June 26, 2015

Connect Alaska
Final Report FY15
Annette Island School District

Dear Sirs:

Please see attached document that is our final report for this program year, 2014 – 2015.

Annette Island School District appreciates the opportunity to work with you on this wonderful program during our FY15 school year.

We hope this report reflects all the benefits and experiences this program provided to our community.

Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Charlene Jimenez
Business Manager

cc: Eugene Avey, Superintendent-AISD
    James Dunn, Connect Alaska

“EDUCATION IS EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS IN METLAKATLA”
TO: NTIA, Connect Alaska, and Connected Nation

FROM: Gene Avey
Annette Island School District Superintendent

Date: June 25, 2015

RE: Final Report on the AISD Innovations Incubator

July 2014, I appointed AISD technology coordinator, Jason Pipkin, to assist Frank Odasz with the logistics of the Alaska Native Innovations Incubator project. Frank has visited Metlakatla several times in the past to provide an inservice for AISD educators, to do a video documentary on a major potlatch event in partnership with KACN-TV, and to co-host workshops on digital entrepreneurship for the Digitizing Alaska; Broadband Strategies NTIA pilot project, Spring of 2013.

In summary, awareness has been raised for many more potential innovations than have been yet implemented.

An incubator website and blog were created on the district website, and updates were emailed to AISD staff, along with updates in the AISD newsletter. Current innovations, and the Incubator’s additional innovations are documented at http://lone-eagles.com/aisd-innovations.htm and in the AISD newsletters for January, February, and March, 2015.

Extensive resources to be shared without restriction are at
Open Invitation: http://aisdk12.org/innovationincubator/open-invitation/

Innovation Highlights include, but are not limited to:
David Nelson learned to use the Book Creator iPad app to create a Prek Ebook for native language instruction, in addition to tutorials for iBook Author, the Explain Everything app, and other broadly useful apps and tools.

As a model for all AISD staff, Mark Richards easily created a classroom website for this 5th grade Codeclub http://rielementarycodeclub.weebly.com/ using weebly.com which is easy to use, has no ads, and websites can be created, managed, and viewed, via mobile devices with the free weebly app.

Eric Dean "carried" the robotic iPad down the Elem. School hallway so Frank could see the wonderful Orca fin carvings of John Hudson's art students. Mark used an iPad to create a short video of this humorous event - a first time for all of us.
On the Codeclub videos page is a short local video demonstration of Frank Odasz’s “live” video conferencing using AISD’s robotic Ipad teleconferencing system. and at http://youtube.com/fodasz

Mark Richard's 5th grade students interacted from Frank Odasz from Montana via
Polycom VTC as well as the robotic iPad. Middle school and HS students are inventing practical uses for Lego Robotics and showed their inventions to Frank in Montana.

Frank and Mark used Skype on Mark's laptop to show Frank what he looked like on the robotic iPad. Then, Jason Pipkin used Google+ VTC to show Frank the district setup with remote access to all district computers.

Four different VTC system events were demonstrated in a single afternoon – 1. Skype, 2. Robotic iPad, 3. Google+, and 4. Polycom VTC, highlighting the ability to now host informal discussions and presentations with anyone interested in learning new tools for digital cultural expression, celebration, and preservation.

At issue is the challenge helping AISD staff and students become comfortable with these VTC tools, which due to limited time, remains a challenge for the district. In a similar vein, the opportunities for recent online courses and personal online mentorship also required more time than AISD staff had available, including missed inservice presentation opportunities. Extensive state requirements for new standards, new online testing, and new staff evaluation requirements created limiting time constraints.

Eric Dean’s 5th graders visited the senior complex with their iPads to create Ebooks using the Book Creator app, as a first event to intentionally begin to preserve elders' wisdom, histories and stories for all future generations. The entrance monitors to the Elem. School show this event taking place.

A VTC event was held for elders, hosted by Naomi Leask with elders Ruth Booth, Dennis Dunne, as well as AISD educator Mark Richards attending.

Eric Dean's 5th graders created 3D rotating images of the HS art student's Orca Fin Carvings, and showed them to John Hudson.

Digital Montessori Content and Conceptual Framework:
Lecia Avey, director of the Digital Montessori initiative, identified the need for community understanding and support for the Montessori school, and how youth preserving local culture, and honoring elders digitally, can go a long way helping everyone understand the culturally supportive uses of digital technologies.

Extensive digital Montessori resources were created, and shared, in support of AISD’s new $2 million federal Montessori grant. These resources were shared with AISD's sister Montessori school in British Columbia.

The Incubator included an AISD conceptual framework for how a K-100 Montessori style digital literacy community-wide initiative could help empower all citizens, with emphasis on training parents in use of iPads for in-home preschool literacy as well as entrepreneurship for low-income parents. http://lone-eagles.com/digital-montessori-resources.htm
Preserving elder’s stories and wisdom for all future generations using new easy smartphone and iPad apps as well as digitizing and archiving all existing photos and videos and audio recordings should be a priority while elders are still around. Intergenerational events around this important goal can take many forms.

