangements.

Please limit phone messages for students to true emergencies and unavoidable changes in plans. Call the school prior to 3:00 to allow us time to contact your child. After 3:00 we are busy preparing students to go home and there may not be anyone available to answer your call.

School dismisses at 3:30. Please be on time to pick up your child. We greatly appreciate your support!



Want to Volunteer?



In order to ensure that all students will be as safe as possible, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District requires volunteers to be screened each year. Anyone interested in being a school volunteer needs to complete an online form and agree to a background check, EVEN IF YOU VOLUNTEERED LAST YEAR. All information will be kept confidential and information can only be accessed by a few members of the Human Resources department. To complete the screening process, visit the District's web page at:

www.kpbsd.org

and click on Employment, then "Volunteer" on the left hand side, then on Current Volunteer Openings, click the Apply button that corresponds to Nikiski North Star, then follow the instructions.

Should you have any questions regarding the volunteer and/or application process please contact Laurie Wood or Larissa Mika at (907) 714-8888 or by email at teach@kpbsd.org or mika@kpbsd.org. We appreciate your interest and look forward to assisting you with the application process!

We would also like to invite everyone who's interested in volunteering to attend the:

VOLUNTEER TRAINING
Thursday, September 17
Library at 9:30am

Not only will you learn some of the skills needed for this important job, but there will be people available to help you apply online.



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 2015

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

Each school day close to 8,000 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 on the District's website at <http://www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us/board.aspx?id=3040>.

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

Sincerely,

Sean Dusek
Superintendent of Schools

KPBSD EMERGENCY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS



BEFORE A SCHOOL EMERGENCY

✓ Parents Should Be Prepared

- Contact information** entered in PowerSchool is used to make emergency contact with parents. So that KPBSD can keep you informed, make sure your child's emergency contact information is accurate, current, and updated as needed. That information may be used during an emergency to generate automated phone messages, emails, or text messages to parents from schools or the district office. **Parents need to go to the school office to update and sign their information.**
- Download the [KPBSD Mobile App](#) so you can automatically receive emergency update push notifications
- Become familiar with the [KPBSD Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) social media sites where emergency information is posted

✓ Parents Should Be Informed

- Familiarize yourself with these KPBSD emergency terms and procedures:
 - ✓ **Stay Put:** A "stay put" takes place when a potential threat is identified in the school's neighborhood. All school doors are locked but classes continue inside as normal. No entry into or exit from the school is allowed. Students will not be released until the situation is resolved and the "stay put" has been rescinded.
 - ✓ **Safety Closure:** A "safety closure" takes place when a violent intruder is identified on school grounds or in the school building. The ALICE protocols will be followed. No entry into or exit from the school is allowed. Students will not be released until the situation is resolved and the "safety closure" has been rescinded.
 - ✓ **Shelter-In-Place:** A "shelter-in-place" takes place when students take refuge in designated areas to be protected from hazardous materials or severe weather. Entry or exit from the schools will be controlled.
 - ✓ **Evacuation:** In the event of certain building emergencies, students will be relocated to an appropriate evacuation assembly area. Students will be released to parents per district student release procedures.

DURING A SCHOOL EMERGENCY

Parents:

- ✓ Should **trust** that during an emergency the school and district is first doing what is needed to protect students, and then communicating to parents as quickly as possible when we have full and accurate information.
- ✓ Should trust that staff and students are prepared for emergency situations. Schools participate in emergency drills throughout the year, and staff and emergency responders know the best procedures for keeping students safe.
- ✓ **SHOULD NOT call or rush to your child's school**
Phone lines, staff, and local roads are needed for emergency response efforts.
- ✓ **SHOULD NOT phone or text your child**
The sound or vibration from cell phones and phone conversations could put students in danger. Also, students need to be paying attention to the instructions from trained staff. Conflicting instructions from parents may put a child's safety at risk.

AFTER A SCHOOL EMERGENCY

How will I be reunited with my child?

Parents and guardians will be directed by school or public safety officials to their child's specific location. This information will be distributed via the previously discussed emergency modes of communication. Students will be released **ONLY** to parents and guardians or other designated individuals who are documented as emergency contacts. All individuals will be required to present a valid picture ID such as a driver's license, military ID, or passport. Please remember to bring your ID with you and inform your child's emergency contacts that they will be required to show proper identification if they are picking up your child.

