



Old Steller Yeller

September 2012

Hello Steller Community,

The start to this school year has been great. Staff received wonderful feedback from parents and students on orientation. I believe it was a well worthwhile event. Students and staff have discussed orientation in advisory group, and hopefully, we can make it even better for next year. The parent group put on an orientation for new to Steller parents, and I was very impressed with the 149 people who turned out for the event. The more our parents know how they can be involved in the function of the school, the closer we become as a community. Parents group also put on a wonderful back-to-school barbecue. It was held on a beautiful afternoon, and everyone seemed to enjoy the sunshine. The staff really enjoyed just being able to mingle and meet new parents and catch up with families that have been here for a while.



From the Principal
Dale Evorn
742-4964

Our school district has come under the leadership of Dr. Jim Browder. He is absolutely committed to raising test scores in our district, and he has a plan for doing so. Our district has adopted the National Common Core Standards for teaching. More information on what the standards are can be found at www.corestandards.org. Our district is working hard to align curriculum so students transferring from one school to another will be working from the same textbooks no matter where they come from. Also, every school will be administering three universal screenings for students in grades 7-10 as a part of the Response to Instruction initiative in our district. This tool is meant to identify students who need remediation in reading. The test will also ensure that students who don't need remediation are improving their reading skills at a level commensurate with the rest of the nation.

This summer, Steller received the results of the Climate and Connectedness Survey teachers and students take at school. Parents also have the opportunity to take the survey on line or by paper. Unfortunately, there were not enough parents who took the survey last year to consider it a reportable amount. However, the total responses from teachers and students were excellent. Over all, our school shows a higher moral than the rest of the district combined. Results show that teachers and students have a high regard for the staff and they believe what they are learning is valid. Students felt safe in school, and they believe Steller is a good learning environment.

One downside I saw when looking at the results was that students were seen at school under the influence. I realize that many schools in our district have problems with drug usage, but with our small community and the many wonderful students we have, we have the power to change that. I have spoken to several parents concerned about drug usage in our school, and I have assured them we will have a comprehensive plan for dealing with it. Steller staff met and discussed the issue at hand. All agreed that the most opportune time for a student to use would be before school, at lunch, and directly after school. Each teacher will be more observant and watch for the indications of apparent drug usage.

From the Principal cont.

I also brought this to our student group, and I asked them to come up with strategies for ridding our school of drug use. Op Group brought the issue to Advisory groups, and students overwhelmingly wanted to form a bottom up campaign. Several of the student groups said they didn't notice there was a problem, but they were willing to work on possible strategies to address the issue. Some other ideas were given about how to keep Steller a positive place by having more inclusive activity nights such as Community Café and Creative Commons. Some students want an All School Meeting led by only students to address the issue. One other idea was to create an environment where students don't feel like a snitch if they tell on others. When asked how to create the environment, it was said that it needed to begin with the 24 students that were in the room and move from there. All the ideas put forward by the students were viable and can be accomplished. I am looking forward to working with the students to help make our school a better place to be.

Parents can help greatly by keeping an open line of communication with their students. Students know best what goes on in a school, and if they give information to a parent that can help our school, it's important to pass that information on. It's also important to talk to your kids about drugs and how they affect student growth. Here is one article that speaks about the effects of marijuana on a teen ager: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=160126401&sc=17&f=> . It is a good start for a talking point at home.

I believe if parents talk to their students about the negative effects of drugs, students work together to discourage drug usage, and staff makes it a point to be present and alert to the signs of drug usage, we can all make a difference here at Steller.

I want to make it clear to all of you that we care deeply about our community. There are many more positive things happening in our community than negative ones. This is a wonderful school with excellent options for any student to explore where they want to go in life. We, as a staff, strive to make this the best institution of learning available, and we need your help as well.

The fall is an exciting time for our students as they return to the routines of studying and learning time management. Our building is full of new and hard working students, and the veteran students have made them welcome. We have four foreign exchange students this year, and I will be asking them to write brief bios for the next newsletter. Let's do our best to welcome them. Thank you for your continued support of Steller, and I look forward to seeing you all at Back to School Night on the 13th of September. Take care for now.

Dale

Staff Corner

One aspect of Steller that people often comment on is our sense of community, which is not surprising since we take time throughout the school year to focus on community. Orientation is a prime example of this. When staff planned the orientation schedule at the end of last year, we thought it was important for students to spend time with both their advisory group and their grade-level class, two smaller communities to which students belong.

