



Old Steller Yeller

December 2013



From the Principal
Dale Evern
742-4964



Happy Holidays to a wonderful Steller Community,

Students are taking finals, and intensives will soon be upon us. I hope your Thanksgiving was wonderful and everyone enjoyed the four-day weekend. I am hoping we will get enough snow for me to make it to my cabin during the Winter Break. Every little bit helps. I can't wait to spend some time snowshoeing in the quiet of the forest.

Last month, the staff put together a wonderful article about what experiential learning opportunities Steller offers students. It was nice to see how many different options students have for the size of building we are. Even so, sometimes we have to go outside of the regular curriculum to offer everything a student may need. If your student has a need for a class the school can't provide, please consult your student's advisor to see if they have any ideas of how to meet your student's needs.

If you are the parent of a senior and your student wants to attend college, there are some things that should be happening right now to ensure your student has everything needed for acceptance in the college they choose. John Stahl, our counselor, has already presented three times this semester on how to best prepare your student for school. I have heard very positive things on the evening presentations. It is worth your time to attend one. Please keep an eye out in the Flash announcements for the next College and Career Night.

We have several projects that are currently under way in our building. Interactive projectors have finally been mounted, and the district is working to finish the entire project soon. Maintenance has removed our old Kiln, and they have put the new kiln in place. They still need to ensure we have the correct power source for the new kiln and ensure it is ventilated correctly. Next summer, we will be getting a new roof over half the building, a new boiler, and I am hoping to have two ventilation hoods installed in the Art Room. Our rock-wall should be installed before the end of the year.

I am hoping to hear back from all the committees from the All Community Meeting, and am interested in what has been accomplished. It is nice to see all parties invested in making our school a better place to work and study.

Thank you for all you do to help your students be successful in life. Have a wonderful Winter Break, and come back refreshed and ready to tackle the second semester.

Dale

Staff Scoop

This year, an area of focus for staff is involving parents in meaningful ways. We have great parent support for all of our events, such as the auction, and parents are integral to the running of our school. Our goal is to broaden the ways in which we involve parents to enhance student learning and to expand what we are able to accomplish in the classroom.

One step toward this has been the development of a list of parents' areas of expertise. Teachers can look to the list when they have a particular topic or skill that a parent might be able to assist students with or speak about. Parents can lead small groups in tasks or work one-on-one with students, which can increase individualized attention to students and maximize teachers' ability to reach students.

Another piece of the effort to involve parents is the creation of a Teaching Assistant Request Form, which will allow teachers to describe and advertise specific needs in their classes. Parent group will be able to use these forms to recruit parents whose skills match the needs of the teacher. This form will likely be put into use next semester.

As second quarter comes to a close, the staff is looking forward to teaching intensives, one of the unique aspects of our program. Intensives allow teachers to offer classes outside of the normal curriculum and allow students to explore topics they might not otherwise. They also offer the opportunity for parents to share their skills and expertise in the classroom, with greater scheduling flexibility. We encourage parents to contact teachers if they are interested in helping out with a particular intensive or have suggestions of resources for teachers.





Ten Questions Parents & Students Are Asking Right Now About College.

