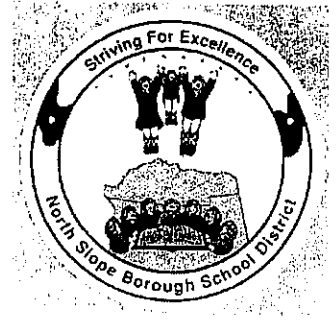


Barrow School Advisory Council



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September 27, 2004

Community Members, Parents, Teachers, and Administrative Staff
North Slope Borough School District
Barrow, Alaska 99723

All Concerned

I am writing to you as the Barrow SAC President. In this letter I would like to outline the process used to get the Strategic Planning Results from the meeting held at Hopson Middle School on September 20, 2004.

The meeting was held in the Multi-purpose room at Hopson Middle School from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM. There were 48 participants; Elders, Parents, Teachers, SAC Members, Board Members, Administrative Staff, and Community Members from an assortment of the ethnic and cultural background that populate this diverse community.

The meeting was conducted by our NSBSD Superintendent Dr. Michael Smith. At the meeting the group was broken up into four smaller groups, and then presented several questions as outlined in the results attached to this letter. The groups were asked to come up with a specific number of answers to each questions as a group. After each group came up with the specified number of answers, the answers were put up on the wall and the duplicate answers were weeded out. Then each answer was ranked by each group from one (1) to say 25 depending on the number of answers left after the duplicate were weeded out. The ranking were than added together. This process gave each answer a ranks as a consensus of all the groups. The answer with the lowest number being the highest ranked answer. This was a lengthy process given the fact that we were asked to come to a consensus on three specific questions and there were 48 participants from diverse backgrounds.

However we accomplished the goal and come up with some very interesting and useful information. Now we need to use this information to improve the education of all our student on the North Slope. The Barrow School Advisory Council, Teachers and Administrative Staff from the NSBSD will be working on incorporating this information into ways to improve our Schools. I would like to thank DR Smith, the Elders, Parents, Community Members, Teachers, SAC Members, School Board Members, Administrative Staff and everyone else that participated in the process for your hard work and dedication to improving the Education of the youth on the North Slope.

Most respectfully and with great appreciation,

Walter R. Cook, Barrow SAC President

Ipalook, Hopson and Barrow High School

September 20, 2004

SUMMARY:

When participants were asked to respond to the question:

Do you believe all children can and must learn well?

the consensus of the participants clearly indicated they believed all children can and must learn well.

When participants were asked to respond to the question:

*If you believe all children can and must learn well,
yet believe it is not happening in your school,
why do you believe it's not happening?*

the following reasons were provided and have been ranked from 1-21, with 1 being the highest ranked reason why it's not happening in their school:

1. Lack of parental support and parental knowledge of student work (sometimes hard to help a child if you don't possess the content background knowledge and needed skills).
2. Parents not meeting basic student needs: i.e., not providing adequate amount of sleep; nutritious meals at home; safe and nurturing home; adequate clothing, medical attention; etc.
3. Abundance of drug and Alcohol in community.
4. Few "real life" connections between school and the greater world.
5. Lack of family, student, and school discipline.
6. Student harassment and bullying.
7. Low student self-esteem.
8. Poor student attendance.

9. Failure of educators to recognize and/or accommodate individual student learning styles.
10. Lack of parental understanding of community-wide consequences when children in their community are not educated well.
11. Not raising parental expectation bar high enough.
12. Lack of quality ongoing communication process between home and school.
13. Family social problems.
14. More personal distractions in a child's life today than in the past.
15. Allowing students to move on to the next grade level without ensuring they have mastered the content knowledge and skills needed to be successful at the next grade level.
16. No school district accountability.
17. Parents and communities not stressing to their children how important it is to receive a quality education.
18. Not providing enough culturally related materials and resources within the school curriculum.
19. Conflicts between Western and Inupiaq cultures.
20. Lack of personal goal setting by students and parents.
21. School district economic constraints.

When participants were asked to respond to the question:

What do you believe the duties and responsibilities are of your teachers in your school in ensuring all your children learn well?

the following reasons were provided and have been ranked from 1-13, with 1 being the highest ranked duty and/or responsibility for teachers in ensuring all children learn well:

1. Keeping parents continually and systematically informed of their child's progress, academically and socially.
2. Assessing, understanding, and addressing unique and diverse learning styles.

3. **Ensure all student assessments provide opportunities for early intervention.**
4. **Honor and respect the individual personal qualities in each and every child.**
5. **Provide a relevant education for every child.**
6. **Identify and eliminate cultural biases in the classroom and school.**
7. **Stay actively engaged in improving professional knowledge and skills . . . seeking to be the best educator possible.**
8. **Reflect a positive attitude that is contagious and says . . . I believe you can accomplish anything you put your mind, heart and soul in and I am here to help you along the way.**
9. **Be extremely knowledgeable of craft . . . a knowledge and command of effective instructional and assessment methods and practices.**
10. **Maintain high professional standards, morals and ethics.**
11. **Treat all students with love and respect.**
12. **Provide a safe and nurturing classroom and school environment.**
13. **Provide challenging and exciting learning activities that capture the interest of all your children.**

When participants were asked to respond to the question:

What do you believe the duties and responsibilities are of parents in your community in assisting your school in educating all your children well?

the following reasons were provided and have been ranked from 1-13, with 1 being the highest ranked duty and/or responsibility for parents in ensuring all children learn well:

1. **Ensuring their children's basic needs are met (i.e., safe and nurturing home; quality and nutritious meals are provided in the home; adequate sleep is maintained; medical needs met; properly clothed; etc.).**

2. **Provide appropriate and consistent discipline at home (*a recent found that 80 % of parents and teachers say discipline issues begin at home*).**
3. **Spend quality time doing things with their children both in and out of school.**
4. **Demonstrate through verbal communications and actions the absolute need for their children to receive a quality education.**
5. **Set high expectations for success for children.**
6. **Control exposure to media (i.e., limiting TV watching and monitoring what children watch; limiting video game time; limit and monitor internet usage; preview and limit exposure to inappropriate literature, movies, and music; etc.).**
7. **Always believe in and encourage children.**
8. **Teach children at home basic and acceptable social skills.**
9. **Instill a respect for authority . . . without it there is chaos.**
10. **Be a positive and exemplary role model for children.**
11. **Give children responsibilities and let them know they are valued.**
12. **Hold educators and schools accountability for providing every child within the community a quality education.**
13. **Ensure children attend school every day and on time.**