The purpose of this time is to welcome new students and orient them to Steller, to re-familiarize returning students, to look ahead at class responsibilities and to set individual and group goals. The ultimate purpose is to start the year in a positive and productive way. The volunteer fair was a successful event and helped set a great tone for the start of the school year. Many students came away with something concrete they would like to do as community service. If your student hasn't already mentioned an idea, you might ask what organizations in particular they were interested in.

Overall, we thought this year's orientation went well. We have started to discuss the pros and cons, and in the first advisory meeting we got feedback from our advisees about what they liked and what can be improved. If you have feedback you would like to share about orientation, please email your student's advisor.

We also spent time in our first advisory group discussing what it means to maintain a strong, healthy community and what types of behaviors enhance community and detract from it. One of the hallmarks of Steller is that the lockers do not have locks--because our school's philosophy is grounded in trust. We trust our students to make good choices, and most of the time they do. As the year goes on, we will continue this discussion and will continue to work with our students and their parents to foster a positive and effective learning community.



BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT
Thursday, September 13th
6:00pm



Nurse's Notes

Want Student Success? Help Them Feel

Better

Parents,

Below is information from The Journal of Orthopsychiatry (psychiatry concerned with the prevention of behavioral disorders). It's positive information to start the year off right. We all know these practices work, however, it's nice to be reminded of them. Many of these practices are already incorporated into the teaching at Steller.

Subjective well-being has been a factor that consistently predicts positive school outcomes. Subjective well-being is related to one's degree of life satisfaction, positive emotions, and negative emotions. Research demonstrates that these components contribute to how successful a student will be. Yet, few schools target "life satisfaction" and emotions in their regular school curriculum. This article outlines a framework for schools to incorporate these elements into their curricula.

The first element to incorporate into school curricula is goal setting. A large body of research illustrates that setting life goals and then making progress toward these goals serve to increase well-being. While pursuing goals at the requests of others can be effective to accomplish tasks, personal goal setting is more critical for well-being. These are goals freely chosen by each student so that the goals represent their personal interests and values.

The second element is life coaching. Several studies have evaluated the effectiveness of life coaches assisting students with goal setting and problem solving as a means to achieve subjective well-being. Using a life coach to reach goals is associated with lower stress, depression, and anxiety as well as higher positive emotions and well-being. The positive effects of this intervention appear to last for a long time (i.e., it was studied up to 40 weeks). It appears that peer coaching is not sufficient to increase students' progress toward their goals. Rather, engagement with a coach who is trained in cognitive-behavioral, solution-focused coping techniques is an important element in efforts to increase well-being.

Third, close interpersonal relationships are important for maintaining well-being. The authors recommend that school curricula offer more instruction in interpersonal skills so that more introverted students can develop strong relationships and, in turn, increase their well-being. Fostering the moral emotion of gratitude is a fourth element recommended to schools. The authors cite one study where 11 middle school classrooms were randomly assigned to one of three groups: students who learned to write about gratitude, those who learned to write about their hassles, and a control group. Students who participated in the gratitude condition reported significantly less negative moods and had greater satisfaction within important domains of life. Their most significant finding was increased satisfaction with school, even when this was measured at 3-week follow-up.

Other well-researched elements of a curriculum that can improve subjective well-being are: structured extracurricular activities, arranging for personal homework and study time, teaching students how to build their executive skills, and weekly structured mentoring from college students trained in goal setting.

(Bird JM, Markle RS. *Am J of Orthopsychiatry* 2012; 82(1): 61–66.) —H.T.

Meet Steller's New Staff



Chris Selin - Art

I am excited to be teaching Art at Steller Secondary. Not only are students thoughtful and creative, they are motivated learners. A great combination! In my free time, I enjoy the outdoors of Alaska hiking, skiing, and rollerblading, and looking for wood to use for carving. I've lived in 3 parts of Alaska (southeast, interior and southcentral) with very different environments that shape the cultures that thrive there – like the way that Steller's environment of caring staff and parents shapes the students with a rich culture of learning. I'm happy to be a part of it.