- 1. I'm a high school junior (or Senior). What's the most important thing I should be doing right now to prepare for college?** The most important thing juniors and seniors should be doing right now is take the most rigorous classes you can, keep your grades up and take the SAT and/or ACT (better to take the ACT w/ Writing than the ACT).
- 2. How many extracurricular activities should I be involved in?** It is not the number of extracurricular activities that colleges are looking for. - quality not quantity. Colleges are looking for extracurricular activities that mirror the student's passions, interests and commitment. They also like to see a consistency of commitment to the same activities over time.
- 3. What's more important – grades or SAT/ACT?** The most important academic factors in the college application process are the quality and rigor of courses (not as objective), grades (again, not as objective) and scores on the SAT or ACT (completely objective).
- 4. I don't know what I want to major in. Should I be worried?** Although you probably don't know exactly what you intend to major in, it will pay off in a number of ways if you have some idea the major field of study/career interests you most. A couple of very real reasons are: many degree programs start with major specific required courses the freshman year and the more focused you are when you first start college the better chance you of finishing college in 4 - 5 years (saving all the cost / expense of additional classes and resources required every time you change your mind).
- 5. Is it better to take a regular class and get an A or an AP class and get a B?** College admissions answer this question all the time. The answer they would give students from Steller (because we don't offer AP classes) is going to be: a student should "ALWAYS take the most rigorous courses" our school offers.
- 6. What is the best way to determine which college is right for me?** Determining the best college fit takes time and research. Some of the search programs available for parents and students are AkCIS.org and **CollegeBoard's: Big Future or Quick Start** (based on PSAT scores and requires PSAT Access code) are some of the best; a couple of other good ones are [Peterson's](#) and [Princeton Review](#).
- 7. Are community service hours really important?** Yes. They are one of the criteria admissions and selection committees will definitely look for and factor into a student's likelihood of being accepted and receiving an award; every college application and other scholarship application asks about your community service.
- 8. I don't have any money for college. What should I do?** There are merit and need based scholarships, grants, very low interest institutional loans, etc available to assist students in funding their education. Talk to John early in your high school journey (or as soon as possible if you're already thinking about or making specific plans) regarding your college goals and family financial situation and get your FAFSA or CSS (College Scholarship Service) submitted.
- 9. Do colleges like to see employment during high school?** Yes, they like to see that a student can manage the responsibilities of holding a job (the longer at the same job makes a much bigger impact) and also like to see that they are helping to fund their college education.
- 10. What can my high school guidance counselor (John) do for me?** I can help you with any of the questions above: how the courses you take throughout high school can lead to paths in the real world, the college admission testing process, how to write and submit the best college and/or scholarship applications and all kinds of resources to help shed light on finding the right college, scholarships and financial aid.

Nurse's Notes

Parents,

At the all school meeting members of the op group did an excellent job discussing some “house keeping” topics. One of the topics mentioned was bringing medication to school. I want to remind you that it is against ASD policy for a student to carry ANY medication on their person without physician permission, parent permission and school district permission to self-administer and self-monitor. Medication will be maintained in the nurse's office with a few exceptions. I have reviewed many policies in many other states as part of a health advisory committee for the state of Alaska. Our state and district policy is similar to others all across the nation.

People are often hesitant to follow policies they don't feel are necessary. Here are some scenarios that might help you to better understand this importance issue. Students once put vitamin pills with iron in a peanut butter sandwich and gave it to another student. Too much iron can cause irregular heart beats and can lead to death. In a middle school I worked at some students had a history of using asthma inhalers to get high. Theft of this medication was common. We all know many students take amphetamines for ADHD. This medication, of course, has a street value. Having it in your possession can have legal repercussions if brought to school. Ritalin has been known to cause adverse heartbeats and death in individuals even when prescribed in the appropriate amounts. It could cause death if shared with someone who has a heart disorder. Many adolescents *do* share medication, whether we want to believe it or not.

ALL medication is dangerous. Many authorities believe that if aspirin were put on the market today it would require a prescription. Ibuprofen until a couple of decades ago. Both medications not only relieve pain but can cause blood-clotting problems as well. Even what a person might perceive as a very benign medication can cause severe illness and death, especially if taken in inappropriate amounts. All medication must be monitored for potential side effects. This is imperative in order to avoid any adversity to our students.

Additionally, all across the nation there are laws that help ensure students have *ready access* to urgently needed medication. Alaska has passed laws that allow students to carry and self-administer emergency medications, including asthma inhalers and epinephrine pens, while at school or school related functions with written documentation from parents and their physician. Both the state and the district want students to have medication on them when there is an emergency. The majority of the time, however, the need for medication is not urgent.

