Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Golden Apple Award | May 7, 2018

Mrs. Nancy Kleine

As a consummate advocate for her students and schools, Mrs. Nancy Kleine is quick to brag about her student's latest accomplishments, which is usually accompanied by a tour of the building. As a colleague, Nancy is supportive of District initiatives that benefit students. As a result, students from Nanwalek and Port Graham schools benefited from opportunities provided by multiple KPBSD UPSTREAM Academies, the Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program Middle School Academy, and through opportunities with District partners such as the Kenai Peninsula Native Youth Leaders.

Going above and beyond, in February, 2018, after working on the project for hundreds of hours, Nancy published a book in the Apple iTunes store. It's 33 pages, free, and titled, "Inspiring New Ways of Learning at Nanwalek School." This book chronicles the outstanding education contribution that is now in place for the current students, and students to come in future years. Nancy has worked with local tribal councils, and with partner agencies to publish Nanwalek historical resources about the school, and obtain permissions from older school materials that were produced to tell the story of Nanwalek and Port Graham.

In 2015, Nancy was instrumental in garnering a ConnectEd grant from Apple for Nanwalek School. They were one of 114 schools across the country who received one-to-one iPads for each student, a Mac and iPad for each teacher, and an Apple TV in each classroom. In addition to the technology, the grant implemented processes for planning and professional learning. Her advocacy led to the acquisition of materials and ConnectEd included Port Graham School in their support. Nancy's role was vital to the successful implementation of this technology and its transformative effect on both sites. Additionally, as a seasoned educator, Nancy can be counted on to provide valid insight to situations, practices, and protocols. "Nancy has done a great job mentoring me this year," says Josh Hinds, principal of Susan B. English School in Seldovia. "Her assistance, clarifications, and insights have been very helpful to me in my first year with the district," he adds.

Devin Michel, teacher at Port Graham, says about Nancy, "She is the epitome of support. Nancy puts everything she has into her schools, students, and staffs. She works with people as individuals and helps them to utilize their strengths to benefit the greater good. When asked about such things as rabbits, salmon, or chickens, she enthusiastically wants her staff to take on projects that will truly have an effect on the life learning of her students. Nancy will be greatly missed in her retirement, as she has come to be the mother hen of both schools. She leaves big, warm, patient, and loving shoes to fill." Renee Estelle, KPBSD Itinerant Teacher of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, adds, "It's been an honor to work with Nancy and to see positive changes in Nanwalek School over the years she's been at the helm. I appreciate Nancy's hard work, her commitment to excellence, and her willingness to think outside the box to meet the unique needs of students. Her kindness and caring for students is evident as she encourages them to move ever upward toward success!"

When Nancy Kleine announced that she will retire at the end of this school year, it marked the end of a career in education spent entirely in Alaska. Nancy served KPBSD in multiple capacities and at multiple sites. After two years with Connections serving as an Academic Advisor, Nancy became the principal of Nanwalek School. A year later, she assumed leadership responsibilities at both Nanwalek and Port Graham, where she quickly brought with her the kind of credibility that can only come from a career in education. She is steadfast in her expectations as a school leader, for personnel and students alike. As a result, under Nancy's leadership, both schools have seen a marked gain in the areas of academic achievement and attendance.

Principal Kleine's tenure with the District will have lasting effects for the students, families, and schools she has served. Educators, more than anything, want to make a difference. It is clear that Nancy, through a career spent creating opportunities for students, has done this successfully.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education is proud to recognize Principal Nancy Kleine for her dedication to the students of the school district, past, present, and future.