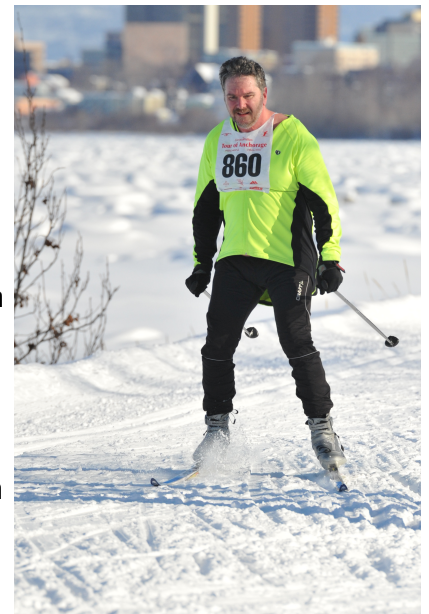
Mike Moore - Special Education

I'm Mike and I'm excited to be starting a new school year. This is my 20th year teaching here in Alaska. Over that time I've taught in setting ranging from the large comprehensive High Schools here in Anchorage, to a tiny bush school where I was the entire school staff serving students from K-12 in one room. (the staff meetings were great!) I enjoy outdoor sports , and try to spent several weeks a year out kayak camping with my wife and two children. I also spent way too much time skiing around town preparing for the tour of Anchorage. I look forward to meeting the entire Steller community and working towards a great school year



Carol Combs - Math

I am very excited to be included in the Stellar community this year. Students, staff and parents have been welcoming and helpful. A transplant from a suburban school district in New Jersey with a year on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, I came to Alaska in 1977 to teach in Savoonga on Saint Lawrence Island, where, on a clear day, I could see Russia. My interests, aside from teaching and learning, are my two daughters and our dog, volunteering, beading, reading, traveling and getting outdoors.



Change Machine

Parents please remember when sending lunch money with your student that our change machine only accepts ones and fives and that the office does NOT have any change.



MEMO

To: All Principals, Grades 4 - 12

From: Kristine Stout, Assessment and Evaluation

CC: Ed Graff, Mike Henry, Linda Carlson, Cindy Anderson, Mary Meade, Margo Bellamy

Date: August 14, 2012

Re: Activity & Athletic Interest Survey

Attached to this e-mail are both this memo and the notice for your newsletter/website or other parent communication.

This memo serves as a reminder of the upcoming Activity & Athletic Interest Survey. As of this year the survey is provided to all students, grades 4 – 12, in the Anchorage School District through an online survey only. The dates for the fall 2012 administration of this survey are as follows:

- Prior to September 25, 2012: required notice provided to parents through school newsletter, Web link and/or other method. (See notice below)
- October 3, 2012: Athletic Interest Surveys Link will be sent from Assessment and Evaluation to the individual schools principals by e-mail
- October 9 – November 16, 2012: Online administration of survey

Notes:

Students in grade 6 will have 4 possible grades to choose from based on the type of school they attend. This will determine which pages of the survey they complete. The four options are grade 6 (Elementary schools), grade 6 (K-8 schools), grade 6 (K-12 schools), and grade 6 (Middle schools). The option selected will determine whether the student completes the elementary or middle school version of the survey.

The principal will determine and communicate to their staff what method and when within the window of administration their school will be participating in the survey. The survey will be accessible in two possible ways:

- a) Through Zangle Student Connect (detailed instructions will come with the October 3 e-mail)
- b) Through the dissemination of the link to the survey which will be sent to the principal on October 3.

If you have any questions please contact Assessment and Evaluation at 742-4420 or e-mail

stout_kristine@asdk12.org.

Notice to parents: (To be placed in a newsletter, website and/or other method of communication)

2012 Activity & Athletic Interest Survey – Grades 4 - 12 only

The 2012 Activity & Athletic Interest Student Survey is being done to provide schools with information about student interests in athletics. This is an annual survey implemented and analyzed jointly by the ASD departments of Equal Employment Opportunity, Secondary Education, Elementary Education, and Assessment and Evaluation. This survey is a tool for understanding what interests our students have and how we can better serve their interests, while also meeting the federal requirements for Title IX. The survey will take place in computer labs at your child's school between October 9 and November 16 of 2012.

This survey does not require parental permission and will be administered to all students in grades 4 - 12. This message serves as a notice to parents about this upcoming survey.

The questions contained in the student questionnaire ask about student interest in activities and athletics.

