



Old Steller Yeller

October 2011



From the Principal
Dale Evorn
742-4964



Hello Steller Community,

Fall is heavily upon us and we are gearing up for the winter. I hope all your to-do lists are completed and everything is ready for the first snow. I know our Garden Club has worked hard to sell the last of their vegetables and the garden has been left in great shape for next spring. My fall was very fruitful, and my freezer is full.

Students are working hard every day. I have sent out a notice to the Flash about student parking. Please make sure your students are parking correctly in front of the school. We have had complaints from our neighbors about parking on the sidewalk, and I would hate for anyone to get a ticket.

The seniors put on an All-School Meeting, and I was impressed with how they covered many issues that I recognize as things we need to work on. The focus of the meeting was to speak about respect for all things around us. This means all things in the building, all students, our community businesses, our staff, and our parents. The message was inspiring and I am thankful it came from our students and not just from me.

We are looking at moving next year's intensives away from August because of some of the issues that came up this year. A proposal to do so will go before the next Ad Group Meeting. I attended part of an Auction Committee meeting the other day, and I am confident it is well organized and it will be a quality event. In my career, I don't believe I've been to so many meetings, but I am enjoying the process and have come to realize the value it has in making our community a better place.

Steller students continue to impress me on a daily basis. Please make sure to congratulate our three National Merit Semifinalists, Kaylin Saur, Anna Miller, and Aryeh Lax. They scored within the top five percent of all students who took the PSAT last year. They will be turning in applications to be considered as finalists as National Merit Scholars. Also, please take time to congratulate Harrison Mann for receiving a letter of commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Program. I am very proud of the hard work and dedication these students demonstrate for us on a daily basis.

Staff Corner



Ideas for this column often arise from topics or issues discussed in our weekly staff meetings that we feel are worthy of further explanation. Recently, we have spent a fair amount of time discussing fall intensives. Beginning the year with intensives generated a lot of comments from students, parents and staff. We felt this was especially important to address because the next school year is set to begin with a fall intensive, and if we want to change that, the sooner the better.

After advisory groups discussed the pros and cons of a fall intensive and after parents had the opportunity to respond to a flash request for feedback, staff shared their own thoughts and weighed the pros and cons from all stakeholders. Here is a summary of the gathered feedback:

- Students missed having orientation and the opportunity to bond with students in their grade level
- New staff and students felt somewhat isolated since new and returning students were in separate intensives, some out of the building
- It was nice to take advantage of outdoor opportunities
- It was a creative way to start the school year

The staff affirmed that having intensives at different times of the year offers a variety of opportunities but that having a fall intensive two years in a row was not ideal. Staff reps took to Op-group a proposal to move intensives to the end of each semester next year. Op-Group decided last Thursday to bring the proposal to Advisory Groups for discussion and a vote.

Intensives are one of the unique aspects of our program, and the ability to offer them at different times reflects the dynamic nature of our school. Next semester, intensives are between third and fourth quarter, from February 27th to March 8th. We will know next year's intensive schedule by the week of October 10th.



Welcome to Student-Led Conferences!

On October 26th and 27th, Steller will be holding student-led conferences for all students. Student-led conferences are a chance for parents and students to meet with advisors to discuss student's successes and struggles at the beginning of the new school year. The staff at Steller feels that student-led conferences will benefit all students by opening up lines of communication between parents, students, and the advisor. We believe that student involvement in the conferences makes learning active, provides opportunities for students to self-reflect and evaluate their performance, and encourages students to accept responsibility for their learning.



To prepare for the conferences, students will create a portfolio representing work from all of their classes during the first quarter of school. The students will conduct the conference detailing skills and processes learned, and share goals they have set to further improve themselves. Students will be taught how to select representative work, how to write self-reflective evaluations, and how to diagnose their own strengths and weaknesses. It is critical that your child is present to lead his/her conference.



Conferences will be scheduled on Wednesday October 26 from 12:30 to 3:30 and 4:30 to 7:00. The same schedule will take place on Thursday the 27th of October. Students will be

dismissed at 11:45 on both days. A twenty-five minute time block will be scheduled with your family in advance for the student-led conferences. This quarter we are using the district's Student Led Conference Online Scheduler, which allows parents to sign up for conferences online. Here is how to do this:

1. Go to <http://www.asdk12.org/ConferenceScheduling/StudentScheduleStartExt.aspx>
 - a. This can be reached by going to the district web page, clicking on Parent conferences on the left, and then on the Middle School conference scheduler.
2. Choose Steller as the school
3. Choose 7th grade! (In order to work the system, all conferences are scheduled as 7th graders. It is the square peg into a round hole thing)
4. For Team Name, choose your student's ADVISOR (Conferences will be with the advisor, if you want to meet with classroom teachers, you will need to schedule a meeting outside of the conference dates. Your student's advisor will have forms to request meetings.)
5. Choose your day
6. Choose your time and continue through the process. You can sign up to receive a reminder email. If you need to cancel your appointment time, you will have to email your advisor.

