

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2020 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Richard Dormer  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Mitkof Middle School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 500 N. First Street PO Box 289  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Petersburg State AK Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 99833-0289

County Petersburg Census Area

Telephone (877) 526-7656 Fax (907) 302-2378

Web site/URL <https://www.pcsd.us/> E-mail rdormer@pcsd.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Superintendent\* Mrs. Erica Kludt-Painter E-mail supt@pcsd.us  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Petersburg School District Tel. (877) 526-7656

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mrs. Sarah Holmgrain  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date \_\_\_\_\_

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2020 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2014 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, or 2019.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2019-2020) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)  
1 Middle/Junior high schools  
1 High schools  
0 K-12 schools
- 3 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- ☐ Urban (city or town)  
☐ Suburban  
☒ Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2019 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	16	17	33
7	26	20	46
8	19	12	31
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	61	49	110

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 17 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 6 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 4 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 3 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 65 % White
  - 1 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2018 - 2019 school year: 10%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	9
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2018 until the end of the 2018-2019 school year	2
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	11
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2018	108
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.10
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %  
0 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 56 %

Total number students who qualify: 62

8. Students receiving special education services: 17 %

19 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>3</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>2</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>10</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>3</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 11

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	12
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	5
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 13:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015
Daily student attendance	95%	93%	93%	95%	94%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2019.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

Petersburg Schools will provide a safe environment, promote continuous improvement, and advocate for the highest educational opportunities for all students.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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Petersburg School District is located on Mitkof Island, in the southeast panhandle of Alaska, approximately 700 miles north of Seattle. The school district serves approximately 430 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The district employs 43 licensed staff and 44 support staff. The City of Petersburg is one of the top-ranking ports in the United States for quantity and value of fish landed. Commercial fishing is key to the economy of the area. In addition to the permanent 2,750 residents, the population increases by about 1,000 additional people who are employed by the canneries and custom packing services during peak season. Petersburg's climate is characterized by mild winters, cool summers and year-round rainfall. Annual precipitation averages 106.3 inches. Petersburg is also known as "Little Norway" due to its foundation by a Norwegian fisherman and the community continues this rich Norwegian tradition today. The community celebrates Mayfest every May in recognition of Norwegian independence. The festival is well-attended by community members and tourists from Alaska, the Lower 48 and other countries. Transportation to and from Petersburg is limited to air and water; there is no road access. Residents and visitors rely on the state ferry system, commercial flights and float planes.

Petersburg School District enjoys very strong community support. This is demonstrated by community attendance at and participation in school events (sports, plays, music performances, conferences, special meetings), support and passage of two bond issues in recent years, radio and newspaper coverage for student achievement and district activities, and donations to school fund-raising. Living in a small fishing community affords a common language and understanding of the value of hard work. The opportunities to explore the nature and environment is abundant, allowing multiple field trips both during the school day and overnight. Trips down to the harbor, up nearby waterways and into the fields to fly balloons created in class or measure trees are common and well-supported by the community. The pinnacle of field work is the HS students that annually survey and publish data on the local freshwater glacier, a project that has gained coverage from National Geographic. Local professionals from the large employers in town such as seafood processing plants, Forest Service and Coast Guard are often volunteering to speak or assist students in the district.

Petersburg School District is rich in technology, with enough laptops and/or iPads for 1 to 1 support across K-12 grade students. Mitkof Middle School students pick up their individual MacBook in the morning and return them before going home, preparing themselves for 24/7, one to one Apple laptops in the high school years.

Our students are active and supported by required physical education courses for grades 6th through 8th grade. Our entire 7th and 8th grade student body begin the day in physical education, spread out amongst two gymnasiums and a swimming pool. Swimming is taught for Elementary students and continues into middle school for exercise and skill-development as well as safety related to water, cold and outdoors. These are essential skills living on an island in Alaska. Our 6th grade students attend physical education every afternoon. All PE periods last 50 minutes and are taught by certificated staff members. Due to our remote location, students must travel to compete in activities and athletics, either by ferry or airline. This begins as early as 6th grade and continues in added intensity throughout their secondary years. Many families are also part of the fishing industry, which leads to many missed days of school to work the family business. While we receive Migrant funds to offset some of the supports required to assist these students, teachers must go above and beyond to keep these students caught up and not overwhelmed. These many experiences outside of the traditional school picture affords our middle school students above-average personal responsibility and organizational skills, which our staff promote and develop over the years. The premise that we are all in this together--living, working and recreating together on an island in the Pacific Ocean of Alaska--binds us all as Petersburg citizens. This understanding leads to a tight, inseparable bond between staff, students, parents and community members which creates a trust that is ultimately the main component in the success we have in getting the very best out of the students at Mitkof Middle School.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