Please follow or type this link to review the survey: http://www.asdk12.org/depts/assess_eval/athlsurvey.asp

GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

<p>ACT, SAT, PSAT / NMSQT</p> <p><i>Test Dates</i> <i>Registration Information</i> <i>Test Help</i></p>	<p>College & Career</p> <p><i>Wednesdays @ lunch in MPR</i></p>	<p>Letter of Reference (Referral Letter)</p>	<p>“What To Do When” College and Career Nights @ Steller</p> <p><i>September 11 - MPR Room</i></p>
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ACT & SAT Testing

All tests listed will be administered at Steller
On Line registration is Required (except PSAT / NMSQT)
If you have any questions see John

ACT					
2012 - 2013 Test Dates	Test	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Notification Web	Notification Mail
27-Oct	ACT & ACT Writing	21-Sep	Sep 22 - Oct 5	13-Nov	17-Nov
8-Dec	ACT & ACT Writing	2-Nov	Nov 3 - Nov 16	24-Dec	29-Dec
9-Feb	ACT & ACT Writing	11-Jan	Jan 12 - Jan 18	25-Feb	1-Mar
13-Apr	ACT & ACT Writing	8-Mar	March 9 - March 22	29-Apr	4-May
8-Jun	ACT & ACT Writing	3-May	May 4 - May 17	26-Jun	29-Jun

SAT					
2012 - 2013 Test Dates	Test	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline	Notification Web	Notification Mail
6-Oct	SAT & SAT Subject	7-Sep	21-Sep	25-Oct	3-Nov
20-Oct	PSAT / NMSQT	Register @ Steller - ASAP (\$20)		Scores mailed to Steller	
3-Nov	SAT & SAT Subject	4-Oct	19-Oct	20-Nov	1-Dec
1-Dec	SAT & SAT Subject	1-Nov	16-Nov	20-Dec	29-Dec
26-Jan	SAT & SAT Subject	28-Dec	11-Jan	24-Feb	23-Feb
9-Mar	SAT (only)	8-Feb	22-Feb	29-Apr	4-May
4-May	SAT & SAT Subject	5-Apr	19-Apr	23-May	1-Jun
1-Jun	SAT & SAT Subject	2-May	17-May	20-Jun	29-Jun

ACT and SAT: the essential article.
ACT
SAT
Objective Information

[ACT and SAT](#)
[ACT Registration & Test Help](#)
[SAT Registration & Test Help](#)

[Erik the Red Test Help](#)

[Test Prep: about.com](#)



A few
very
useful
links:

[Freshman - Senior](#)

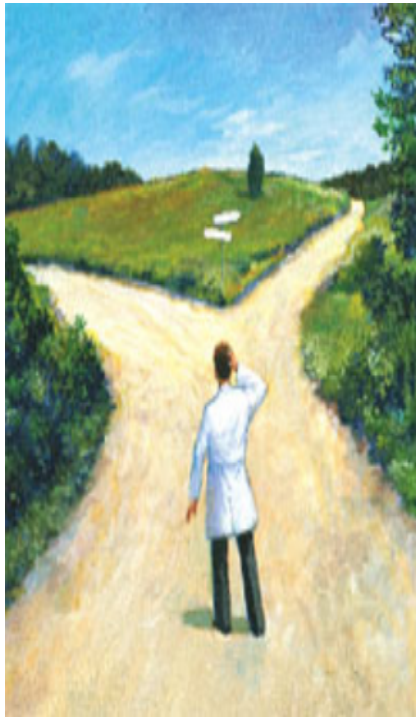
[To Do List](#)

[Letter of Reference
Request Form](#)

“What To Do When”

College and Career Night
September 11 - 6:30 - 8:00
MPR Room

College & Career Information and Planning



The Road To Your Future

- What To Do When - Grades 8-12
- The New Rules of College Admissions
- Making Colleges Want You
- Choosing the Right College
- Writing Compelling Essays
- Paying for School: FAFSA, Types of Aid
- Scholarship & College Applications
- College Visits & Interviews
- Gap Years – Taking Time Off
- What major and which degree
- Getting and Keeping a Job
- Resumes and Portfolios

Who: everyone who won't be in high school forever,
What: everything you want / need to know about what happens after high school,
Where: MPR Room,
When: every Wednesday @ lunch,
Why: you can't stay at Steller forever.

Bring questions, concerns, thoughts about your future; leave with what you need to navigate through confusion, frustration, and anxiety about the future.

GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

Request For Letter of Recommendation

Do not include this sheet in your Student Portfolio.