***You can also email your student's advisor with times and the day that would work for you and they will schedule you in an open spot.

Advisors, students, and parents all play important roles in the student-led conferences. The following are some tips to help parents feel better prepared.



Before the conference:

- * Confirm a conference time that works for you and your family
- * Make a list of questions to bring with you to the conference
- * Arrive on time with your child

During the conference:

- * Listen to your child and offer encouragement
- * Ask follow-up questions to help you child reflect on his/her learning
- * Take notes to help remind you of possible discussion points

After the conference:

- * Schedule an additional conference if you feel you need more time or further clarification or wish to meet with a specific classroom teacher
- * Remember to fill out an evaluation about your conference to help us improve our implementation

Thank you in advance for supporting your child's education in such an important way.



Nurse's Notes



Parents, Staff and Students,

This is the month of Red Ribbon Week. Red Ribbon week is always celebrated the last week of October and therefore, this year, it will be October 23-31. Red Ribbon has an interesting history that I want to share with you. The following was taken from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration website.

Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention program in the nation reaching millions of Americans during the last week of October every year. By wearing red ribbons and participating in community anti-drug events, young people pledge to live a drug-free life and pay tribute to DEA Special Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena. Special Agent Camarena was an 11-year veteran of the DEA assigned to the Guadalajara, Mexico, office where he was on the trail of the country's biggest marijuana and cocaine traffickers. In 1985, he was extremely close to unlocking a multi-billion dollar drug pipeline. On February 7, 1985, he was kidnapped, brutally tortured, and murdered by Mexican drug traffickers. His tragic death opened the eyes of many Americans to the dangers of drugs and the international scope of the drug trade.

Shortly after Kiki's death, Congressman Duncan Hunter and Kiki's high school friend Henry Lozano launched "Camarena Clubs" in Kiki's hometown of Calexico, California. Hundreds of club members pledged to lead drug-free lives to honor the sacrifice made by Kiki Camarena. These pledges were delivered to First Lady Nancy Reagan at a national conference of parents combating youth drug use. Several state parent organizations then called on community groups to wear red ribbons during the last week of October as a symbol of their drug-free commitment. The first Red Ribbon Week celebrations were held in La Mirada and Norwalk, California.

In 1988, the National Family Partnership (NFP) coordinated the first National Red Ribbon Week with President and Mrs. Reagan serving as honorary chairpersons.

Adolescents have heard about the dangers of drugs again and again, however, since adolescence is a time of impulsive actions, the feeling of invincibility, peer pressure and "neural pruning," we cannot expect the message to register without constant reinforcement. As we know, adolescents mimic what they experience and hear from their parents. So, please use the upcoming Red Ribbon Week as another opportunity to discuss the dangers of drugs to your son or daughter. Below is information from The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention to help you do so. Although these suggestions address alcohol, basically they work for any other drug. If drugs have become a problem with your adolescent (including nicotine), please let me know how I can help. I have knowledge of available resources in town and am constantly acquiring more information.

Sincerely, Nurse Anne

Nurse's Notes cont.



