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Dear Winterberry Families,

As we begin our final semester of the 2013 school year, I would like to take this time to address the issues of: guest teachers (substitutes) at Winterberry, student-to-student communication, and school safety.

Each day our fabulous teachers come to school prepared to meet our children with rich images and an abundance of energy. They are professionals called to serve children and families each and every day. Occasionally, however, these impressive individuals become ill or need to be absent to attend training. During these times we strive to connect with guest teachers who understand our program and can offer gentle service and shepherd our children during the absence of a class or specialty teacher.

These guests teachers have been fully screened by the Anchorage School District and have at minimum a four-year college degree. Many of our guest teachers hold teacher certifications as well (holding a teacher certification is now a requirement for any substitute joining the ASD). It has been our fortune at Winterberry to be able to have guest teachers who are also parents of Winterberry students allowing for the individual to have even deeper knowledge of our program.

Our guest teachers, like our classroom and specialty teachers, hold the safety and security of our students as their highest priority. In order to achieve an environment that is

safe and secure the guest teacher may ask students to move through the day in a slightly different way. Our classroom teachers, specialty teachers, and staff have shared with the students that we expect each of them to follow the direction of their guest teachers and to treat them with respect at all times. Please reiterate this to your children. It is understandable that our children can at times feel frustrated or confused when they have changes in their day, however

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Winter Fun Edition

Upcoming Events

February 2013

- 5th Outdoor Site Committee, 3:45pm
- 7th WPG Meeting, 6pm
- 9th Winter Faire 11am-4pm
- 12-13th WCC Elections
Mark your calendars for a five-day weekend!
- 14-15th NO SCHOOL
- 15th "More than Survival: The Waldorf Way to a Thriving Adolescence" 7-8:30pm
- 16th Workshop on Waldorf High School Curriculum, 9am-12:30pm
- 18th Presidents Day: -NO SCHOOL
- 21st WCC Mtg. 6pm
- 27th Grade 5 Parent Night, 6pm

March 2013

- 2nd Community Potluck 6-7:30pm
- 3rd Community Workshop 9am-2:30pm
- 4th In Service: NO SCHOOL
- 5-7th Parent-Teacher Conferences:
12:30 early release
- 7th WPG Mtg., 6 pm
- 8th All-School Ski/Skate Day
- 9-17th Spring Break
- 19th Search for the Self: Adolescent Talk with Principal Shanna Mall 6:30-8:30pm
- 21st WCC Mtg., 6 pm

Awakening the innate potential in every child

News from Mr. V: Ice Skating at Winterberry

Though Mother Nature took her toll in the rain-soaked days at the beginning of January, things are looking better for the start of February. Ice skating will be a part of our movement classes, especially in the first and second grades. Every Tuesday during movement classes (1st 1:45-2:30 & 2nd 2:30-3:15) we will be playing ice skating games and teaching students who have not learned how to skate to do so too! We will be in need of parent volunteers to come in and help students to learn how to skate, not to mention getting the students' skates laced up. If interested, please e-mail me at vander-schrier_kyle@asdk12.org and there will also be a signup sheet located outside of your child's classroom. Students in grades three through eight will also be skating during their movement classes (4th-8th grades Mondays & Wednesdays, 3rd grade on Thursdays). If your child has skates I ask that they bring them in for class. If your child does not have skates we have some available from sizes 1-4 and a few size 5-7. If you have an extra set at home that your child no longer uses it may be nice to have your child bring them in so that they may share them with a classmate who needs a pair. Students will be required to wear helmets while skating. I am looking forward to skating with the classes and I know that they have been looking forward to it as well.

The Search for the Self: Adolescent Talk with Shanna Mall, Principal Winterberry Charter School

Tuesday, March 19th beginning from 6:30 - 8:30pm

References:

Between Form and Freedom by: Betty Staley
Sixth Grade Crisis by: Eugene Schwartz

Do you have a teenager on the rise? Do you just wonder what is in store for you and your family? Do you wonder if your child is being met by their current educational environment? Are you facing the question, "Should we stay or should we go?"

If you are currently wondering this, or just want to get ahead of the parenting curve, please consider joining us in an informal talk based on the work of Betty Staley and Eugene Schwarz. Have spare time? Stop by the front office and pick up a copy of Eugene's article and consider ordering Betty's book as well. Hope to see you!

