

As we move from the Thanksgiving Holiday to the Christmas Holiday I am thankful for many things, the sun being one of them. I am coming into my first full winter in Alaska since I was a child and I now see how valuable the sun is each day. Currently each day is about 6 hours long and is decreasing with each new sunrise. As everyone told me when I first arrived, you go to work in the dark and you come home in the dark. I am blessed to not only have a warm home to wake up in every day, but also plenty of food in the pantry and the love of a good woman to get me moving. I also have two children who daily give me "hugs and kisses" before work.

My eyes also see the other side, children who do not have a warm home each day and do not have their choice of cereal for breakfast. Many children have to get themselves up each day because their parent/s are already at work trying to make ends meet. It is for these kids that we as educators come to work each day. It is for these students that we spend hours grading and preparing lessons. It is precisely for these students, that each and every staff member works to become a better teacher, instructional aide, food service worker, custodian, principal, and secretary. We are blessed in Valdez to have some of the best students in the nation, whether they come from a traditional two parent home in the "rich" section of town or whether they come from a small trailer with a dedicated single mom in the "poor" section of town.

Please know that as educators, we push ourselves to make sure that your child receives an excellent education each day they come to our schools. We come to work in the dark and we go home in the dark, and hopefully just like you, to a place we love. Although you may love your job, you don't get to see hundreds of smiling faces each day like we do. Those smiling faces light up our lives and make the fact that we don't see much sun each day, not such a big deal at all!

Superintendent, Jacob Jensen