

Summer has turned to fall and fall has quickly now turned to winter, such is the life in Valdez. This year has brought us some new faces and I am excited to welcome our new staff members. Our first new staff member is Chris Bennett, our new Elementary School Principal. Chris comes to us from Idaho along with his wife and two teenage boys. Elizabeth Balcerek is our new principal at Valdez High School. Dr. Balcerek had a long and successful career in North Carolina before moving up to the Northwest Arctic School District for the last 5 years. Her husband Jim joins Dr. Balcerek in Valdez for this new adventure. Our new District Librarian is John Wellcome and he joins us from Montana and is accompanied by his wife Jodi and their three teenage children. In the district office, we have a new Special Education Director, Suzanne Jacobson, who is from Fairbanks, but most recently moved from Utah. Also, new to us this year is Jennifer George, who last year taught in Hoonah. Our final new certificated staff member is our fourth grade teacher, Holly Miner. Holly is not completely new to us as she did her student teaching at Hermon Hutchens last year. I am so proud of our new hires and I am hopeful that you will get a chance to meet them soon.

Thank you,

Superintendent, Jacob Jensen