



# DRAGON TALES

## State Testing and School Budgets Big News

02 Oct 15

The middle of this month will bring new information about how our students did on the new Alaska State education assessment referred to as AMP and how our state's "fiscal reality" is going to impact school budgets across the entire state.

By the third week of this month, our current 4th, 5th and 6th grade students should receive in the mail their individual results for the AMP testing that they completed this past April. It is anticipated that because this is a new test, testing new standards and being given in a new format, online computerized testing, that the results will be much lower when com-

pared to these students results on the previous state test, the SBA. We have not received any information regarding how our McNeil students did but the statewide results indicate that the proficiency rate has dropped to below half. We will analyze the data when we get it and use that to adjust our instruction as needed.

Regarding education funding, I encourage you to get in touch with your legislators. Your input makes a difference.

Our mission continues to be inspiring our students to realize their fullest potential. Thank you for your commitment to making that happen.

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### Special points of interest:

- Garage Sale
- Picture Day
- End of 1st Quarter
- P/T Conferences
- Fall Carnival

### Dates to Note:

Gallery Walk	05 Oct
No School for Students	16 Oct
Report Cards Home	23 Oct
Fall Carnival	30 Oct
No School for Students & P/T conferences	29 & 30 Oct

## Picture Day on Tuesday

Picture Day is Tuesday, October 6th. All pictures will be taken in the morning with preschoolers invited to have their picture taken at 11 am.

## Garage Sale SATURDAY!!

On Saturday, October 3rd from 9 am to 1 pm will be the annual 6th grade garage sale. Fourteen different families have rented tables already. It should be a great sale! Come check it out.

## Important Borough Meeting SATURDAY, Oct. 3

At 10:00 am on Saturday, Oct. 3rd in our school library, the Borough will meet with our community about capital projects and Revenue Sharing. Make your voice heard.

## Bake Sale

On Monday, October 5th, the Sixth Grade may be selling any left over Bake Sale items during the transition from lunch to recess time—based on donations left.

## Alaska Measure of Progress (AMP) Update

Superintendent Sean Dusek said, “Our staff is working incredibly hard to make the instructional shift in expectations required by the new AMP assessment, and I’m confident we will rise to this opportunity. It’s important to realize that we utilize many sources of information and measures to help prepare our students for their future—AMP is one piece of the equation.”

We expect our district AMP results to be released by the Department of Education and Early Development (EED) in mid-October, followed by school summaries, and your individual student reports. We do know that Alaska’s new English and mathematics standards raise expectations for our students. It is very important that when we receive our results, and students receive their scores to remember:

- Student achievement has not declined.
- What is expected of students is more rigorous than previous expectations.
- These first AMP results are setting a new baseline to help us understand where students stand on their path to success.

We will continue to work with you to understand AMP results, and how we are preparing our students for future assessments now that the baseline has been set in this initial year.

[An Academic Checkup](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahjGaihxp94) is a short, helpful video to understand the value of assessments, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahjGaihxp94>

This KPBSD webpage offers more information about AMP, and has links to the Alaska EED department pages. The district will update this page as more information is released. <http://bit.ly/AMPtest>

## First Quarter Ends/Inservice Day

First Quarter will be ending on Friday, October 16th. This is an in-service day for staff so there will be NO SCHOOL for students that day.

## Ukulele Assembly

Our 4, 5 & 6 graders have all been learning to play the Ukulele in music class. On Thursday, October 8th at 10 am, some local Ukulele players will perform for us in the gym. Keep playing!

## Artist in the Schools

Josh Nordstrom's mosaic residency will be ending on Monday. An exhibit of the amazing, colorful, careful work done by our students is being prepared for a final celebration on Monday afternoon. The students will be participating in a gallery walk through the exhibit following this schedule:

Bill's and Corise's Classes: 12:30-1:00

Melon's and Kendall's Classes: 1:00-1:30

Debbie's and Joanna's Classes: 1:30-2:00

All parents and community members are invited to join us. Josh's personal mosaics will still be on display, so if you have missed seeing his impressive work, Monday afternoon would be a perfect chance to see everyone's art displayed together.

This Artists in Schools project is supported by McNeil Community Council, a grant from the Alaska State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts with additional funding from the Rasmuson Foundation.

## KPBSD Budget Meeting

The KPBSD will have a District wide budget meeting on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. McNeil Site Council Members, as well as all interested parents, are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting. We will join other Site Councils at Homer Middle School for this meeting that will be delivered by MSLync. "Our annual budget is one of the most important things we do each year," said Dave Jones, assistant superintendent of instructional support. "We want to give our parents, staff, students, and community members a chance to learn about our budget, participate in the process, and offer input. The meeting on October 15 will be an important step in the process to develop the FY17 budget. We hope to see a large turnout at all our schools across the district."

