FAIRBANKS — Whenever the Alaska Nanooks have a hockey game, neighbors in the University Heights subdivision are notified via a gleaming white LED outline of the team’s polar bear mascot displayed above Mike Fisher’s garage doors.

The 5-foot-by-4-foot logo is switched on early each game morning before Fisher goes out the door to take Dusty, the family’s golden retriever, on her morning walk.

When evening descends, the Nanook’s white glow again heralds Fisher’s favorite sports team.

Cheering on his alma mater’s hockey team is one way the borough school district’s chief financial officer relaxes after a week’s work of back to back meetings, poring over reports and spreadsheets, and overseeing the district’s accounting services, procurement and warehouse, business services, copying and printing services, nutrition services and student transportation departments.

Hutchison High School Students Present Research at Science Bowl

A team of Hutchison High School students known as the Hammerheads recently competed in the Alaska Tsunami Bowl in Seward. The Alaska Tsunami Bowl is the regional competition of the National Ocean Science Bowl — an annual event that aims to encourage and increase knowledge of oceans and to broaden awareness of the critical value of ocean research.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences sponsored the regional event and students on the Hammerheads team got a glimpse of college level studies as they completed their competition entry. A unique component to the Alaska event, as opposed to other National Ocean Science Bowl competitions, is the requirement of a research project that includes a 20-page collaborative paper and presentation. Hutchison High School Science Teacher Megan McCarthy and James Savereide of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game coached the team. For their project, the students investigated the importance of sheefish in the health of the Kobuk-Selawik River Estuary. Sheefish, or “inconnu” are critical to Alaska

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Native communities of the Kobuk region as a subsistence resource but little is known about juvenile sheefish. In the course of their work, the team outlined a proposal to gather information on juvenile sheefish and developed a multi-year management plan to monitor the health of the estuarine system. The project also included a planned budget and implementation timeline.

The research project component was added to the competition because it involves skills that will serve students well in their academic and professional careers regardless of the fields they choose to enter. A large research project requires an interdisciplinary team effort, the ability to assimilate and prioritize large quantities of often conflicting results, and the ability to persuasively communicate the results and benefits of the research.

The bright and inquiring minds of the Hammerheads are Jared Canright and Sara Schlumbohm (seniors), Bri Whiteside (junior), Lina Henrichs (sophomore), and Phelan Green (freshman). The Hammerheads placed 7th out of 25 team entries at the Alaska Tsunami Bowl.

The district is pleased to announce that Michael Angaiak will be the new principal of Anne Wien Elementary at the start of the 2013-2014 school year. Presently, Angaiak serves as the principal of Ticasuk Brown Elementary. He will replace current Anne Wien Elementary Principal Leslie Campbell who retires this year.

The halls and faces of Anne Wien Elementary will be a familiar sight to Angaiak. He taught 5th and 6th grade at the school from 1997 – 2010 and he lives in the surrounding neighborhood.

“This is a special opportunity to return to Anne Wien Elementary, the school where I taught and built relationships over 13 years ago,” says Angaiak. “My family and I also live in the neighborhood so becoming a meaningful part of my home community is important to me.”

While the transition to a new school is exciting for Angaiak, it is also poignant as he is leaving a school that as he describes, “welcomed me with open arms as a new principal.” Angaiak also adds, “I will miss the remarkable staff, students, and families of Ticasuk Brown Elementary greatly and I have been immensely fortunate to work with the wonderful school community in North Pole.”

The district congratulates Angaiak on his new position and wishes him well on his next chapter in the school where he began his career over 16 years ago.

The district is pleased to announce that 24 district staff (pictured below) and two UAF representatives have been selected to serve as committee members of the newly formed English/Language Arts and Math Content Leadership Teams. The Content Leadership Teams are a new effort by the district to include the diverse experiences of educators and other professionals in the ongoing review and monitoring of curriculum and instruction. Teachers, administrators, post-secondary education representatives, and community members have volunteered to lead this process that includes review and development of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The purpose of the Content Leadership Teams is to provide consistent curricular guidance that supports a guaranteed and viable curriculum in alignment with State and National Standards. Content Leadership Team committee members will serve two or three-year terms and will meet throughout the year. The Board Curriculum Advisory Committee and School Board will continue to be part of the review and adoption process of curriculum and core materials.

Community member positions are still open on Content Leadership Teams. Interested community members may apply to serve on a committee by contacting Executive Director of Curriculum, Peggy Carlson at