Student Name: _____

Contact Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Instructions to the Student: To better evaluate you, fill out this form with your information to assist the person from whom you are requesting a recommendation letter. *You may attach additional information to this form, such as a cover letter.*

ASD Student Portfolio College Scholarship Other (circle one)

Student needs letter by: _____

Upon completion please: Return to student Mail in enclosed envelope (circle one)

Instructions to Writer of Letter of Recommendation:

The best letters of recommendation bring a student to life by sharing specific examples or stories, instead of just summarizing the resume'. This form is only to spark ideas about the student.

Academics:

GPA: _____ Class Rank: _____ / _____ SAT Composite: _____ ACT Composite: _____

Intended College Major(s): _____

Long Range Career Plans: _____

• *Special interests, hobbies, or talents:*

• *What do you consider your strengths as a person and as a student?*

• *Please share any other information that would be helpful, such as obstacles you have overcome, and indicate what information the writer should highlight for this particular letter of recommendation.*

- *Advanced Coursework (honors, college prep, AP courses):*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Course</u>

- *Academic awards or honors and when you received them:*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recognition</u>

- *Community Service: List your in-school and out-of-school community service and total hours of service:*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Description of Service</u>

- *Extracurricular: List your in-school and out-of-school activities and years of participation:*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Description of Activity</u>

- *Work experience:*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Description of Experience</u>



Yearbooks On Sale Now

Steller Parents,

Yearbooks are currently \$55, but they will rise to \$75-\$80 by the end of the semester. Take advantage of this opportunity to remember your time at Steller! Save money by buying it online (visit Josten Yearbook Sales at [www.shop.jostens.com] and look up our school) or complete the order form on the next page and return to Svetlana.

Thanks for your support!!!



Photos Needed for the Yearbook

Steller Parents,

If you have a student participating in any extracurricular activities (i.e. sports at other schools, music or art camps, clubs, or jobs), and would like to have these activities featured in the Steller Yearbook, please send an email with your pictures, the name of your student and a brief description of the activity to jackson_lana@asdk12.org.

If it's a great moment in your child's high school life, please yearbook it!

Order your Steller Secondary School 2012-2013 yearbook today!

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Homeroom: _____ ID#: _____

Student Email: _____ Student Phone: _____ Cell Home

Parent Email: _____ Parent Phone: _____ Cell Home

1 SELECT YOUR YEARBOOK PACKAGE		PRICE	TOTAL
Yearbook		\$55.00	

2 PERSONALIZE YOUR YEARBOOK		PRICE	TOTAL
Personalize Your Cover with your name or special phrase & up to 4 icons to make your yearbook unique.			
NAME OR SPECIAL PHRASE		You must order 1 line of personalization in order to add a 2nd line	
1st Line	<input type="text"/>	\$4.00	
2nd Line	<input type="text"/>	\$3.00	

ICONS — AT LEAST 1 LINE OF PERSONALIZATION MUST BE PURCHASED TO ORDER AN ICON!

Enter four digit icon code from below into boxes provided

Icon 1	<input type="text"/>	Icon 2	<input type="text"/>	Icon 3	<input type="text"/>	Icon 4	<input type="text"/>	QTY	\$2.00 ea	
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3 ACCESSORY ITEMS		QTY	PRICE	TOTAL
Autograph Section 8-page insert offers extra space for special messages			\$2.00	
Photo Pockets A sheet of 6 adhesive-backed repositionable pockets to hold photos & memories			\$2.00	
Donate a Yearbook Buy a yearbook for a deserving student in your school			\$55.00	

4 ORDER TOTAL		TOTAL
Total Due Remember: At least one line of personalization must be purchased to order an icon.		



UPCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday, Sept 4th

College and Career Night
6:30-8:00 pm

Thursday, Sept 20th

Ad Board Meeting
6:30-8:00pm

Wednesday, Sept 5th

Cyberbullying
MPR
6:30-8:00pm

Thursday, Sept 27th

All Community Meeting
MPR
6:30-8:30pm

Wednesday, Sept 12th

Parent Group Meeting
6:00-7:30pm

Friday, Sept 28th

Picture Retake Day
MPR
11:45am-12:40pm

Thursday, Sept 13th

Back to School Night
6:00-8:00pm



STELLER SECONDARY SCHOOL
2508 BLUEBERRY ROAD
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