## Book Fair

Our annual Book Fair this year is once again being held in cooperation with The Homer Bookstore. We are fortunate the the Homer Book Store offers us the opportunity to provide quality literature to our families while supporting our art program through this fundraiser. On top of purchasing books at the Book Fair in our hallway, you can place orders for books you want at that time, the book store will order your books or provide them from their stock, and consider those sales part of our fundraising event. Proceeds from the Book Fair are used to buy art supplies for school wide projects. The Book Fair will be held during the week of Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> through Oct 30<sup>th</sup>. Hours on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, will be during our lunch hour, 11:20-12:20. On Thursday and Friday during Parent Teacher Conferences books may be purchased between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Also, Saturday, Oct 31, will be "McNeil Day" at the Bookstore. Anyone who makes purchases at the bookstore on that day and mentions McNeil Canyon will be adding 20% of their purchase will be donated to our fundraiser. There are lots of ways to support our art program and the local bookstore!

## Sports Day

Student Council is sponsoring Sports Day on Thursday, October 15th. Come dressed for your favorite sport, player or team. Join the fun! Rah! Rah!

## Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting Contest

Every December a tree from a different state is lit in front of the US Capitol to mark the beginning of the holiday season. This year the tree is coming from Alaska. There is an essay contest to select one student from Alaska who will have the honor of turning on the tree lights. Additional information is available on the front entrance bulletin board. Entries are due in the school office by Oct. 15th.

## Community Council

The McNeil Community Council will meet on Tuesday, October 6th at 1:00 pm in the Staff Lounge. All parents are invited to attend. It is especially important for Room Representatives to attend if at all possible. We will be handing out information about the booths each class will be having and directions to help get volunteers to work the booths.

## Fall Carnival

The annual McNeil Canyon Elementary Fall Carnival will be held on Friday, October 30th from 4 - 7 pm. This is a fun-filled evening for the whole family and community. The Fall Carnival is sponsored by Community Council and is their one major fundraiser for the year. Plus it's a lot of fun! Parents may be receiving a phone call asking them to help at the Carnival. Your time commitment can be as short as one hour. Please consider helping with this great event.

## Fall Carnival Poster Contest

All students are invited to make a poster (no bigger than 12" x 18") to help let people know about our Fall Carnival. **All poster contest entries will receive a prize.** Posters need to be submitted by Thursday, Oct. 15th. The poster must have the student's name, grade and teacher's name on the back and **MUST** have the following information somewhere on the front of the poster:

McNeil Canyon School Fall Carnival  
Friday, October 30  
4:00-7:00 pm at McNeil Canyon School

Additional information that you could include if you wish is: "Come Join the Fun!". Food, Prizes, Games, Haunted House, everyone is welcome! Happy creating!

We are also collecting books for the cupcake walk. You can drop off used books in the office with Laura.



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We're on the Web!! <http://mcneilcanyonelementary.blogspot.com>

Next

Site Council Meeting

15 Oct 15

6:00 p.m.

Homer Middle School

Agenda:

- District Budget Meeting
- Review Bylaws
- McNeil Site News

## Coast Walk Update

All students who participated in the Coast Walk had their name entered into a drawing for a chance to win a new pair of boots. The participating adults received vouchers that classroom teachers were giving out. If you helped on the Coast Walk but have not received your voucher, let Laura know in the office.

## Spotlight Students

The following students have been selected as Spotlight Students for the month of November: Olivia Morris, Faith Overson, Bella Loboy, Alexander Garcia Rivera, Zephaniah Weisser, Seamus Hatton, Michael Reutov, Raiden Skorski-O'Donnell, Wade Carroll, Skye Evans, Makary Reutov, Cadence Campbell and Jenna Lapp. Parents are invited to join their child and the principal for lunch on Tuesday, October 20th at 11:15 am.

Spotlight Student forms are being sent home with these children today. Please return them as soon as possible so they can be placed on our Spotlight Student bulletin board. Thank you!!

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday and Friday, October 29 & 30 from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Notices with your child's scheduled conference date and time will be sent home with them on Thursday, Oct. 15th. If you are unable to attend at the scheduled time, please contact the school office to reschedule as soon as possible or no later than Oct. 26th. Conferences are an important communication time for parents and teachers. We hope to see you here!