**1a.** Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas

Mitkof Middle School's overarching philosophy focuses on the student as a whole. We commit to academic excellence in a safe environment that respects the rights of others and enhances individual growth and development. We are dedicated to the creation of a variety of interdisciplinary, active learning opportunities that prepare our students for continued school success and lifelong learning.

**1b.** Reading/English language arts

In the 7th and 8th grade language arts classes, students are grouped and the standard curriculum is modified so that students rotate in groups between language arts, math, and an independent work time. This allows group sizes to stay small and also to provide targeted curriculum and supports to grade cohorts with a low population but wide-ranging ability. In practice, this means that groups follow the same thematic unit and standards, but differentiated assignments and products challenge them at an appropriate level. An example of this is during a unit on courage, some groups read *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank while other groups read a play adapted from the original text. All groups later read *Zlata's Diary*, a text at a lower reading level than Anne Frank's diary, but assignments are differentiated instead. Language arts classes follow thematic units, with the 8th grade aligned to the US history curriculum with nonfiction texts related to and fictional texts set in the time period being studied in the history course.

Our ELA instructor has two class periods in his schedule where he creates small groups of students during their elective times to provide support in ELA, as determined by his classroom assessments along with local and state summative assessments listed below. Mitkof Middle School utilizes the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment results (given three times a year), Performance Evaluation of Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) scores as well as informal observations to guide appropriate class placement and ensure individual student needs are met.

**1c.** Mathematics

Grade 6: Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, and Statistics and Probability.

Grades 7 and 8: Number and Quantity, Ratios and Proportional Relationships, The Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometry, Statistics and Probability, Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions.

We believe it is important for our students to understand every new concept has its origins in a concept that was learned earlier. Nothing stands alone and even the simplest of math concepts will help to build a better understanding of more complex math concepts. The result being our students having a stronger understanding of math.

Math is a part of our everyday lives, and everything we do in math goes back to what we learned to do first, which was count. From there we learned to add, subtract, multiply, and divide. For our students to see the connections, from learning how to count numbers to learning how to manipulate those numbers, helps our students better understand math.

Students are frequently assessed, in a variety of ways, on their understanding of math concepts. In order to meet the needs of our students and to allow them to reach their full potential, we use a variety of methods for instruction, including but not limited to: Big Ideas Online, ST Math, IXL, and Carnegie Learning. We also provide math intervention programs and meet with students individually to provide additional help.

Questions from students are always encouraged along with relating concepts to their everyday lives,



knowing we're frequently going to get asked, "Why do we need to know this?". With so many of our students either directly or indirectly involved in fishing, finding relatable examples is not too far of a stretch.

In the 7th and 8th grade math classes, students are grouped and the standard curriculum is modified so that students rotate in groups between language arts, math, and an independent work time. This allows group sizes to stay small and also to provide targeted curriculum and supports to grade cohorts with a low population but wide-ranging ability. In practice, this means that groups follow the same thematic unit and standards, but differentiated assignments and products challenge them at appropriate levels. There is a group of high performing 8th graders who take high school level Algebra for their math class. We follow the same curriculum as the high school Algebra classes.

#### **1d. Science**

6th grade physical science is designed to teach students basic physical science concepts using activity and inquiry-based methods. The main topics discussed and practiced throughout the course are: the scientific method, the metric system, forces, energy, electricity, sound, light and matter.

7th grade life science focuses on students' use of scientific practices to better understand key concepts of the biological world. Topics include: cells, genetics, scientific method, proper use and measurement of science equipment, symbiosis, evolution, ecology, kingdoms, and environmental relationships.

8th grade earth science covers astronomy, the universe, planets, stars, galaxies, eclipses, the tides, the atmosphere, weather, the greenhouse effect, chemistry, ocean acidification, geology, fossils, geologic time, and oceanography.

