

GALENA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SUPERINTENDENT
Jim Merriner

August 20, 2018

Dear GCSD Families and Community Members:

Today marks our first day of classes in Galena. All of GCSD's programs are doing very well. Our school choice homeschool support program (IDEA) is once again experiencing an increase in student enrollment. Enrollment at GILA and SHS appears akin to last year. Upshot, GCSD's enrollment remains strong. GCSD is anticipating, once again, our largest enrollment district-wide. The continued increase in our enrollment numbers speaks volumes to the quality of services that we provide our families statewide and, more importantly, to the variety of educational options that we offer for families to determine the most appropriate educational plan for their students.

On July 1, 2018, GCSD finally (after years of grant applications) received 7.6 million in state funding to remodel the GILA Headquarters Building into a state-of-the-art math and science facility. This was the district's number one priority in our six-year capital improvement plan. GCSD plans to begin construction next May with a move-in date for the start of the 2020-21 school year. During their August 22, 2018 meeting, the GCSD School Board will consider the next iteration of the six-year capital improvement plan. The proposed number one project is an energy efficiency upgrade to the aged GILA Composite instructional facility. If approved by the Board, GCSD plans to submit an application to the Department of Education and Early Development's Major Maintenance Capital Improvement Project grant program on September 1 for potential funding for this project. GCSD and the City of Galena are proud of the continuous improvements to our facilities. These improvements allow greater utilization of these buildings in support of the district's educational mission.

During their August meeting, the GCSD School Board will review district summaries and school summaries from last spring's administration of Alaska's state assessments in English/language arts, math, and science. This was the second year of the PEAKS English/language arts and math assessments. Statisticians caution against assuming trends, patterns, etc. when there are only two data points. We must exercise caution when comparing these results with the results from spring 2017 because of the lack of longitudinal data. Of course, GCSD will use these assessments to determine areas within our English/language arts, math, and science curricula that provide data points worthy of celebration and conversely data points that provide an opportunity for improvement. Outlined below is a snapshot of the district and state results.

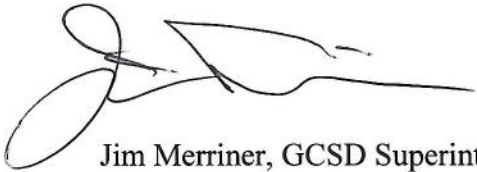
Spring 2018 State Testing Results

Assessment	GCS D % Proficient	GCS D % Advanced	State % Proficient	State % Advanced
ELA	42.5	17.7	32.1	10.2
Math	29.1	3.4	31.1	5.6
Science	34.9	24.2	30.1	17.1

Families will receive individual student reports in the mail. Your school's principal will have school results. If you would like to discuss your child's or your school's results, please contact the principal of your school.

In closing, I want to thank all of our families for partnering with GCS D in the education of your children. The district is extremely proud of the educational services we provide families statewide, and we could not do it without your input and guidance. Thank you for that support, and thank you for providing to your school's principal any improvement suggestions that you might have; GCS D is always looking to improve educational services to our students and their families. And please feel comfortable contacting me at the phone number above or the email address below if you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter in greater detail, or if you would like more information on any district initiative.

Respectfully yours,



Jim Merriner, GCS D Superintendent
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