Talking About Alcohol-Related Choices with Your Child

- ☒ **Make It an Ongoing Conversation.** This initial discussion will likely be the toughest to get started. Instead of lecturing, take this opportunity to open the lines of communication between you and your student so that you can keep talking about this important topic. Find out how your child feels about alcohol and the peer pressures he may face. Let him know that you are always there to talk things through.
- ☒ **Set Clear Expectations.** Let your child know that you expect her to focus on her personal development as well as her academic pursuits. And that you want her to set solid goals for herself. Alcohol use/abuse should not derail any of these plans. And participating in illegal behaviors is unacceptable.
- ☒ **Help Him Learn to Say “No.”** The desire to fit in can be mighty strong, even if it means saying “yes” to behaviors that you don’t agree with. Arm your child with some ideas about how to deflect alcohol pressures. If he’s involved in community service, sports or other extracurricular activities, he’ll have a ready-made “excuse:” “Sorry I can’t join you... I have to do this...” Or he can hang with friends and just drink water or soda – no one has to know. Plus, saying “no” can come in a variety of forms: “I’d love to go dancing with you guys – just know that I won’t be drinking tonight because I have an early meet/family thing/activity tomorrow morning.” When students feel like they have options to use in different settings, saying “no” is that much easier!
- ☒ **Offer Practical Tips.** If your student chooses to drink, encourage her to never accept a drink from an unknown person or to leave her drink unattended. It’s too easy for someone to slip a colorless, odorless “date rape drug” into the drink.
- ☒ **Don’t Talk When a Student is Intoxicated.** You may want to grab hold of a teachable moment, yet having a discussion when your child is intoxicated can get messy and be a waste of your time. Wait until the next day to talk when you’re both more level-headed.
- ☒ **Talk with Other Parents.** How do they handle alcohol-related conversations with their children? What have they learned the hard way? What has worked? This source of info can be invaluable!
- ☒ **Be Upfront About Your Concerns.** While solely using generalized scare tactics (i.e. “So many kids die because they drink!”) can turn your child off, hearing your concerns directly can have an impact on him. “I’m afraid that if you get arrested for drinking, it will be on your record and could show up on a background check when you’re going for your dream job” has a very different tone – it uses the “I” voice and speaks directly to a real-life concern.
- ☒ **Don’t Glorify Your Own Alcohol Use.** Glamorizing tales of your own alcohol abuse sets a poor example for your child and can make her feel invincible (“If nothing happened to Mom, I’ll be fine, too.”). Be a strong role model for good decision-making instead.
- ☒ **Offer Your Help.** If your child is faced with accepting a ride from an intoxicated individual or calling you for help, make sure that he knows he can always call you. This agreement between the two of you ahead of time will help him make better decisions and keep him out of harm’s way.
- ☒ **Have a Calm, Open Conversation.** When speaking with your child about alcohol, stay calm and be open. Encourage her to express her fears and concerns, and try to understand where she’s coming from. Don’t interrupt your child in the quest to get your point across. And try not to use, “Yes... but...” sentences as the word “but” can invalidate anything you were saying beforehand.

Sources: “Alcohol, Other Drugs, and College: A Parent’s Guide” from The Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, highercenter.org; “How to Talk to Your College Age Child/Student About Alcohol & Other Drugs” from the Substance Abuse Prevention & Health Enhancement Office at Syracuse University, <http://sumweb.syr.edu/health/parents.htm>; “A Message to Parents About High-Risk Drinking at College” from the Ohio College Initiative to Reduce High Risk Drinking, highercenter.org/parents/ohio.pdf