The reunification process can be time-consuming, so everyone is urged to be patient.

Recovery:

Following the emergency, we encourage parents to:

- Listen to and acknowledge your child's concerns
- Provide reassurance that your child is safe
- Assure your child that additional prevention efforts are being put in place
- Seek help from school personnel or a mental health professional if concerns persist

Should your child have serious concerns in response to an emergency or crisis, contact your school directly for information and guidance.

QUESTIONS?: Please contact your school principal or office.

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL “SAFETY CLOSURE” INFORMATION

After extensive research and study of historical and recent school safety incidents, the U.S. Department of Education issued a new document with new guidelines for school safety entitled “Guide For Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operation Plans.” One of the major findings was that the lone option to *lockdown* was no longer enough. It was stressed that “as the situation develops, it is possible that students and staff will need to use more than one option.” In order to give our staff and students more options to protect themselves, KPBSD adopted the **A.L.I.C.E.** protocols to be used when the presence of a violent intruder necessitates a “Safety Closure.” **A.L.I.C.E.** is an acronym for:



ALERT **Use Plain and Specific Language. Avoid Code Words**

Get the word out! Notify authorities and those in harm’s way of the danger at hand. The objective is a conveyance of plain, clear, concise and accurate information, not an issuance of a command. The goal is to empower as many individuals as possible with the ability to make an informed decision as to their best option to maximize their chances of survival!

LOCKDOWN **Barricade the Room. Silence Mobile Devices. Prepare to EVACUATE or COUNTER if Needed**

Locking down and barricading entry points may still be the best option in some situations. The noise of cell phones and phone conversations could put students and staff in danger so all mobile devices should be silenced. ALICE training includes instruction on practical techniques to assist in better barricading the room. Pre-Planning and obtaining of materials can improve the ability to barricade. The time in Lockdown can be used to prepare for the use of different protocols (i.e. Counter or Evacuate) as the incident proceeds and situational information is supplied.

INFORM **Communicate the Intruder’s Location in Real Time**

Inform is a continuation of Alert and uses any means available to pass on real-time information. Communicate real-time updates throughout the incident to those involved. This can be accomplished through the use of video surveillance equipment, public address systems, or electronic updates. Updates during an incident allow those involved to make sound decisions about how to react and what steps, if any, to take next. Information should always be clear, direct and, as much as possible, should communicate the whereabouts of the intruder. Effective information can keep the intruder off balance, giving people in the school more time to further lockdown, or evacuate to safety.

COUNTER **Create Noise, Movement, Distance and Distraction**

This protocol is used only as a “last-resort” or “worst-case” option if those involved have not been able to find a secured area, or their secure area has been breached. Staff and students are trained in disruptive actions that create noise, movement, and distance to distract, confuse, and gain control through age appropriate tactics. ALICE does not endorse civilians fighting an active shooter, but when confronted directly in a life-and-death situation, individuals should use any actions necessary to defend themselves.

EVACUATE **When Safe To Do So, Remove Yourself From Danger Zone**

The goal is to safely put as much time and distance between the threat and our staff and students as possible. The decision to evacuate can be made at any time during the incident based upon information that becomes available. Evacuating to a safe area takes people out of harm’s way and hopefully prevents civilians from having to come into any contact with an intruder. Evacuation is the number one goal! When Evacuation is one of multiple protocols that are safely available, Evacuation should be the first choice.

It is important to understand that these protocols are age appropriate, not sequential or chronological, and those involved have the ability to change protocols as an incident progresses.

KPBSD’s change to the use of **A.L.I.C.E.** protocols has been done in conjunction with our local law enforcement agencies. These agencies also participate in the training of staff and students.



50 BOX TOPS = \$5 FOR YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL



Tape or paste clipped Box Tops to this collection sheet and send it to school. Please note, bonus certificates must be submitted separately. Thanks for your help!

- 1 Clip Box Tops and check expiration date



- 2 Tape, glue or staple Box Tops on sheet until filled

- 3 Send completed sheet to your school Coordinator