Keeping medication in the nurse's office is a safety issue. There is some loss of freedom and inconvenience experienced when a student has to come to the nurse, but we know it is worth it to facilitate student safety. Thanks for your cooperation in helping keep our students safe.

Have a wonderful holiday and be safe!

Nurse Anne
742-4963



Caroling Around Steller

Rosa's and Ashley's Spanish classes continued the tradition of holiday caroling this year, bringing laughter and joy to many classes. Students learned both traditional Spanish Christmas songs and well-known English Christmas tunes sung in Spanish, and a Hanukah song. They caroled throughout Steller on Monday, November 25th to begin holiday festivities. Students in Spanish classes can earn extra credit and have a great time by attending the International Songfest at the Performing Arts Center lobby on Friday, December 6th from 6-7pm. The International Songfest is a gathering of students from world language classes throughout the Anchorage School District coming together to sing songs in many languages. We hope to see you there!



Students in Rosa's and Ashley's third hour classes sing to Jennifer's class.



Students in Ashley's first hour class sing to Jen's class



News You Can Use

2nd Semester Registration Schedule

Friday, Dec. 6th

8:00am - 10:00am / 8th & 12th grades

10:00am - 12:00pm / 7th & 11th grades

1:00pm - 3:00pm / 9th & 10th grades

Students will meet in advisory groups for 1st hour and sign up for classes 2nd hour.

HURRY, HURRY, HURRY

Yearbook needs out of school activity pictures and out of school sport pictures. Please contact Svetlana. jackson_lana@asdk12.org

Prices will be going up, up, up after Dec. 19th for the Steller Yearbook. Don't miss ordering at the low price of \$60.00.

Please note that there will not be custom personalization allowed by the publisher post December 31st deadline. If students wish to have a name, special phrase on their cover, icons, or autograph section they must purchase the book by Dec. 19th! Checks payable to Steller Secondary. Payments go to Jaime in the office.

Senior pages and portraits are due December 19, 2013

Thanks,

The Yearbook Staff





Steller Community

~Be The Change~



The first semester of 2013 is coming to a close and we are thankful for all the students, staff, parents and School Business Partners (SBP).

We wanted to share with you just a few of the many ways our Steller community is Being the Change this year!

~Community service passages - class opportunity to make a difference based on personal passion~

~Souper Steller - weekly homemade soup & rolls for Steller Community ~

~Temple of the Bean - Student run coffee shop~

~TPC - Technical Production Crew ~

~North Star Elementary School - students volunteering in classrooms everyday during a class period~

~Students volunteering for the Polar Plunge to benefit Special Olympics - Dec 21st (one student has raised over \$1400 jumping for the past 3 years!~

~Students volunteering to be a "Big" for Big Brothers/Big Sisters - 1 hour commitment a week (through school year)~

~Downtown Tree Lighting Ceremony - supporting our SBP- Anchorage Downtown Partnership November ~

~Pupil + Paper - Recycled garment design competition benefiting The Children's Lunchbox~

~Anchorage Youth Court~

~8th grade drive for The Children's Lunchbox~

~Bean's Cafe' - Steller students & community volunteering to serve lunch once a month (let us know if you would like to join us)~

~Trick or Treat Town - October 2013 Students handing out candy, face painting and helping support a community event benefiting Boy's & Girls Club~

“”Life’s most persistent and urgent question is
‘What are you doing for others?’”

~Martin Luther King Jr.

