



**North Star
Elementary
School**



CONSOLIDATION



**Nikiski
Elementary
School**

*Process and Communication
Planning Document
2003-04*

Consolidation Planning Document

Nikiski Elementary School & North Star Elementary School
2003-04

Due to decreased enrollment and revenue, the school district has made the decision to consolidate the two Nikiski elementary schools for the Fall of 2004. As a community, we are tasked with a smooth transition and consolidation of Nikiski Elementary and North Star Elementary School. In an effort to provide direction and support, the following plan has been developed. It includes a process for decision making and communication. Participation and input is crucial to forming a quality school and learning environment that improve learning for our students. We look forward to the additional options and educational opportunities that consolidation will provide. We must maintain a positive and proactive attitude throughout the year to best meet these goals. It is our hope that you will become involved, informed, and interested in making these goals become reality.

THE PROCESS PLAN:

The consolidation of the two elementary schools will be an exciting and huge task. It is likely to present many challenges, questions and problems along the way. Every effort will be made to value all community/parent, staff, and student input into the decision making process. The notion that there will be 100% consensus on every issue and decision is highly unlikely. Every attempt will be made to consider how best to meet the needs of the majority of students. A process for decision making is critical to the smooth transition into a unified elementary school and community of learners.

The following structure has been designed to allow for processing decisions to be made during the consolidation process. There is a hierarchy of decision making. Stakeholders will need to understand that this process will only be as strong as the buy-in and support of those involved.

Level 1: District Project Team

- The District Project Team from the Central Office shall have final authority in all decisions. They may decide to send back Task Force decisions that conflict with budget constraints, facility issues, personnel and negotiated agreements, state law/district policy, and other such matters.
- The Superintendent of Schools has agreed to be the point person for the district and will meet monthly with the principals for updates and progress reports.
- The District supports the idea of local control and will honor those decisions that will enrich the educational community in Nikiski.

-The District has committed assistance in the areas of instructional direction, trucks, personnel placement decisions, moving assistance, and technology coordination.

-The District will work with the Borough on closing and possible reopening plans for Nikiski Elementary.

Level 2: Consolidation Task Force

-The composition of the Consolidation Task Force shall be a six person membership comprised of each building principal, one staff representative from each school, and one parent member from each school. The staff member may be a classified or certified person. That position will be elected by a simple majority of staff at each school. The parent representative will be appointed by the principal and should be a member of the Site-Council, PTA, or PTO at the site.

-All final decisions will be made through the Task Force. A "Super Majority" (5 votes of yes) is needed for a decision to be ratified. A decision that is not ratified will be sent back to committee with rationale for further study.

Level 3: Committees

-There will be six standing committees that all recommendations will be forwarded to for Task Force approval. The charge of each committee will be to address all concerns, problems, and decisions of consolidation that fall into their committee description. Each committee will have a principal representative, 2 staff members from each school, and two parents/community members from each school. There will be a total of nine members on each committee and a simple majority will forward a recommendation to the Task Force. The following are the six committees to be formed in the fall of '03. Committee meetings will follow Roberts Rules of Order. A chairperson and secretary will need to be elected to coordinate meetings. Secretary will be responsible for taking and posting minutes and agendas. The principal shall not serve as the chairperson or secretary.

Staff members should serve on these committees on a voluntary basis. It is vital that we have balance and expertise on these committees. Staff membership includes both classified and certified members. Staff members electing not to be involved are responsible to educate themselves on the progress of each committee and the possible ramifications of committee decisions.

Parent/community members will be appointed by the PTA/PTO organizations. Community members wishing to serve should

contact one of the PTA/PTA officers at the school of their choice. Parents may only serve on one committee.

Committees may solicit outside assistance and expertise in addressing certain issues when needed. Those experts may not vote and can only provide information, advice, or serve as a facilitator. Committees may also form sub-committees to organize/facilitate operations/functions of the original committee.

The six committees are as follows:

1. Instructional Issues/Programs
 - Reading, Math, Multiage, Assessment, Title I, Specials, Schedules....
2. Facilities/Transportation
 - Room assignments, storage, bussing....
3. "Moving Day" and Planning
 - Planning for the move, logistics, etc...
4. Parent Groups Coordination/School Identity – Site-Council, PTA, PTO, other.
 - Combining Groups, School Mascot, School Name,...
5. Community/Business/School Partnerships
 - Faith Based Initiatives, CPCS, Closing Ceremony, Grand Opening, B&G Club...
6. Joint School Activities for '03-'04-'05
 - Joint activities and programs, teacher exchanges, student exchanges....

Membership on these committees will be voluntary and will serve as a representative of the constituents they represent. In the event that there is overlap in some of the issues, two committees may decide to hold a joint meeting to discuss and process the issues. Committees should plan on meeting at least monthly or as needed. The first meeting may simply be a brainstorming session to generate a list of issues that fall into their area.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

Internal and external communication will be critical to avoid any misunderstanding or failure to get the information out to interested parties. The following guidelines will serve as a vehicle to get the information out in as many forms as possible.

1. Each school will make a bulletin board available to post all of the minutes and agendas of the Task Force and Committees. The boards will be in a prominent place in the school and be visible to the general public.
2. Each schools' newsletter will make space available for committee information to go out on a monthly basis. Information must be sent electronically and get to the school office no later than 48 hours prior to the newsletter going out. Both schools should receive the same release. Committees may send home flyers on Mondays only.
3. Each Site-Council, Tri-Council, PTO, and Staff meeting will start with an update from the principals on the process and progress of the consolidation.
4. The District, Clarion and KSRM will be included in the communication plan. Media will access information from the districts web site. (see #7)
5. It will be the District's responsibility to keep the School Board informed. A formal presentation on the consolidation will be made to the school board at some point during the school year at the superintendent's direction.
6. All meetings will be open to public comment. Advance notice (48 hours) to the chairperson is required for presentations to the committees; presentations shall not be more than 15 minutes in length. Public comment at the meetings will be limited to 3 minutes for each community member and no longer than 30 minutes aggregate.
7. There will a link on the districts web site that will include all committee minutes and updates. Go to www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us and find the "Superintendents Corner". Follow the "Nikiski Consolidation" link

Every effort will be made to communicate the progress and decisions made throughout the school year. If there are any questions surrounding the consolidation, both principals will be happy to discuss decisions, rationale, process, and outcomes with all interested parties. We hope to keep the lines of communication open and healthy during the year. Please feel free to ask whenever you have ideas, concerns or feedback for committees.

CONCLUSION

The closing and opening of schools is a sizable and emotional task. It will require commitment, time, energy, and professionalism from all those involved. The Nikiski community is committed to make this transition positive and a beneficial move for students. It is our ultimate goal that student achievement and climate be improved. Parent and community involvement in this process is critical. Committees need to reach out to all interested parties for input and assistance whenever possible.

The Process and Communication Plans will drive a successful consolidation. This plan is subject to modification as needed. We appreciate all of the many hours of volunteer work that will go into this project. Unfortunately, there simply are no funds to support any decisions that may require expenditures of a sizable nature. Both schools have nominal supply budgets and 710 accounts that may be used to support smaller projects.

Once again, thanks to all who have been supportive and understanding. We have been given direction and flexibility by the District to make the best possible elementary school for the Nikiski Community. Given that challenge, we will rise to the occasion and forge ahead to work together in a positive, professional, and energetic manner and make the best possible learning environment and opportunities for our children.