



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Education
& Early Development**

Office of the Commissioner

801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500
Main: 907.465.2830
Fax: 907.465.6760

May 8, 2019

Representative Tammie Wilson
State Capitol Room 511
Juneau AK, 99801-1185

Dear Representative Wilson,

This letter is in response to your questions regarding the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council.

Who has received the grants?

FY 2014-2016

Anchorage School District
Northwest Arctic Borough School
District
Haines Borough School District
Petersburg School District
North Slope Borough School District
Juneau School District

Lower Kuskokwim School District
Bering Straits School District
Fairbanks North Star Borough
School District
Matanuska Susitna Borough School
District

FY 2017-2019

Lower Yukon School District
Anchorage School District
Petersburg School District
North Slope Borough School District
Juneau School District

Bering Straits School District
Fairbanks North Star Borough
School District
Matanuska Susitna Borough School
District

What was \$11,000 of "indirect"?

Administrative services costs and IT costs for DEED

What was \$6,500 of "indirect"?

This is DEED travel to Council, Alaska Mental Health Board meetings and to provide statewide suicide prevention training at state conferences for educators.

E-modules are \$70,000

The emodule costs are for DEED's online professional development courses (eLearning courses) which have reached most of our educators in Alaska (24,000 users just this year). This expenditure covers both the cost of developing these trainings as well as a portion of the annual costs DEED pays for a Learning Management System that hosts all of its eLearning courses. DEED pays for the number of "seats" made available for users of the eLearning Program (seats are for district staff as well up to 500 parents or other critical public stakeholders who work with youth and constitute a critical part of Alaska's safety net for youth). The LMS allows DEED to run custom reports at the state and local level to track completion of courses, generate certificates of completion for users to submit evidence (as required by law) that they have completed the training when seeking an Alaskan teaching certificate, provide feedback to DEED on ways to improve its courses, etc...

In response to Alaska Statute 14.30.362 DEED created online suicide awareness, prevention, intervention and postvention courses. As required by AS 14.30.362 DEED continues to create/maintain/update courses to support the safety and health of Alaskan students.

Our suicide related courses:

1. 4 educator (adult) suicide courses have been created and have been taken by over 18,000 Alaskans (they have taken one or more of the following)
 - a. Part A: Suicide Awareness
 - b. Part B: Suicide Prevention
 - c. Part C: Suicide Intervention
 - d. Part D: Responding to Suicide – Postvention Guidelines
2. Navigating Transitions: Promoting Wellness to Prevent Suicide (Student courses developed for grades 5-12) Launched Nov. 2018 –over 400 users
3. ACEs/Trauma course have had over a 1,000 users
 - a. Overcoming ACEs in Alaska's Schools
 - b. Trauma-Sensitive Schools
 - c. Trauma Engaged and Practicing Schools
 - d. Under development for Fall 2019 release "Trauma Engaged Educators Tools & Techniques" These Micro modules will have hands on activities for educators to use in their classrooms topics will include: classroom practice, self-regulation, non-academic, emotional intelligence, childhood traumatic grief for school personnel, and a guide to family partnerships.
4. Opioid 101 & Narcan Administration over 200 users

Consulting and content \$18,000

Grant to Association of Alaska School Boards for assistance in the development of the "Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska" (copy provided previously) This funding also paid for the copy editing of the document and the illustrations. This is an historic document for Alaska as it gets to the root cause of suicide in Alaska Adverse Childhood Experiences (or ACEs). Our hope is by providing this type of professional development to our schools it will help staff to better understand how to work with students who have experienced trauma. This framework is already receiving national accolades and being used by a number of our districts.

Staff Development for \$30,000

This funding was given to the grantees above for teams to attend our annual grantee meeting where they learn about evidence-based suicide prevention practices and share ideas with each other on what is working in different districts, as well as to attend the Alaska School Counselors conference. These two meetings are held in conjunction with each other to save on travel and to give grantees an opportunity for more professional development as many of the topics at the conference help with suicide prevention in our schools.