STELLER BE THE CHANGE

~Trick or Treat Town - October 2013 Students handing out candy, face painting and helping support a community event benefiting Boy's & Girls Club~

~Students participating in the Lion's Club Peace Poster Contest~

~North Star Fall Carnival - students supporting our neighborhood school~

~Anchorage Fire Department Station 5 Open House - volunteering to help our local fire station~

~Youth Employment in Parks - student volunteering above and beyond work day~

~Red Cross - students volunteering to help~

~YWCA - Multicultural Event - students met with staff/planned and supported event~

~Intensive to Belize collecting donations for The Liberty Children's Home~

~December intensive to bake cookies for local homeless shelters~

~December intensive to make toys for AWAIC shelter~

~Nicaragua Travel Intensive planning to volunteer in an orphanage~

~Police Navidad - December 2013 student volunteering to help~

~North Star Make It and Take It Event - students to support North Star~

~Thanksgiving Blessing - staff member volunteering ~

~Imaginarium we have students volunteering and also two have been hired that previously volunteered!~

Many students shared during the volunteer fair that they also volunteer at the following:

Their old elementary schools, Alaska Humane Society, Alaska Zoo, American Legion, TBA Theatre, Anchorage Literacy Project, Theatre of Youth, AYE, Covenant House, Food Bank of Alaska, The Learning Farm, Lion's Club, Seward Science Camp - 4H

Did you know our students shared at our volunteer fair that they volunteered **4996.50 hours last year and this year they have a goal of volunteering 5595 hours this year!**

Please let us know where you are helping in our community. You might inspire a friend!

Want more information? Email stellerbethechange@aol.com or like our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/StellerCommunityBeTheChange>

ASD Announcements



The ASD Evaluation System is a reflection of the Anchorage School District mission to “educate all students for success in life.” Students, parents, community members and school staff are given the opportunity to provide information about teacher and administrator performance.

The two forms currently available are the *Evaluation Input Form on Teachers* and the *Evaluation Input Form on Administrators* (whether they are site administrators or central office administrators). If you would like to complete an Evaluation Input Form you have three options:

- Employees can complete the web-based Evaluation Input Forms anonymously by going to the District Connection at <http://home.asdk12.org>. You will find links to either Evaluation Input Form (teacher or administrator) under the Announcements section.
- Members of the public and employees not wishing to remain anonymous can complete the Web-based Evaluation Input Form by going to either the Parents or Community portal pages on the District’s website: www.asdk12.org/parents or www.asdk12.org/community/. Links to both Evaluation Input Forms are available under the “Feedback & Questions” heading.

Web-based Evaluation Input Forms will be transmitted electronically by the Human Resources Department (Ginger Moser, HR Specialist) to the appropriate supervisor.

- For those who wish to print a hard copy of the form, PDF versions can be found in the Forms & Publications Library on the District’s web site by searching for “Performance Evaluation Input.”
 - School sites will also have ‘hard copies’ of the forms for parents and employees who do not have access to a computer. Each school will determine a location for the form (most likely the main office). Hard copies will be kept confidential and routed by the school to the immediate supervisor.



**Anchorage
School
District**

2012-13 Anchorage School Board

Jeannie Mackie, president

Tam Agosti-Gisler

Don Smith

Pat Higgins

Natasha Von Imhof

Kathleen Plunkett

Superintendent

Ed Graff



UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, DEC 4

PARENT GROUP MEETING 6:00-7:30PM

MONDAY - THURSDAY, DEC 9 - 19

WINTER INTENSIVES

FRIDAY, DEC 6

REGISTRATION FOR 2ND SEMESTER

THURSDAY, DEC 19

AD BOARD MEETING 6:30-8:00PM

FRIDAY, DEC 6

DANCE 7:00-11:00PM

FRIDAY, DEC 20

END OF 2ND QTR, INSERVICE DAY NO SCHOOL

SATURDAY, DEC 7

SAT TESTING

MONDAY, DEC 23 - JAN 5

WINTER BREAK





Blaines Art

Picture Framing • Art Supplies • Art Classes • Gifts



Anchorage School Business Partnerships
5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99504-3135
www.asdk12.org/depts/sbp/



ABBOTT



Alaska



BATES ENTERPRISES



**Steller can't thank it's
fantastic**

business partners enough!!!

**Thank You, Thank You,
Thank You**

PYLI

Friends of Alaska

POINTS OF LIGHT