Individual students are targeted with in class help, study skills classes are available, RTI to help with reading strategies, and after school help. All levels of science are aligned to the Alaska State Science Standards and further guided by the principles of the Next Generation Science Standards. A wide variety of teaching, learning, and assessment techniques are utilized, including inquiry-based labs, hands-on experiments, virtual experiments, engineering challenges, building models, and assessments. Special programs such as Earth Day and Exploratory Day provide students with opportunity to interact with the local environment and develop stewardship. Citizen science projects such as the Plate Watch Program, which monitors local harbors for invasive tunicates, provides authentic learning. Guest speakers visit classrooms, with topics ranging from GIS mapping, to ocean plastics to lichen identification.

In addition to assessments in the classroom, teachers evaluate student growth with Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) results (three times a year), Performance Evaluation of Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) scores as well as informal observations to guide appropriate class placement and ensure individual student needs are met. Individual students may be targeted for additional in-class help, study skills classes, or after-school tutoring.

#### **1e. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement**

Throughout our curriculum, it is important for our students to make connections to what has happened in the past, identify similarities to current events, and make predictions for the future. Students are assessed in a variety of ways, including showing understanding by making connections between groups of people being studied and present-day. One-to-one help is provided to students throughout the school day and after school. Furthermore, students are encouraged to assist one another's learning through various cooperative learning strategies.

We help students become responsible citizens through the analysis of primary and secondary sources. Students are frequently tasked with identifying the reliability of a source and any potential biases that might come with it. Primary and secondary source analysis also allows students to consider various perspectives. In a world where many students have access to information at their fingertips at all times, it is essential that students be able to independently identify accurate information, while considering perspectives that differ from their own. As teachers, we spend a small portion of the day with any given student, making it

important to help our students develop the tools they need to separate truth from fiction and engage in evidence-based discussions with people of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and values.

Deciphering fact from fiction helps students become informed advocates of their beliefs. When individuals are equipped with the tools to acquire accurate information, they can more effectively communicate their ideas. Furthermore, students are able to engage with the community around them on issues that matter to them. In the classroom, we frequently ask students to acquire information, form opinions, and support those opinions with evidence from reliable sources. As social studies teachers, we strive to help students become independent, informed thinkers who can eloquently communicate their ideas through text, spoken word, and visual presentation.

**1f. For secondary schools:**

**1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Music – Our Music department consists of a requirement for all 6th graders to be enrolled in Band and Music. Within band, students select an instrument of their choice and learn to read and play music in a concert band setting. Our Music section of the 6th grade curriculum revolves around music types, history of music, basic music reading, and current events. Our 7th and 8th grade students may choose Band as an elective. The combined 7/8th grade band meets daily to rehearse on their instrument, learning music theory, instrumental skills and an appreciation of music. This group performs at an evening concert, along with 6th grade band, three times each school year.

Physical Education is a required course for all students attending Mitkof Middle School, for grades 6th through 8th. Our entire 7th and 8th grade student body begins the day in physical education, spread out amongst two gymnasiums and a swimming pool. Our 6th grade students attend physical education every afternoon. All PE periods last 50 minutes and are taught by certificated staff members.

All Mitkof MS students are required to take an exploratory shop class in the 8th grade. The curriculum introduces students to the basic concepts in our wood shop as well as the metal shop. The state of Alaska as well as Petersburg has many employment opportunities in the Career and Technical Education fields, so naturally we begin this instruction in middle school. Students also begin career planning in middle school with guidance by our shared (MS and HS) school counselor. Our students are required to take an introductory course on computer use and internet safety in sixth grade as well as a Digital Citizenship course in 8th grade to ensure appropriate use of the 1 to 1 laptop program across the district. In MMS, all laptops are checked out every morning and back in every afternoon, and do not go home with students until the HS years. Health is taught to all 6th with a focus on body system. Our 8th graders receive a semester of health that includes sex education and relationship safety to prepare for the adolescent years. All seventh grade students participate in a Culinary Arts class, as cooking at home is a strong component of families in Petersburg. All seventh grade students take a beginning computer programming course for half a year, using the Code.org curriculum. Some students will elect to take visual art classes in 7th and/or 8th grade. Mitkof Middle School is served by a shared library between MMS and PHS, which is staffed by a certificated staff member as well as an instructional aide. Each grade will be taught library and research skills through the curriculum in the library setting.