Grants to statewide Conference \$8,500

This is a grant given to our State School Counselor Association for their annual conference to provide training to counselors around the state. The conference has around 150 attendees each year. School counselors are our first round of defense for suicide prevention and intervention with our youth. Over the years we have trained hundreds of counselors in ASSIT, safeTALK, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Engaged Schools, Gatekeeper QPR, Navigating Transitions, substance abuse to include opioids and many other topics to help build up our students.

Sincerely,

**Sharon Fishel,
Education Specialist II**



**Department of Education & Early Development
Educator & School Excellence**

*Goldbelt Place
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1894
(907) 465-6523
(907) 465-2713 Fax
Sharon.Fishel@alaska.gov*

To: Alaska Statewide Suicide Prevention Council

From: Sharon Fishel

Date: July 18, 2018

Subject: School-Based Suicide Prevention Grant Program Update

Wall of HOPE

Wall of Hope project went out to all schools at the end of Aug.

Online eLearning Modules FY 18

- Suicide Awareness Part A – 3,128 users
- Suicide Prevention Part B -- 1,217 users
- Suicide Intervention Part C -- 798 users
- Suicide Postvention Part D “Responding to Suicide: Postvention Guidelines” -- 511 users
- “Overcoming ACEs in Alaskan Schools: Childhood Trauma and Its Impact on Learning” -- 192 users
- “Trauma Sensitive Schools” -- 62 users
- “Opioids 101 and the Opioid Epidemic 101” -- 31 users
- “Narcotics Administration for an Opioid Epidemic” -- 13 users
- **Total FY 18 learners --5,952**

Upcoming courses: “Navigating Transitions 5-12” these lessons were developed by the MSBSD for teachers to use with students for suicide prevention, Trauma-Engaged and Practicing Schools”, “Trauma Engaged Educators Tools & Techniques”, and “Trauma Engaged Counselors Tool & Techniques”

SAPP School based Suicide Prevention Grants

Annual Face to Face grantee meeting Nov. 15 Anch. Downtown Marriott

- Each site highlighted their activities

Grantees FY 17-19 (Funding from Statewide Suicide Prevention Council)

Funds \$225,000

Anchorage School District = Safe & Civil Schools (AVAIL & New Path,, Benson, McLaughlin)

Mat Su = QPR Suicide Awareness students and staff (Districtwide), community behavioral health support for drug and alcohol counseling on site (Burchell & Valley Pathways)

Juneau = Signs of Suicide, Sources of Strength, Reconnecting Youth & Restorative Justice

Petersburg = Green Dot, Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports, Signs of Suicide (mental health screener), community behavioral health agency support on site

North Slope = ASIST SAFEtalk training for staff & community, Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

Bering Strait = Youth Leaders program (they also include Nome students)

Fairbanks = Signs of Suicide all middle & high schools

Lower Yukon = Youth Leaders program

Kenai = Sources of Strength, 4th R, Healthy Relationships

FY 18 End of year data collection (last school year):

As a result of the activities supported by these grants the following chart represents the approximate numbers/contacts of Alaskans reached from the nine grantees.

FY 18 Data		Participants		
District	Schools:	# students	# staff/ community Stakeholders	Total
LYSD	all	260	310	570
NSBSD	all	686	282	968
KPBSD	all	177	101	278
PSD	all	572	146	718
ASD	Avail/New Path	600	18	618
MSBSD	all Burchell/Valley Pathways	2,265	2,539	4,804
JSD	all	1,960	391	2,351
BSSD	all	103	54	157
Fairbanks	all	675	445	1,120
	Totals	4560	3396	7956

FY 18 (last school year) Grantee Highlights

The following information is taken from their final reports.

Mat Su Borough School District

General Summary

The Mat-Su Borough School District is continuing a three-year implementation plan for suicide prevention lessons district-wide. This year the plan included a third annual, district-wide training including alternative and traditional school sites in Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Awareness and Prevention program. These students will sustain this program with fidelity by presenting QPR in secondary classrooms. This year, these students have reached an

grades 5-12 by utilizing the newly developed, "Navigating Transitions" lessons that were developed with the support of this grant as described below.

