



John Fredson School

Principal/Teacher - Ms. Diane Olmstead

NEWSLETTER

April May



John Fredson School Vision – Our vision is to instill knowledge and history, pride in culture, and confidence sufficient to be happy and productive in a modern world (along with a deep appreciation for Gwich'in values).



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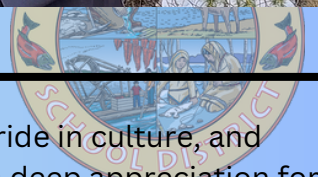


Jamerson Erick

Dalen E. Frank



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APRIL 2025

SUMMARY PAGE



April Events & Activities

April

Venetie Carnival (April 1–8)

- The first week of April brought fun and energy to the school with the Venetie Carnival! After-school events included talent shows, races, and creative challenges. Students enjoyed friendly competition and shared laughter.

AK STAR State Testing

- Students completed the AK STAR assessments, Alaska's statewide achievement tests. We commend all students for their hard work and focus during testing week.

AK Reads Progress Monitoring

- April marked a milestone with our 10th round of mClass progress monitoring. This meets the annual requirement of the Alaska Reads Act, ensuring students' literacy growth is tracked and communicated to families throughout the year.

SIP Implementation Reward Party

- As part of our School Improvement Plan (SIP), a student behavior initiative was introduced and successfully implemented. To celebrate their effort and leadership, students earned a pizza party—planned and organized by the students themselves!




LSAC Meeting: Culture & Prom Discussion

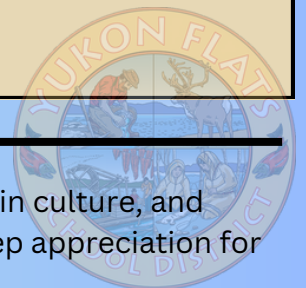
- Coleen Maldonado met with our LSAC (Local School Advisory Committee) to discuss requirements for prom and a district-wide cultural event. The focus was on ensuring proper documentation and reimbursement for participation.

Dancing with the Spirit Returns

- Students welcomed back Dancing with the Spirit for another unforgettable week of music and cultural connection. The group worked with students to celebrate Gwich'in values and community traditions through song.

Middle & High School STEM Activities

- STEM took center stage in April, with MS/HS students exploring science & engineering through hands-on challenges:
-  Standing on Paper Cups Challenge
-  "Yank Me" Cup Stacking Game
-  Popsicle Stick Bridge Building





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MAY 2025

SUMMARY PAGE



May Events & Activities

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Culture Weekend & District Prom (April 28–May 2)

- Students participated in a Cultural Event and the district-wide Prom—created to give students from smaller schools like ours a chance to celebrate together. The weekend also included the Dorian Job Fair, connecting students to future career pathways.

Reading Symposium in Anchorage (May 1–4)

- Several teachers attended the statewide Reading Symposium. Sessions focused on the Science of Reading, empowering staff with new strategies to improve instruction.

Quarter 4 Family Literacy Night (May 6)

- Our final Literacy Night of the school year featured reading games, book giveaways, and an exciting “Design a Reading Bag” activity. Families left with free books and big smiles!

Graduation Ceremony (May 9)

- John Fredson School celebrated its graduating 8th and 12th graders in a heartfelt ceremony. Congratulations to our students and families—we’re proud of your accomplishments!

Grant Presentation by Coleen Maldonado (May 13–14)

- District Grant Coordinator Coleen Maldonado visited to summarize current grants and share expectations for proposals. Her insight helped staff understand the opportunities available for future funding.

School & Community BBQ at Big Lake (May 14)

- We closed the year with a fantastic picnic at Big Lake. Community members volunteered to help transport students. The menu featured burgers, hot dogs, and ice cream—and the fun ended with a rocket launch using a STEM kit led by Mr. Jay and Mr. Jestoni!

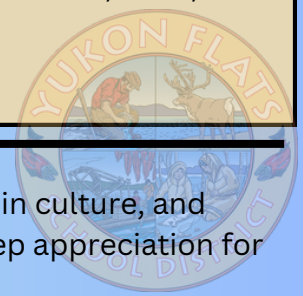
End-of-Year School & Community Picnic in front of the school (May 15)

- We closed the year with a fantastic picnic at Big Lake. Community members

Closing Notes

- From carnivals to rockets, reading nights to graduation—it’s been a joyful and productive spring at John Fredson School. Thank you to our students, families, staff, and community members for making this a meaningful school year!

Have a safe and restful summer! ☀️





APRIL/MAY 2025

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Staff Spotlight

Diane Olmstead



I feel incredibly fortunate to have served as the Principal and Teacher at John Fredson School for the past two years. It has been a true joy to work with such wonderful students and staff, and be part of this amazing community. Alaska has held a special place in my heart ever since I worked a summer job at Glacier Bay Lodge. I will never forget the beauty and spirit of this state. I feel truly lucky to have continued my teaching journey in the state I got to call for six years—surrounded by the land and people who make Alaska unlike anywhere else.