**3. Academic Supports:**

**3a. Students performing below grade level**

The academic supports for students performing below grade level are individual targeted class help, study skills classes, options for a math support class in the afternoons with our certified math instructor, RTI tier two and three interventions to help with reading and math strategies, and after school help. Our ELA instructor has two class periods in his schedule where he creates small groups of students during their elective times to provide support in ELA, as determined by his classroom assessments along with local and

state summative assessments listed below. Mitkof Middle School utilizes the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment results (given three times a year), Performance Evaluation of Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) scores as well as informal observations to guide appropriate class placement and ensure individual student needs are met.

### **3b. Students performing above grade level**

Students that are performing above grade level are allowed advanced coursework by a tiered system in our Math and Language Arts program. We divide our groups according to classroom, local and state assessment tools in order to meet needs of students in different sections. With our close proximity to Petersburg High School, we have many staff crossover as well as a shared library space in which students may take Virtual High School (VHS) courses at their appropriate interest and academic level, along with advanced HS-level courses such as Algebra I and Advanced ELA taught by on-site, certificated staff members.

### **3c. Special education**

Mitkof Middle schools believes that all students with special needs have the right to be educated in the least restrictive environment. Petersburg School Districts provides the support our special education students need to successfully be educated in the regular classroom, whenever possible. By integrating these children into the general education classroom, it helps them to become socially accepted by theirs, which in turn, increases their emotional well-being. Our Special Education program is staffed with multiple paraprofessionals that support the learning needs in the classroom as well as provide enrichment activities, such as one on one swimming or adaptive learning sessions.

Working together, the special education and classroom teachers adapt the learning environment to allow both the special needs and regular students to excel. The special education teacher leads a multidisciplinary team in developing education plans to ensure that individual needs are being met. When the IEPs are being implemented, students are continually assessed and the progress towards the goals is communicated with parents and other team members. The special education teacher also continually develops, implements and adjusts interventions, as needed, in order to ensure that students are making progress and being successful.

### **3d. ELLs, if a special program or intervention is offered**

When a student is identified, either by parent request upon arrival, student files from previous schools or teacher requests, a formal plan is made with a team of educators. We take into consideration the students schedule and level of need. If a student is new to English they may receive a replacement English course given by a teacher with an ELL background. A student may need only a small amount of support with aspects of English such as irregular verbs; in this case they may be pulled from an elective once a week or more, to work with support staff or a teacher. We mold our programs and schedules to fit the needs of each student. Screeners and annual testing determine status and guide instruction.

### **3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant), if a special program or intervention is offered**

In our fishing town, about 22 students in the middle school are considered eligible for the Migrant Education Program. This means that their families depend on the resources or the funds collected during fishing moves. Throughout the year. This also may require that students miss school on occasion to take part in these economically-necessary activities for their family. These students are supported using federal grant funds that can provide for a multitude of services from counseling and tutoring, to fees associated with AP exams, as well as trips to visit vocational schools and colleges. This federal grant supports migrant students in a targeted way allowing educators to decide what resources students may need and bring them a service to support them.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Students are engaged into our school climate by the numerous academic curriculums that are in place. Along with our academics, Mitkof Middle School offers an abundance of athletic and academic activities for students to participate in. Our Activities program is viewed as an extension of the classroom and is educationally-based.

Our academic activities that we offer are Student Council, Yearbook Club, Robotics, and Ocean Science Club. We also run the yearly Geography Bee and Spelling Bee and send our school champion to the state event each year, which includes airline travel and lodging accommodations due to geographic location.

Our athletic activities that we offer are Cross Country, Basketball, Cheerleading, Wrestling, Volleyball, and Track & Field. Our students travel via ferry or airline to other communities in order for interscholastic competition along with local events hosted within the Borough of Petersburg, which often includes multiple teams in a tournament style setting.