Our substantial accomplishment this year has been the collaboration and development of Navigating Transitions: Promoting Wellness to Prevent Suicide. Five Mat-Su counselors teamed up to tackle the task of developing suicide prevention lessons for grades 5-12. In collaboration with our state partners and friends, we are in the final editing stages of the lessons which are now being converted to eLearning modules. Our hopes are to kick-off and implement some of these lessons next fall. We are so extremely proud of the work that was done and look forward to the final product. We could not have done this without the support of the SAPP grant.

Another program goal that was a success involved the collaboration with a community agency. Valley Pathways School partnered this year with the agency, Onward and Upward. This agency actively engages students to step outside their comfort zones in order to discover their strengths. Curriculum emphasizes developing skills that will enhance overall wellbeing such as developing self-awareness, acting with mindfulness, building authentic relationships, increasing self-confidence, setting goals, creating purpose, solving problems and being physically active. The goal of partnering with Onward and Upward is to provide opportunities and engaging, healthy activities to promote wellness and prevent drug and alcohol use which can lead to depression and suicide ideation. The program was a success for the 68 individuals involved and we hope to offer the same program in year three of the grant.

Lessons Learned

Our greatest lesson this year is the power of voice and determination. It is so humbling to know that we work in such a supportive environment with student and staff that are compassionate for one another. Our community has faced yet another challenging year with grief and loss, however, the amazing postvention skills that have been instilled in our system helped overcome the unthinkable. It really does take a community to support one another in times when tragedy and crisis occurs. We continue to learn through lateral capacity and through the support of our colleagues around the state. We are one state that is dedicated and determined to reduce our negative statistics because we are, in fact, a great state with more pride than we know what to do with. Thank you for supporting these efforts! Without the focus on a statewide prevention plan, we wouldn't have a lead example to follow.

Petersburg School District

General Summary

Green Dot Program:

This year we trained 20 students in the Green Dot program and had a GD launch week. It was a struggle to keep up the momentum throughout the year though.

SOS Curriculum to PHS students in the Fall:

As we have each year with this grant, we delivered the Signs of Suicide curriculum to students in the fall.

PMHS Clinician in the School:

We continued to have a clinician available to meet with student on campus this year. PMHS was able to increase the limited hours they had last year by nearly double. This past year, we had multiple students lose a family member or loved one, much higher than average, making counseling services even more crucial to supporting these hurting students and maintaining a safe and positive school climate for all students.

We partnered with a local artist to offer additional positive activities for students to participate in during the summer.

The school board has been kept up on the projects we have implemented this year as they came along through announcements made at monthly school board meetings.

The school counselor had weekly meetings throughout the school year with the PMHS clinicians.

Parents received information that was sent home about the Green Dot program and the Signs of Suicide curriculum through our Daily Bulletin (announcements sent via email to all parents) and our High School Facebook page. Our Green Dot launch was held on a day that we also held a hotly contested rivalry in basketball, where students wore Green Dot shirts and tattoos, members of the Pep Club wore Green Dot shirts and green bandanas, Cheerleaders wore Green Dot bows and athletes wore Green Dot socks. Our programs also featured a two page insert with information on Green Dot and student participation information

Lessons Learned

Every year we see a benefit to the teaching the S.O.S curriculum. We end up having students more open to talking about depression and thoughts of suicide in themselves and signs they see in others. This in turn opens up further conversation and discovering the needs of that student.

The Green Dot program is a large and involved program that takes a lot of focus and energy to keep up throughout the year. Being a smaller school, we are often competing for our student leaders with activities, heavy classroom loads, work and family. While we have trained many PHS students, we are not reaching as many student groups and families as we would like after multiple years, and the Green Dot program has not been as contagious amongst our student body as we had originally hoped.