Living and working as the Principal/Teacher in Venetie among the Gwich'in people has been one of the greatest honors of my life. The strength, wisdom, and warmth of this community have deeply inspired me. I have learned so much from the traditions, culture, and values shared here, and I will carry that learning with me every day. I am continually grateful to have been welcomed so generously and to be part of such a vibrant place for the last two years.

My journey in education has taken me across six different school districts—four in California and two in Alaska—working in ten schools under the leadership of 16 principals and 8 superintendents over my 39-year teaching career.

I've taught a wide range of grades, from preschool through 6th grade. I spent my first 33 years teaching in California before moving to Alaska, where I worked in Ambler for three years (and adopted my dog, Chewbacca), then in Circle for one year, and now here in Venetie for the past two years (where I adopted Padawan).

I hold a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a focus on Technology. I'm passionate about using technology to inspire lifelong learning. I hope I provided our students with the best tools to succeed in a rapidly changing world. I hope they will continue to have the confidence to bravely accept any challenges technology has to offer. I also hope I have given the proper reading foundation for these little ones who have been with me for the last two years.

As the daughter of a career U.S. Army officer, I grew up in various places including Washington State, Germany, France, Hawaii, North Carolina, California, and Pennsylvania. I also served in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Heidelberg, Germany before beginning my teaching career. But, the memories I've made here in Venetie with all of you have been a gift I will always cherish.

I will be retiring to live close to my son, Patrick in Bellingham, Washington, along with our dogs Chewbacca and Padawan. Thank you for the memories. I will miss you all.

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APRIL / MAY 2025

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Photo Gallery

Carnival



Diane Olmstead



Dancing with the Spirit



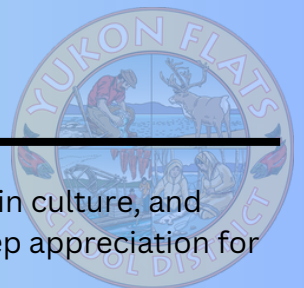
Graduation



Family Literacy Night

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Photo Gallery

STEM Activities

SIP Implementation Reward



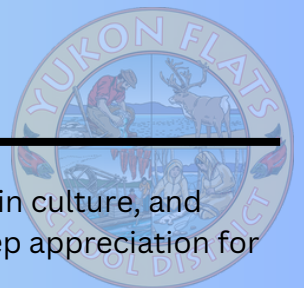
Picnic



BBQ at Big Lake



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Bulletin

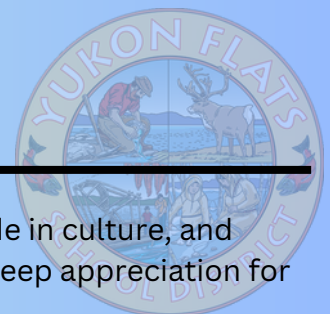
April Dates

- April 1st to April 4th - Reading Progress Monitoring #9
- April 1st to April 8th - Venetie, AK Carnival
- April 3rd - Special BOE session (Superintendent Selection)
- April 8th - LSAC Meeting at 4:30pm.
- April 15th - YFSD BOE Meeting 3pm.
- Photo Exhibition at 5:30pm
- April 18th - LSAC Meeting (scheduled) for 4:30pm
- April 20th - Easter
- April 21st to April 25th - NWEA Testing Week K-2 and 10th-12th
- April 22nd - Earth Day
- April 28th to May 2nd - Make-up Testing Time
- April 28th to May 2nd - Dancing with the Spirit Week 2

John Fredson School Staff

Principal/Teacher	- Ms. Diane Olmstead
Classroom Teacher	- Mr. Joel Brooks
Classroom Teacher	- Mrs. Vanessa Fe Carmona
Classroom Teacher	- Mr. Justine Villasencio
Gwich'in Teacher	- Ms. Katherine Tritt
Paraprofessional	- Ms. Darlene Christian
Paraprofessional	- Ms. Jamie Frank
Maintenance	- Mr. Jeremiah Druck
School Cook	- Ms. Audrey Rolfe

April



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- May 2nd to May 5th - Cultural Trip to Fairbanks for 8th-12th graders
- May 2nd - Cultural Trip-Doyon Job Fair
- May 3rd - Cultural Trip-Morris Thompson Cultural Center, Regional Prom
- May 4th - Cultural Trip-UAF Museum of the North
- May 2nd to May 4th Reading Symposium (Anchorage-Mr. Brooks and Mrs. Carmona attended)
- May 6th - Q4 Family Literacy Night
- May 7th to May 9th - Ms. Leslie Spilman (occupational therapist) visited
- May 9th - Graduation Ceremony follow by community lunch and cake
- May 13th to May 14th - Ms. Coleen Maldonado will visit
- May 12th to May 15th - Wrap-up reporting, Clean-up and cakes
- May 15th - School-Wide End of Year Pizza Party/Root Beer floats
- May 16th - Last day of School \$600/class in Prizes from LSAC give away
- May 17th - Teacher Work Day
- May 19th - Report Cards mailed home
- May 20th - YFSD Board of Education meeting at 3pm
- May 27th to May 30th - ASLI PD in Anchorage



May

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