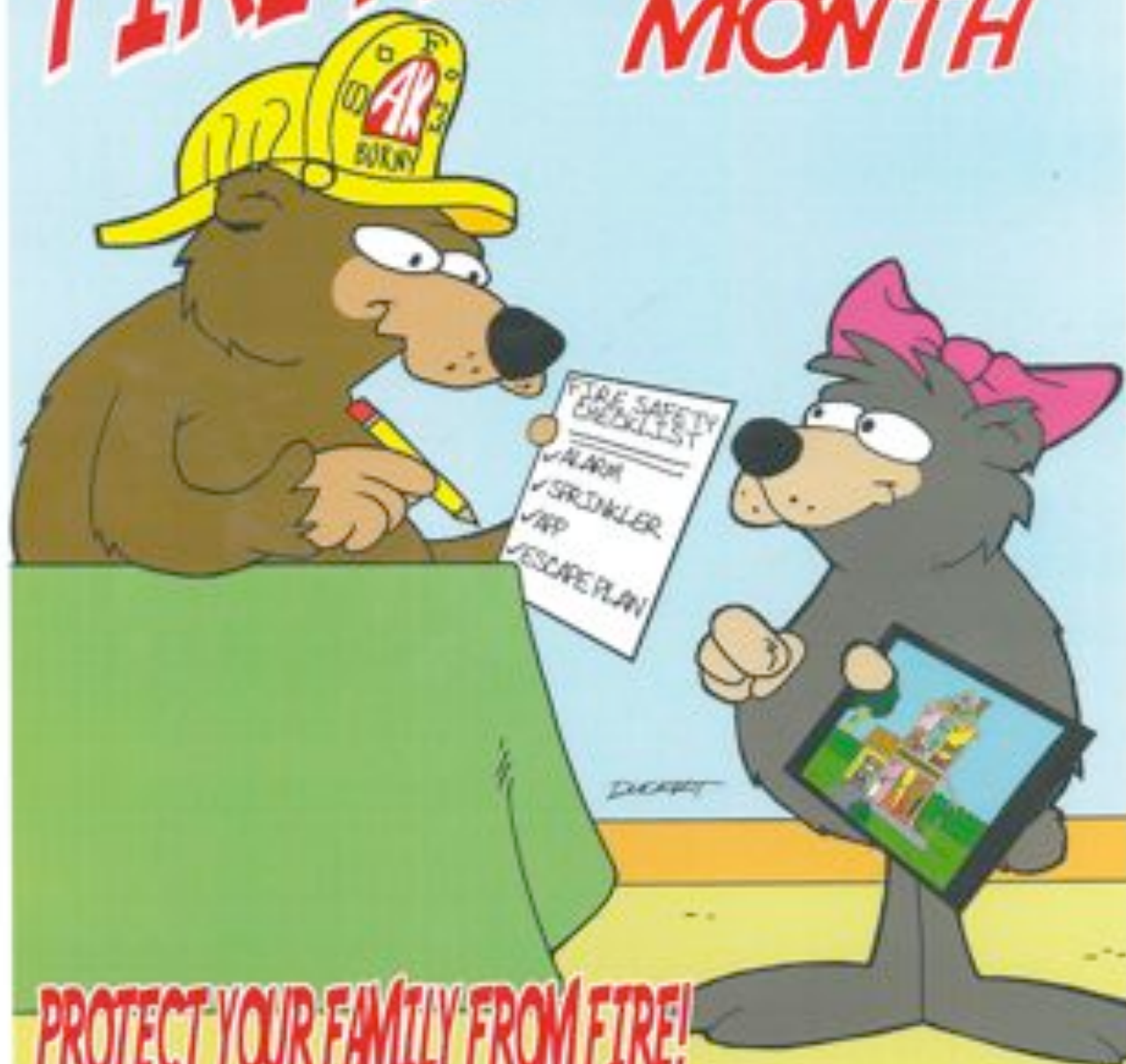


THE 22ND ANNUAL GREAT
ALASKAN FIRE
ESCAPE



OCTOBER 2011 IS

FIRE PREVENTION MONTH



PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM FIRE!

**CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR HOME IS FIRE SAFE!
DOWNLOAD BURNY'S FIRE SAFETY APP FOR
IPHONE, IPAD & IPOD TOUCH**

WHEN YOU PRACTICE FIRE SAFETY, YOU SAVE LIVES!

**Alaska Advantage
Alaska Dept. of Education**

Alaska Career Information System ([AkCIS](#))

Presented by CJ Allison

**COLLEGE / CAREER NIGHT # 1
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 2011
7:00-800 (Q&A AFTER) MPR ROOM**

**Lay out a path by organizing you education and career goals
with the Alaska Career Information System (AkCIS).**

What can AKCIS do for me?

- ✓ AKCIS gives you the tools for a successful future.

This interactive online career & college planning system is free to all Alaskans; it offers detailed information to help students from middle school – college create personal individualized portfolios.

Tell them about yourself by using ‘My Portfolio’:

Track your education and career plan:

- Save assessment and search results.
- Get a Reality Check...find the salary you need.
- Plan classes to take in high school and college.
- Build custom resumes.
- Link to your projects on outside websites.
- Share your portfolio online with visitor accounts.

What will you do when you grow up? Need career goals?

Using interactive assessment tools you will discover and learn more about the “job of your dreams.”

What college is the best fit for you?

Do a custom search of more than 4,000 accredited colleges, universities, technical schools and apprenticeship programs in Alaska and nationwide.

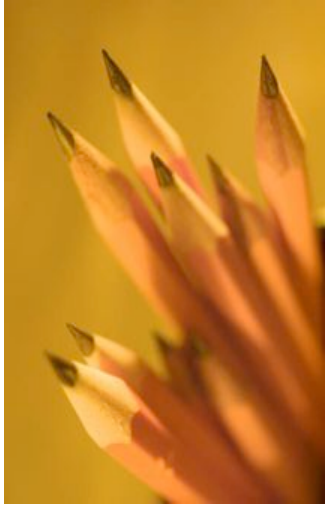
Need to know how you’re going to pay for college?

Learn all the steps searching for & finding financial aid ...create a personal list of scholarships, grants and loans.

“Land a job” by improving your job search skills.

Find tips on completing applications, resumes, cover letters, and performing well in interviews at akcis@alaska.gov





2011 PSAT/NMSQT at Steller

10th & 11th grade students

- good practice for the SAT
- National Merit Scholarship
- personalized college / career planning ideas in My College QuickStart™
- request information from colleges and universities
- assess your critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing skills
- get specific suggestions on how to improve your academic skills

Date/Time: Saturday, October 15th, 8:00 a.m.