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

General Summary

Our three year plan is right on track. We purposefully planned to incorporate a train to train opportunity so that we can maintain the program, training and support if funding declines. We have also reached out to outside organizations, such as the REC Room and Lee Shore Center to offer them training, coordination of services and support. For example, we have an MOA for 2018-2019 school year for an adult mentor from the REC Room will help support and coordinate a district-wide adult Sources of Strength leaders.

Additionally, our Fourth R trainers were invited to facilitate a training at the State-Wide Counselor meeting, so we are going above and beyond the scope of the grant by sharing our district experts with others in Alaska.

KPBSD also received 2 Alaska Community Foundation Awards to support supplemental events, such as our UpStream Conference for SOS students and mentors, as well as cite visits by our SOS trainer. We wish to continue and expand these events in the future so we can build resilience factors in our students.

Bering Straits School District

General Summary

BSSD continues to utilize a teen peer-to-peer support program as a primary method for curbing suicide among school age children in the region. Through this program, Nome Public Schools (NPS) and recently Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NABSD) has joined and participated in the Youth Leader program events. With NPS and NABSD it provided the venue for cross training of regional supports systems, extension of skills, resiliency development, and program improvements. BSSD conducted two marque workshop events: Youth Leaders Retreat and Youth Leaders Institute. These workshops combined with student led community and school based activities promoting wellness continued to address suicide prevention in the communities throughout the region. The inclusion of major regional partners (Kawerak Inc., Norton Sound Hospital Corp. (NHSC), Norton Sound Economic Development Corp., Alaska Association of School Boards) aided in key prevention delivery programming.

Lessons Learned

This shift in suicide prevention efforts has yet to be measured. The changes within the program stemmed from an increase of suicides in 2017. A qualitative review is recommended of the participants of the Youth Leaders institute as a data point

Lower Yukon School District

General Summary

Our 2017/18 Natural Helpers project, Hope Squad Training and Retreat, focused on empowering students by providing a school-based, peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Activities and presentations were provided that focused on suicide prevention, healthy living, creating hope as well as community outreach and enrichment among others. Dr. Gregory Hudnall, the founder of Hope Squad, was the guest speaker for the 2nd year. The retreat was scheduled in Mountain Village October 26 & 27, 2017. Activities such as: acquaintance games, Yupik men's and women's gatherings, presentations ("Adopt an Elder Project", safeTALK), dances, etc. were planned during the retreat. The retreat had approximately 100 students in attendance. Students from all 10 villages participated. The retreat met its accomplishments of providing knowledge, training, and tools to students to aid them in successfully making an impact in their community.

Our youth still strongly practice their cultural values and they yearn for more understanding how they can help their peers, others and themselves to succeed in life. We had students positively intercede in helping their peers to love life to the fullest.

We respectfully appreciate the SAPP grant that has created a positive atmosphere in our schools and in the homes where elders feel the love through our future leaders.

Lessons Learned

The project came with a few challenges. The main one being that I was solely responsible for the events. I was fortunate to have many volunteers in assisting me. Moving forward next year I would like to make a list of delegates to help facilitate. Weather played the biggest factor during this school year, Scammon Bay was the only site that didn't make it to the Retreat. End of the year I went Scammon Bay to conduct the safeTALK Training and hosted a celebration that concluded end of the year as well.

Fairbanks North Star Borough SD

General Summary

In this second year of the SAPP grant in the FNSBSD, our SOS groups continued their work at six secondary schools, educating their peers about the signs of suicide.

Materials were purchased to support the SOS training "Plan, Prepare & Prevent" SOS student groups created television and radio public service announcements, in partnership with local TV and radio stations staff, the CRISIS line and school adult facilitators, for Youth Suicide Awareness twice during the school year.

These were used during the school year at schools, but also aired during November, December, January and February by TV and radio stations.

SOS student leaders helped create classroom lessons, presentations for school assemblies and other opportunities to speak with youth related to the SOS curriculum "Friends for Life".

Presentations by SOS leaders and their advisors at PTSA and parent groups, upon request, using the "Gatekeep Training Trusted Adults" materials from the Jason Foundation.

