Since the last School Board meeting:

- In June and July we offered a Baranof Kids Camp for incoming K and 1st grade students. The Camp ran for 4 weeks, and more than 20 students participated in the 3-hours a day, 4-days a week play-based social emotional learning opportunity designed to help students get ready for the school year. STEPS grant funding supported the Camp.
- In partnership with Sitka Tribe of Alaska, we were able to offer Cultural Camps to students this summer. Over 100 students participated in the various Camps with topics ranging from Bears and Berries to Native Youth Olympics!
- Our Cultural Department staff participated in a Sealaska Heritage Institute Language Retreat held in Sitka in June.
- Thank you to the organizations and individuals who engaged in discussions regarding the operation of Community Schools. I am thrilled to be able to present to the Board the opportunity to approve a Community Schools contract for the Hames Center. The Hames Center is a non-profit organization supporting youth and adult activities, which makes for a common mission. Thank you to our previous contractor, Matthew Turner. The contract will begin August 8th.
- **FY20 Budget Update:** The Alaska State Legislature and Governor are engaged in a legal battle over FY20 funding for public schools in Alaska. While the legal case works its way through the Court system, the Legislature and Governor have entered into an agreement to continue funding for public schools except for the $30 million statewide one-time funding that was passed during the 30th Legislature. The School Board voted to balance our FY20 Budget assuming only $15 million statewide comes through in one-time funding, which equates to $151,000. We will not know whether or not we will receive our portion of the $30 million until the legal issues have been settled. We do not have $151,000 in our available Reserves to cover this cost should the Legislature fail to prevail in the Courts.
- Non-tenured teachers received a contract once the agreement was reached between the Legislature and the Governor and we started to receive our FY20 State funding allocation, which happened on July 22nd.
- In June I traveled to Anchorage for an Alaska State Council on the Arts meeting, as I am a Trustee. I also traveled to Philadelphia to attend the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Board meeting and the ISTE Conference where there were 20,000 participants. Participation in both of these events helps to move our district initiatives forward especially our Arts, Culture, and Technology professional learning opportunities for teachers.
- In July I traveled to Bloomington, Minnesota to attend the Innovate K12 Innovation Summit along with Board Member Amy Morrison, Parent Geoff Diehl, Teacher Jeremy Strong, Family Engagement Coordinator Kari Sagel, and Principal Jill Lecrone. At the Summit, we received our initial training in how to implement the InnovateK12 strategic planning model. Stay tuned for information about how we will be soliciting input this fall from staff, students, and the community to guide the development of our strategic plan!
- In July I traveled Juneau for the Department of Education and Early Development’s Superintendent Meeting and the Alaska Superintendent Association’s Summer Meeting. While in Juneau, I also attended a SERRC Executive Committee meeting. At these events I learned information that will be important for our district operations this school year.

Current Happenings:

- School offices opened on August 1st, so people are ready to help register students if you are new to town!
- **Security Update:** This summer we are installing new security cameras throughout the district. We are also going out to bid for a new phone system that will allow any phone to broadcast throughout the school, which is a safety feature. Our new phone system will cost the same as our current phone system for a few years, as we need to purchase new handsets since our current handsets only work with our current system. After the cost of the handsets has been accounted for, our new phone system should provide a significant cost savings – up to $75,000 a year.
- The STA Back to School Fair will be held on Friday, August 9th, from 4-7 pm at Sitka High School. This free event is open to the public and will include agency tables, activities, food, and kids’ games. There will be a backpack giveaway for Tribal citizen families. This is an expanded event from previous years, and a great place to get info and resources.

Things on the Radar:

- Teachers and staff report to work on Thursday, August 15th, and our Welcome event where we honor longevity awardees will occur at 11:00 am in the Sitka High School Commons. Board members are always welcome to attend!
- School starts on Thursday, August 22nd! Some schools have unique schedules the first few days, so check with your child’s school for specific orientation activities. The Back to School issue in the newspaper will publish on August 14th.