Cost: \$20.00; check made out to “Steller” – BRING TO OFFICE
BEFORE TEST DAY.

Location: Meet in “lounge” area at Steller

Additional information, what you need to bring for the test:

Calculator (check PSAT website for “permitted / not permitted”),
Regular #2 pencils, can’t be mechanical or anything other than
plain old regular #2 pencils,

Erasers.

Leave your food at home...a snack will be provided (food and/or
beverage are not allowed in testing room)

- What to do next:**
1. Pick up a PSAT Student Guide in the office
 2. Bring check for \$20.00 made out to “Steller” ASAP
 3. check out the College Board PSAT info on their web-site
 4. get a hold of John ASAP if you have any questions

2011 ANCHORAGE COLLEGE AND CAREER FAIR

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SUNDAY – OCTOBER 23, 2011

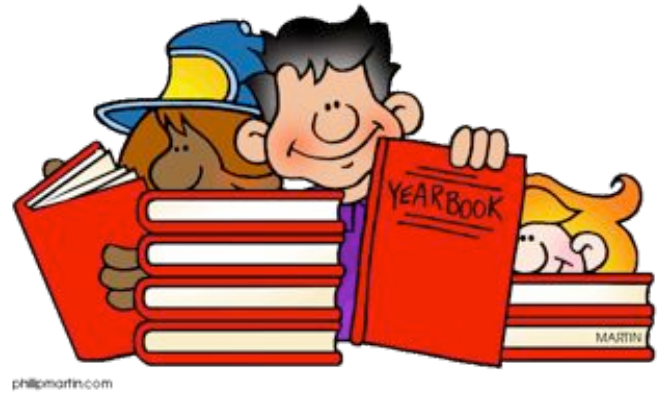
- 11:00 am – 1:00 pm **Registration and exhibit set-up** available for College Fair Exhibitors. Check-in/Registration table located at the 8th Avenue back entrance (loading dock area) of Dena'ina Convention Center.
- 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm **Workshops** – Financial Aid (How to Get Started); Scholarships (How to Find Them). College Admissions Process. Parents of high school students will find these afternoon sessions especially beneficial and are strongly urged to attend.
- 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm **Fair in Session** in Tikahtnu Ballroom. Participants include local and rural high school students and the general public.

MONDAY – OCTOBER 24, 2011

- 9:00 am – 1:00 pm **Fair in session** in Tikahtnu Ballroom. Participants include local and rural high school students and the general public.



Last Chance to buy a Yearbook for only \$55



Yearbooks are currently \$55, but they will soon rise to \$75-\$80. October 14th will be the last day to order a yearbook at the current price. Take advantage of this opportunity to remember your time at Steller and order now!

Library News



DONATION BOX LOCATED IN STELLER LIBRARY: This year marks the 55th year of Operation Santa Claus. This program is part of the Alaska National Guard's yearly community relations and support program that provides books to children in rural communities across the state. This year, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting ALLAKAKET and WALES to distribute gifts and books for each child. **ALL DONATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER FIRST!**

DID YOU KNOW that Steller has an account at TITLE WAVE BOOKSTORE? What this means to you is that the STELLER LIBRARY can add new books using any funds that accumulate in our account there. Soooo....if you are taking your used books into Title Wave anytime throughout the year, you can request that the funds be added to Steller's account! Your contribution in this way would be much appreciated!

Donate a book to Operation Santa Claus

This year marks the 55th year of Operation Santa Claus. This program is part of the Alaska National Guard's yearly community relations and support program that provides books to children in rural communities across the state. This year, Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting Allakaket and Wales to distribute gifts and books for each child.

Steller will be collecting new and gently-used books in the Library from October 3rd – 14th.



OPERATION SANTA CLAUS BOOK DONATIONS

Donate a new or gently-used book to Operation Santa Claus.

Books will be distributed in Allakaket and Wales in early December.

Thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Thursday, October 13th
6:30 – 8:00 pm
Ad Board

Wednesday, October 26th
Parent Teacher Conferences

Friday, October 14th
End of 1st Quarter

Thursday, October 27th
Parent Teacher Conference

Wednesday, October 19th
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Parent Group Meeting

Friday, October 28th
In-Service Day - NO SCHOOL

Friday, October 21st
Picture Retakes
7:00 - 11:00 pm
October Dance

STELLER SECONDARY SCHOOL
2508 BLUEBERRY ROAD
ANCHORAGE, AK 99503