SOS teams traveled to outlying Nenana Middle and High School to present SOS information, materials, pre and post-vention activities for students in Nenana.

SOS teams and adult advisors participated in the Annual Youth Suicide Out of the Darkness Walk 4 Hope in partnership with North Pole, Fairbanks and FNSB Mayors.

SOS teams partnered with Bright Futures on Youth Suicide Awareness activities, developed care packages for the Fairbanks Rescue Mission and The Door - Fairbanks Youth Advocates homeless shelter for youth

Lessons Learned

Need a more consistent meeting time to collaborate and coordinate projects shared between all of the school participating.

Need a broader net of ways to encourage students to be SOS leaders - at some school sites, the students who participated struggled with academics and therefore either stayed back at school instead of participating in SOS activities OR they left school and put in jeopardy their academics. More students would mean having different options for students participating.

There is a greater interest in middle school than in high school with the participation in SOS leadership training. Focus efforts more on middle school throughout the year.

PSAs are positive but having a contest of some sort may bring in other ideas or expand the

school with winners being the ones to record the PSAs.

There are school level activities that students can develop that may have a more lasting impact on the school community rather than impact on the local community overall.

Pursue these ideas with school teams in the fall of 2018.

New administrators need guidance on how to best support their staff, SOS leadership team members and a contact if there are questions about the program overall.

Work with administrators about finding time to allow information about the projects supported through the grant to be highlighted in their schools.

North Slope Borough SD

General Summary

Suicide Training

ASIST training was provided in Utqiagvik to provide equal opportunity to local agencies and community members to participate. An ASIST 2-day training was hosted August 3 & 4, 2017 in collaboration with ASNA and Ilisagvik College.

1. Trainers and trainer travel was funded by Ilisagvik College.
 - a. The room and food was provided by ASNA.
 - b. Logistical support, training materials, and travel for NSBSD counselor was provided by NSBSD.

Six new counselors and fifteen community members attended the ASIST training. The training was scheduled during a 2-day district-wide new hire in-service so all counselors could attend. Six (6) NSBSD counselors were trained and 15 community members representing Native Village of Barrow, North Slope Borough, HOPE, and Ilisagvik College. Two of the participants flew in from Wainright, Alaska to attend the training.

ASIST is a pre-requisite to participating in, and becoming a, certified T4T safeTALK trainer.

The safeTALK T4T training was hosted in Utqiagvik in a collaborative effort. On October 12 & 13, 2017 new counselors with an ASIST certificate were flown to Utqiagvik for safeTALK T4T training. Seven (7) NSBSD school counselors from Kaktovik, Anaktuvuk Pass, Point Hope, Nuiqsut, Hopson (Utqiagvik), Ipalook (Utqiagvik), and Atqasuk attended and received their safeTALK trainer certificates.

Please Note: In order to build capacity and sustainability, ASNA, located in Utqiagvik, now has 2 trainers for ASIST. They will be doing our August 2018 new hire training.

A mandatory training checklist was revised for the FY18 school year based on Alaska Statutes and NSBSD Board Policy. This checklist was provided to all staff and administrators outlining the trainings and time requirements. The office of Student Services monitors the Mandatory training requirements.

2. Positive: Counselors who attend the safeTALK training are required to provide at least 1 training to student 16 years and older as well as 1 in the community. Having the training completed first semester has provided more opportunities for the on-site training to occur. As part of the mandatory training checklist, counselors have been required to turn in sign in sheets for their safeTALK trainings. In additions, counselor's who do not maintain their safeTALK certificate will not be considered for the Alaska School Counselors Conference in FY19.

School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

A SW-PBIS web site continues to be updates as a district-wide repository for school-based PBIS artifacts. Either distance or face-to-face training has been provided on at least 1 occasion to all school sites (except BHS). In some cases, CPI and SW-PBIS were incorporated together based on the CPI/SW-PBIS refresher workbook.

support was most effective. Weather delays, staff absences, and lack of administrative support were problematic. On-going SW-PBIS activities and training will occur during the FY 18 school year. A focus will be on providing Tier 2 training to counselors in conducting SW-PBIS FBA's and BIP's, CICO, using data to identify targeted groups. Implementing reward systems continue to be a philosophical dilemma for some teachers and administrators.