Blessings,

Shanna

Winter Time

~Robert Louis Stevenson

Late lies the wintry sun a-bed,
A frosty, fiery sleepy-head;
Blinks but an hour or two; and then,
A blood-red orange, sets again.

Before the stars have left the skies,
At morning in the dark I rise;
And shivering in my nakedness,
By the cold candle, bathe and dress.

Close by the jolly fire I sit,
To warm my frozen bones a bit;
Or with a reindeer-sled, explore
The colder countries round the door.

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap
Me in my comforter and cap,
The cold wind burns my face, and blows
Its frosty pepper up my nose.

Black are my steps on silver sod;
Thick blows my frosty breath abroad;
And tree and house, and hill and lake,
Are frosted like a wedding-cake.

WINTER FUN

Cabin Rentals

One great way to spend a winter weekend is renting an Alaska State Park public use cabin.

There are 60 cabins available to rent in areas all over the state. Some are accessible by road, although access can be different between the winter and summer, so you will want to be sure you read the information on the website carefully before reserving. Some are a little more remote and will require cross country skiing or snow machining to access. You need to provide your own wood for heat and water for the duration your stay, as well as everything else you would bring on a camping trip (except for a tent), so figure this in when planning whether or not the distance from the road to the cabin is doable for your family. We find having a large dog who likes to pull is helpful!

There are many things to do in a cabin during the winter months. There isn't any TV or internet or video games, so it is a great time for reconnecting by playing cards or board games or telling stories.

You can snow shoe, ski, ice fish, have a snowball fight - all of the usual winter outdoor activities, but with the added magic of being out in the woods.

One of my favorite cabin activities is star gazing.

You can reserve cabins seven months in advance, and the easily accessible ones fill up quickly on the weekends. But don't despair - sometimes you can find one available for a last minute trip as well.

Costs range from \$30 to \$60 a night, and cabins sleep from 2-8 people. You can get information on the cabins and make reservations at: dnr.alaska.gov/parks/cabins/index.htm A helpful book with first-hand information about many of the cabins is; "How to Rent a Public Cabin in Southcentral Alaska" by Andromeda Romano-Lax.

Skiing and Skating: Programs and Equipment Rental

Anchorage has many wonderful ways to get kids skiing and skating!

Here is a list of SOME of the programs.

If you know of any others please let us know and we will add to the list.

Happy Outings!

The MTC

Rental Info-

You can rent **Downhill Ski** (Alpine) gear for the ENTIRE snow season for \$110 from Play It Again Sports. This is a cost effective way to outfit growing kids for the ski season. Call Play It Again Sports for more information-278-7529.

AMH rents **Cross Country Ski** (Nordic) gear for older children and adults. They have daily, weekly and monthly rates. Contact AMH for more info 272-1811

REI (272-4565) rents adults and kids **Cross Country Ski** gear They have daily and weekly rates.

Champion's Choice at the University Mall (563-3503) rents **Skates** for \$10/day

Ski Programs

Anchorage Little Nordic- A learn-to-ski program. Open to 4-5 year olds. For more info go to

<http://www.muni.org/departments/parks/pages/skiing.aspx>

Anchorage Junior Nordic-Kids ski with coaches in small groups and learn skills. This program checks out skis to participants for a very reasonable rate. For more info go to

<http://www.juniornordic.org/>

APU Devo Program

Ages 12-14 years. Early Development program for cross-country ski racing. For more info go to-

<http://www.alaskapacific.edu/explore-apu/nordic-ski-center/program-descriptions/devos/>

Hilltop, Arctic Valley and Alyeska offer Ski Programs for kids. Check out their websites for more info.

www.hilltopskiarea.org

<http://www.skiarctic.net>

<http://www.alyeskaresort.com/mountain/alyeska-ski-club.aspx>

Winterberry Charter Council Meeting Reports

December Meeting

The WCC met December 12th in the 6th grade classroom. Present were Mary Meade, Shanna Mall, Haras Cullers, Alicia Besh, Meg Eggleston, Erin Fleischer, Melissa Janigo, Meggan Judge, Tara Smith, Bob Steinmann, and Kyle Vander-Schrier.

We heard reports on the new ASD electronic lottery and the new ASD organization. We postponed discussion of the 8th grade trip policies pending the completion of faculty discussion and drafting. We discussed the upcoming WCC elections. We reported on our individual and subcommittee board goals on parent education, teacher training, ASD organization, and intra-body communication. We will give updates on our progress at all future WCC meetings this year.