All of our activities require minimum academic eligibility requirements in order to participate in competitions. Grades are discussed and checked before each competition in Mitkof Middle School. Our students have many opportunities for extra-curricular participation and we believe it enhances their educational experience. It should demonstrate high standards of ethics, sportsmanship, and promote the development of good character and important life skills.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Mitkof Middle School engages families and our community in multiple events that we host throughout the year. Back to School night is done annually within the first two weeks of the school year for parents to meet their teachers in a social talk setting. The evening commences with a talk time with our Principal, Dean of Students, Counselor, and Technology Director. It is an evening designed to be non-formal and non-intimidating, with extra support and consideration for incoming 6th graders.

Pastries with Parents was developed a few years ago as a monthly meeting time for families to visit with the Principal and Dean of Students. It is an evening with pastries and talk time for to review current events as well as opportunity for general questions. Parent-Teacher conferences happen twice throughout the school year for formal meetings between teachers and parents.

Activities & Athletics nights are held two times a year for parents of students involved in activities to receive the most up to date information on policies, sign ups, and how activities and athletics work at Mitkof Middle School. Along with those meetings, there are multiple opportunities for parents and community members to become involved with home events. We are in a unique region of Alaska and hosting events involves teams spending 2-4 days in our town for the events.

Strong community support and solid relationships between staff, parents and students is a strength of Mitkof Middle School, a solid foundation that leads to the consistent, high academic achievement of our students as well as the 88% participation rate of our students in activities and athletics.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

In creating a professional culture, MMS teachers and staff have created that culture from day to day interactions with students. Our scheduling of courses available for students helps create a professional culture by our daily expectations of students. MMS utilizes the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) program for the last seven years. We have built it into our daily structure by implementing the program known as Viking Pride and continually teaching on our three elements of Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. Students are taught specific behaviors that MMS staff believe are important to building the best

all-around students and representatives of our school community. These lessons occur weekly and are taught in small-group settings by certificated staff members.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Petersburg School District is led by a single Superintendent, whose office is a short walk away from school buildings and is seen regularly in all three buildings. Mitkof Middle School is supervised by a shared principal between Petersburg High School and MMS, with his office in our 6th grade hallway. This allows more direct contact with our youngest learners and their supporting staff. Mitkof Middle also shares an Athletic Director/Dean of Students whose office is in the adjoining HS. He is part of leading multiple student events along with activities in MMS as well as coaching an activity. The District utilizes an administrative team that meets weekly, consisting of the Superintendent, both Principals, Dean, Sped director, Technology director, Maintenance director and Business manager. This cohesive team meets weekly and makes most decisions as a group. MMS is served by an elected student council that is supervised by a rotation of teachers, with regular attendance at their meetings from the Dean and Principal. These small leadership groups allow for regular student input which is a valued component of decision-making in our school and district.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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The philosophy of Mitkof Middle School is working together so that every student learns and grows every day. This means that slipping through the cracks does not occur, that every student is known by all staff, and the educational atmosphere becomes ILP-like. To ensure an equitable and rigorous education for all students, strong relationships between staff, parents and students must be built. We know this is a core strength of Mitkof Middle School, a solid foundation that leads to the consistent, high academic achievement of our students as well as the 88% participation rate of our students in activities and athletics. We have a daily attendance rate of over 94%, plus 47% of our students have earned a spot on the MMS Honor Roll, achieving a 3.5 GPA or higher.

While knowing everybody may be typical in a small, rural community, our staff work hard to cultivate and maintain positive relationships to create a partnership between families and the school, which can often be a challenging task. Utilizing the PBIS program creates a common language of respect, a recognition that we are all connected because we are all Petersburg Vikings (the same mascot as the adjoining PHS). Mitkof Middle School implements an Academic Discipline program that is utilized for students failing a core subject, resulting in a temporary schedule adjustment to a small, highly-structured learning environment until academic progress is stabilized. Students that have lower than average classroom or local (MAP) assessment scores receive targeted learning intervention through our math and/or ELA teachers who have time built into their schedules to work with small groups or specific students throughout the school year, as needed. Over 70% of Mitkof Middle School students are at or above math proficiency and over 77% of students are at or above reading proficiency, as evidenced on recent MAP assessments. Mitkof MS led the state of Alaska in our score on the Overall School Index Value at 78. Success at MMS is a major reason that PHS has a strong reputation of success, as shown by their consistent graduation rate over 96% across all demographics. PHS also earns regular recognition by US News and World Report as a Silver Medal school, which demonstrates consistent post-secondary success and above-average scores on college readiness assessments for our students.