Lessons for teaching the school-wide expected behaviors would be incorporated into the cultural curriculum of NSBSD. A stronger focus will be placed on the Inupiaq values. Stronger emphasis will be placed on community participation.

Lessons Learned

What have you learned from the data collected?

1. Students, family, and local communities need to be more involved.
2. A clearly defined process to report and gain access to services needs to be developed, especially in rural areas with high turnover.
3. Post-vention activities need to be developed.
4. Develop systems that can withstand on-going staff turn over.
5. Continue to develop distance supports that can be implemented if staff is out or no longer available at any site.
6. Continue to develop inter-agency systems and support for students and family facing issues concerning suicide (identification/prevention/post-vention).

What Impacted the Greatest Change?

1. Collaborating with the local community and mental health.
2. Provide support to counselors with names and contact information of inter-agency linkages.
3. Creating the Mandatory Checklist to be sure all staff is participating in training.
4. Partnering with the local agencies.
5. Have a central point of contact for principals and counselors at Central Office to help in making contacts, following up, aligning services.
6. Providing IBH schedules to counselors and principal's in advance of on-site itinerant counseling services. Counselors are aware of when the itinerant counselors will be on site and are asked to extend an invitation for a school visit.

Anchorage School District (Avail & New Path)

General Summary

The SAPP grant has allowed AVAIL High School, New Path High School, McLaughlin School, Begich Middle School, Clark Middle School and Benny Benson Alternative High School to come together in the 2017-18 school year with a shared purpose, to develop and implement common language and behavior around a positive school climate and relationship building for our youth. This has been an amazing year in which 18 -21 staff members came together to develop, plan and implement a cohesive goal of shared caregiving for the students that pass through our doors. One of the main reasons that this particular group has come together is based on the fact that we share students throughout their secondary experience and the original purpose of this grant was to develop a shared group thought so that as our students moved through out buildings the least of the worry would be learning a whole new way of "playing the game of school." The effort that students put into "fitting in" and knowing the rules removes one stressor from their lives and they are not just the new kid in school. The group met for eight Saturday mornings through the school year and were led by Jessica Graziano, a Safe and Civil Schools trainer who is also a teacher at Benny Benson. The group used the curriculum provided by grant funding and worked through

two of the schools formed leadership groups while others enhanced what they knew and took information back to their already formed leadership groups. McLaughlin implemented several new behavioral policies through their learning and have begun the process of a Leadership team. Weekly and monthly meetings continue to be held at all three of the original grant schools; AVAIL, New Path, and Benny Benson and McLaughlin has now joined and is holding both Leadership and general staff meetings to help come together as a team.

Lessons Learned

What lessons have you learned about your project from the data collected for this report?

The number one lesson learned is that the more we come together the more we all benefit from the process, our students, our staff and our communities.

What do you feel impacted the greatest change this year?

The ability to have Jessica come in and provide the training. As the supervisor/leader it was nice to sit back and let her run the show. The staff seemed to jump in and do the work as if they were in a class and not just a staff meeting.

Juneau School District

General Summary

We continued all of the project activities as planned. We made an adjustment to using Sources of Strength as our student grouping and implemented a new student group called Grit Council that served many of the same purposes with more focus on restorative practices. We continued to use this group to provide student training on suicide prevention/awareness (ie QPR) and support student-led activities in the school.

Lessons Learned

What lessons have you learned about your project from the data collected for this report?

We saw early successes with training students on restorative practices that we'd like to build on - we continue to have the challenge of many new students coming in each quarter (which is great!) so providing more training through the extension class will help keep the level of training we need for new and continuing students.

What do you feel impacted the greatest change this year?

Having students involved in leading proactive circles and having more awareness of restorative practices - students were able to more effectively share out about restorative practices than staff alone.