January Meeting

The WCC met January 17th in the 6th grade classroom. Present were Haras Cullers, Alicia Besh, Erin Fleischer, Melissa Janigo, Tara Smith, Bob Steinmann, and Kyle Vander-Schrier, Della Swartz.

We reported on our individual and subcommittee board goals on parent education, teacher training, ASD organization, and intra-body communication. We discussed the upcoming community event with our school mentors (see the notice in this issue!). We postponed discussion of the 8th grade trip policies pending the completion of faculty discussion and drafting. We discussed the upcoming WCC elections, which will be held February 12 & 13 at the front desk. Our next meeting is on February 21st. Please note that this is our Annual Meeting when all newly elected WCC members' terms begin, and please join us if you can!

Winterberry Charter Council Elections: February 12th and 13th

Voting will be open to all parents and faculty of Winterberry Charter School for members of the Winterberry Charter Council. Please ask for a ballot at the front desk on either day to vote for your WCC members. Six of the eleven seats on the WCC are up for election, 2 are faculty seats and 4 are parent seats. In the past, the WCC has made decisions on school location, grievance policies, curriculum changes, school calendars, and early release Thursdays. If these are issues that interest you, consider talking to the candidates and please do vote on February 12th or 13th! If you have any questions or would like to run for a seat, please contact Meg Eggleston (eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org) or Erin Fleischer (erinf@me.com).

News from ASD: 2013 Climate and Connectedness Survey Grades 3 - 12 only

The 2013 Climate and Connectedness Student Survey is being administered to provide schools with information about perceptions and experiences related to school climate and student connectedness for use in setting school goals and redirecting resources. This is an annual survey implemented and analyzed jointly by the ASD departments of Social and Emotional Learning and Assessment and Evaluation. The survey will take place between January 15 and February 22 of 2013.

This survey does not require parental permission and is administered to students in grades 3 - 12. If parents would like to request that their child does not complete this survey, please contact your student's school. This message serves as a notice to parents about this upcoming survey.

Please follow or type this link to review the survey:
http://www.asdk12.org/depts/assess_eval/climatesurvey.asp

Outdoor Site Committee

We will be meeting after school Tuesday February 5 at 3:45 in the lobby. There will be updates on the outbuildings, schoolyard habitat and other projects for this summer. Your input and participation is very welcome! Let's plan our gardens, trees, water courses and hobbit holes! Contact - Donna Mears mears@alaska.net 632-6382

How Charter Schools are Funded

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While most of us would much rather concentrate on more interesting things, financial realities sometimes force us to focus on aspects of our students' education that are more like getting your child to eat their broccoli. As we go into the season for some of our major fund raising efforts, it might be helpful to understand how charter schools are funded and why we need to raise extra funds.

Let's start out with the top level numbers. The Anchorage School district for the 2011/2012 school year had an income of \$835,234,718. The biggest single revenue source is the state of Alaska contribution of \$312 million, followed by the Municipality of Anchorage contribution at \$237 million. (Local municipalities are required to provide some funding and an additional amount is optional. Most cities and boroughs choose not to supplement the required funding.) The total population of the Anchorage School District in 2011 was 49,091 students.

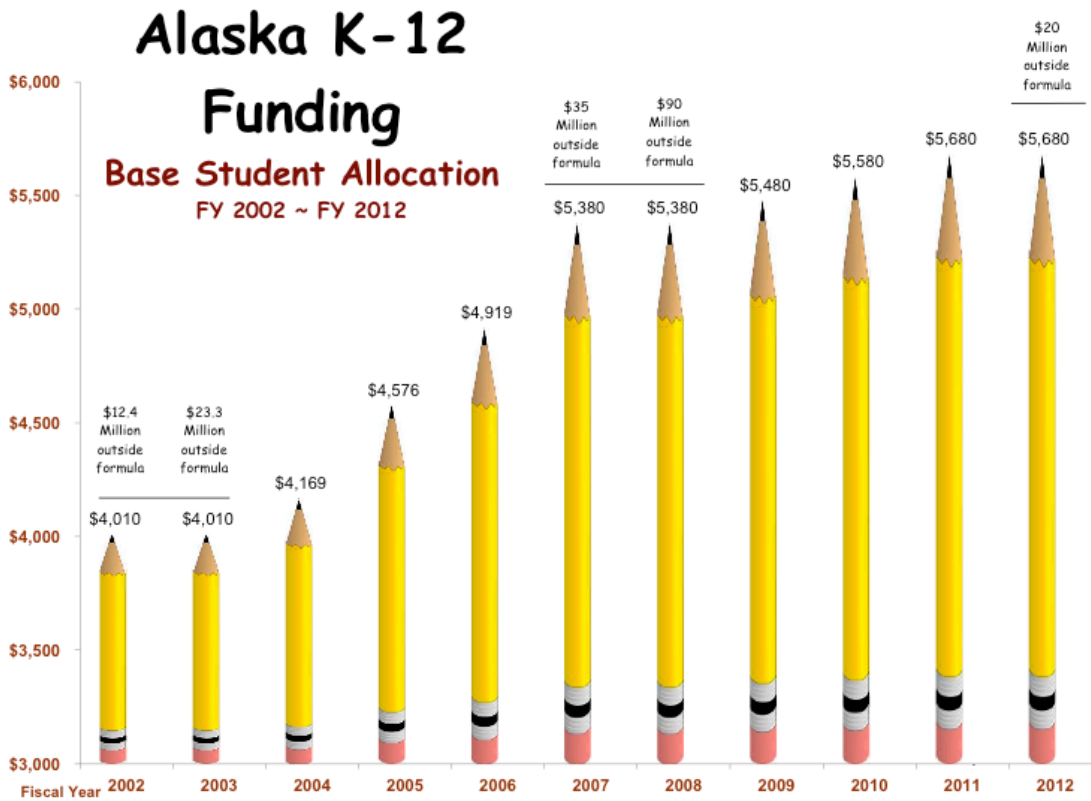
This means that for all programs, the district received \$17,014 dollars per student from all sources. This includes all the money that was earmarked for this, that, and the other, but that is the overall number.

Source, Anchorage School District Comprehensive Annual Fiscal Report, 2011-2012

As a charter school, Winterberry receives funding under the Alaska State statutes governing charter schools. The funding equations that generate program funding for charter schools are the same as those that generate program funding for the rest of the Anchorage school district, except that charter schools do not receive the out of program funding for things like buses and other special programs and capital matching. Our funding per student in 2011/2012 was \$8,832 per student for everything we do.

How do you arrive at this number? The minimum funding for any charter school is spelled out in the Alaska statutes.

It all starts with the "Base Student Allocation," an amount determined by the legislature, which was \$5680 per student for fiscal year in 2011 and remained unchanged for 2012. This number is under debate in the state legislature, as this article is being written, and it will very likely remain unchanged for 2013 as well.



This number is then multiplied by a variety of factors. These are canonized in several statutes, which I won't bore you with, but the principle is:

Alaska Statutes 14.03.260. Funding for charter school.

(a) A local school board shall provide an approved charter school with an annual program budget. The budget shall be not less than the amount generated by the students enrolled in the charter school less administrative costs retained by the local school district, determined by applying the indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Education and Early Development. The "amount generated by students enrolled in the charter school" is to be determined in the same manner as it would be for a student enrolled in another public school in that school district.

The simplest factor is the district size factor, which for us is 1.0. This factor adjusts for districts in the state where costs are higher, like the Aleutians Region at 1.736. Other urban districts like Mat-Su and Fairbanks are similar to us at 1.01 and 1.04 respectively. (See Alaska Statutes 14.17.460.)

The school size factor is where it gets a bit complicated. The school size factor essentially adds money per student for smaller schools because the overhead is usually higher due to economies of scale. It does this by adjusting the actual number of students to a number called the ADM, or Average Daily Membership. (See Alaska Statutes 14.17.450.)

For Winterberry the relevant factors are:

If our number of students during the October count is between 150 and 250, the school size factor is $218.1 + 1.08x(\text{number of students} - 150)$

Example: Assume we have 220 students. The $ADM=218.1+1.08x(220-150)=293.7$

The equation is different for school sizes below 150 students and that results is what is called the “150 student cliff.” The result is a bit more than half the per student funding between 149.9 students and 150.1 students. No charter school ever wants to drop below 150 students.

The ADM is then multiplied by the special needs factor of 1.2. (See Alaska Statutes 14.17.42)

Example: $297.7x1.2=352.44$

This number is then multiplied by the district adjustment of 1.0 and the Base Student Allocation.

Example: $352.44x1.0x\$5680=\$2,001,859$.

We are not done yet, hold on, the hard part is over. We still need to add the quality schools initiative funding of \$16 per ADM per Alaska Statutes 14.17.480 and subtract the district overhead.

This adds $16x352.44=\$5639$ for the quality schools initiative

The district overhead for 2011/2012 was 3.21%, but grew to 4.57% for this year. For 2011/2012 the overhead was $2,001,859+5639)x.0321=\$64,440$

The result is \$1,943,057 total for 220 students, or **\$8,832** per student

So, why the big difference between us and the rest of the Anchorage School district? On the surface, it looks like we get a little over half of what ASD is working with. The reason is fairly complex, and is the sum of many small contributions to the overall funding picture, but the biggest thing is that the Anchorage School District has not elected to provide the optional share of the revenue that the district gets from the local tax revenue.

There is also funding for transportation, currently \$384 dollars per ADM under Alaska Statutes 14.09.010. Since all ASD charter school students contribute to the ADM, the money is provided to the district from the state but charter schools do not receive transportation funding from the district. If Winterberry, with our 220 students, were to receive this funding and were allowed to use it for other purposes, this would add $293.7 \times 384=\$112,780$ dollars to our budget, more than enough for another teacher.

In addition, there is funding from the federal government in the form of impact aid for federal employees and members of the military. There are also grants for capital building and the state has a matching program when districts want to build new schools.

I hope this give you a little window into the funding issues in charter schools in Alaska and Winterberry in particular. One of the most important issues in these funding formulas is that it is all based on the base student allocation approved by the legislature, and if this number is not adjusted for inflation each year, our real income (budget) shrinks, and the difference has to come out of the program.

Traffic at Winterberry

The flow of traffic at Winterberry is the result of thoughtful, intentional decisions made during the planning process for the use of our current site. When we began discussions about the design of our school, we considered the possibility of having enough parking spaces to accommodate all of our families.

Unfortunately, we discovered that clearing out this many spaces would mean we would use at least half of the lot area for parking. It was a difficult decision, but, in the end, we decided that having adequate play space for our children was a more important priority than having more parking spaces. In fact, our parent survey from three (?) years ago rated having a large, flat play area as one of the school's highest needs, even when we had no parking spaces for parents!

Since August, this has worked well for us. All recess and outdoor movement classes have ample, usable outdoor space for appropriate activities, and most of the school day, we have more than enough parking for everyone. It is only at pick up, drop off, and during special events that our traffic flow becomes a slower process. It is at these times that we need to exercise the utmost patience and care as drivers that we can.

Our community traffic patterns have been assessed by both the city and the school district regarding our pick up procedures and both entities were very impressed with the manner in which we work together to efficiently and safely move students from school to home. The only caveats were that many of us still drive too fast in the cul-de-sac and at the beginning of the drive of our school and that many of us fail to stop at the stop sign when leaving the school drive. Focusing our attention on driving carefully through our school neighborhood and grounds is critical to maintaining a safe and inclusive community.

In brief, our current traffic plan is that when coming to the school during drop off and/or pick up times a driver has the option to park and walk in or to use the loading zone like the loading zone at the airport. *(Initially, we had thought that all parents would park and walk to the open field to the west of the school to pick up their children. This, however, has proven not to be possible or practical.)* This means that if your child(ren) is(are) not visible to you as you approach the loading zone, you must make another loop. Our community has done a FANTASTIC job with this. When we have hiccups, it is most often due to a new driver picking students up. Thank you for your patience and cooperation with other drivers and school staff.

When we hold special events, drivers have several options for parking:

- Use one of the 76 parking spaces we have in our lot.
- Use street parking that is **not** in front of driveways, mailboxes, or in the designated Bryn Mawr condos guest parking lot (just NW of the Winterberry sign as you enter our drive). This includes street parking on Wesleyan Drive.
- Park at East High School (this has been approved by East High Principal Mike Graham) and walk over the pedestrian bridge to our school. This option takes approximately 15 minutes if you are taking a leisurely stroll.
- Park at the University Dog Park and make your way to our school via the APU trail system. This is a lovely walk that will take approximately ten minutes.
- There remain numerous ways to gather at Winterberry by foot, bike, ski, etc from your house to the front door of our school!

An Invitation from the High School Initiative

Waldorf education was meant to extend through high school. Many parents have expressed interest in this possibility here in Anchorage. The High School Initiative has invited Meg Gorman to come to Anchorage February 13-16. Meg is now in her 44th year of teaching; 28 of these were in Waldorf high schools. She now trains Waldorf high school teachers at the program in New Hampshire. She has raised three children who went through all 12 grades of a Waldorf school. She has lectured all over the world.

Meg Gorman will give a talk Friday, February 15, 7-8:30 p.m., entitled "More than Survival: The Waldorf Way to a Thriving Adolescence," which will focus on how the Waldorf high school supports the rapid emotional development of teenagers. This presentation will be held at Winterberry Charter School, 4802 Bryn Mawr Court (take Wesleyan south from Northern Lights and turn immediately right). We are asking \$10/adult; \$15/couple.

Meg will also give a morning workshop on Saturday, February 16, from

Volunteer Coordinator Needed!

We are still in need of an enthusiastic individual to fill the vital role of Volunteer Coordinator for the school. Please contact Ms. Mall for details!

If you have questions for the Anchorage School Board, their names are below. Contact information for these board members can be found at www.asdk12.org.

Anchorage School Board

Jeannie Mackie, President

Tam Agosti-Gisler	Gretchen Guess
Pat Higgins	Natasha Von-Imhof
Kathleen Plunkett	Don Smith
ASD Superintendent	
Jim Browder Ed.D.	

Hello Winterberry Friends and Families,

The MTC (Moving Traditions Committee) hopes that you enjoy this newsletter. We have heard some great feedback from the community about the value of these monthly issues. If YOU have found them to be helpful, we hope that you will consider becoming a part of our committee. We meet on Mondays, right after school. We share ideas and divide the articles among our group. Upcoming newsletter topics include:

- **March** – Waldorf Education
- **April** – The Vision of Winterberry
- **May** – Summer Fun

Please feel free to contact any of the current MTC members for more information about contributing to the newsletter or to request a specific topic that you would like to see addressed. Remember that if you are curious, concerned or delighted about something, then someone else is too! Sharing our thoughts with each other is a key ingredient in the continued development of our community.

Thank you for your commitment to your child's education of the "Head, Heart, and Hands." We are in this together!

Sincerely,
The MTC

Faculty Council

Lisa Stratford, Kindergarten,
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Natalia Ramstad, Russian & Other
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Winterberry Charter Council

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Erin Fleischer, Parent, Secretary
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Della Swartz, Parent, Treasurer
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Kyle Vander-Schrier, Faculty/Staff Seat
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VACANT - Parent

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Winterberry Parent Guild

Craig Lyon, President, craig.lyon@gmail.com

Eric Judge, Vice President, ericandmeggan@gmail.com

Christina Eubanks, Treasurer, christinaaann58@hotmail.com

Sarah Rygh, Secretary, sara.rygh@gmail.com

Lynne Jablonski, Fundraising Chair, lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com

Sara Glaser, Faculty Representative, glaser_sarah@asdk12.org

VACANT, Grade Eight Representative

Pili Goddard-Vaughan, Grade Seven Representative

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Becca Bernard, Grade One Representative

becca_bernard@yahoo.com

Rayna Swanson, Kindergarten Representative, yitzu@mac.com

Moving Traditions Committee

Vision:

To hold the heart of Winterberry through the transitional first year in our new home

Charge:

Ensuring that all the intangible components of the community, who we are and who we aspire to become, are transferred to our new location; Realizing the possibilities the new location brings to help the community towards our shared vision for the school; Supporting community members in transitioning their work and participation to the new location; Listening to concerns from the community, gathering information, and helping channel ideas to the appropriate committees or individuals.

Members:

Meg Eggleston, eggleston_margaret@asdk12.org

Lynne Jablonski, lynnejeffrey@yahoo.com

Marya Pillifant, Marya@benchmarkd_alaska.com

Colleen McClurg, mcclurgcj@aol.com

Tara Smth, Chair, taramarlene@gmail.com

Della Swartz, daveanddella@gci.net

Winterberry nurtures and promotes the development of healthy, responsible and creative human beings. Our aim is to provide a holistic learning environment and demonstrate that all children are natural and inspired learners who can achieve. Inspired by Waldorf educational methods, our integrated curriculum seeks to provide each student with meaningful, hands-on, developmentally appropriate experiences that inspire learning and personal growth.



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Anchorage, Alaska 99508