Jason Pipkin shared that elders don’t trust creating stories due to fear of copyright issues. This suggests some education is necessary that elders can retain full copyright for anything they participate in creating.

Frank’s nationally published article; http://lone-eagles.com/silver-tsunami.pdf relates to empowering elders at successive levels of ability. Examples of multiple tools for elder’s storytelling, http://lone-eagles.com/elders-stories.htm Janet Guthrie’s potlatch interview is another example; at http://youtube.com/fodasz - part of 10 interviews and 14 hours of video from the 2011 Boxley Potlatch.

Opportunity Literacy Training and Entry-Level Digital Entrepreneurship Curriculums:
Showing everyone the opportunities to learn-to-earn via Internet can allow youth to remain a part of the village’s future, and art Ecommerce, and telework are just a couple of the dozens of related opportunities. Most villages suffer from the outmigration of youth and young families.

Jason also shared the challenge that youth lack the context and understanding for the full range of their digital self-employment and career opportunities, both living in Metlakatla and elsewhere.

STEM degrees and careers might be suitable for some, but there are many new entry-level digital entrepreneurship opportunities that have never existed before to allow “Making the living you want, living wherever you want.” Developing local artists careers as well as tourism opportunities would suit many who might not prefer STEM careers.

During the 11 months of the project, short videos and many digital entrepreneurship resources were shared with Jason for specific use with his Career and Technology Education classes, and relevant resources and videos were created and sent to assist many others, as partially documented below.

These tutorial videos and others are listed at http://lone-eagles.com/what-you-can-do-too.htm serving as a Open Online Self-directed set of short video awareness tutorials.

This listing showcases a model for the use of free screencasting software that would all AISD educators to ideally create similar video tutorials for their students, to be posted on their easily maintained free Weebly classroom websites.

Opportunities exist for AISD/community partnerships expanding on use of digital resources and collaboration for prevention of domestic violence, suicide, obesity,
diabetes, and more, as a future opportunity. Facebook and mobile devices are already now used by most citizens, as opposed to slow and expensive broadband. How best to build on this existing community connectivity with more purposeful applications might be considered for the future.

The Challenge for Mass Innovation, by Frank Odasz
http://lone-eagles.com/mass-innovation.pdf
Nationally published article on AISD’s Innovation Incubator’s significance.

Key Challenges:
AISD has just remodeled the Elementary school and installed many new technology innovations in all three schools. Frankly, we’re continually overwhelmed with trying to meet changing state standards, meet state teacher evaluation requirements, and keep our teachers properly trained and our curriculums up-to-date.

I appreciate that Frank understands the local challenges and is both patient and flexible. Frank worked within our current innovations structure and has helped us generate many useful new resources, and has identified many opportunities for additional innovation in the near future.

A last minute 50% cut in NTIA funding created key challenges in that no funding was available for Frank’s travel to serve as an onsite presenter to encourage innovators via hands-on workshops. Fall installation of new technologies was overwhelming for the majority of AISD staff, and particularly for Jason, as technology coordinator.

The limitation of one day per week to work on the project, and no travel was leveraged into the opportunity to test multiple video conferencing systems to explore the comfort level with using these new technologies to provide face-to-face interaction opportunities. Identifying the ability to continue to share all online resources locally, and statewide with other districts and educators is a significant innovation, which may require district champions to identify and share the value of these extensive self-direct online resources, for the many short awareness videos, tutorial videos, and webtours of extensive resources.

Promotional Successes:
This unique Innovations Incubator model has been shared on multiple blogs from NTIA, BTOP, and the Federal Dept of Commerce across Washington DC, and nationally, and via a multimedia presentation for the School, Health, Libraries Broadband Coalition in DC, May 2014, and at multiple Broadband Communities conferences in Chicago, Fall 2014 and Austin 2015. As well as via two published articles in Broadband Communities magazine, and via Connect Alaska’s national newsletter, and more. The most current online webtour and print handout was distributed in Austin, April 15, 2015; http://lone-eagles.com/austin-2015.htm
Next Steps:
AISD anticipates serious budget shortfalls this next year, and future funding is a topic of mutual interest. Major trends for philanthropic foundations, and the federal government’s new broadband initiatives, makes it clear, that NTIA/Connect Alaska’s Innovations Incubator project was timely and is just the beginning.

What AISD and the Metlakatla Indian Council, might have to say, and share, for all other Alaska Native villages, about how best to create a culture of creativity, and celebrate and provide incentives for local innovators, to address positive alternatives to the persistent socio-economic challenges that we all know all too well, remains our opportunity to consider.

In short, online public visual social recognition for those contributing to local community capacity, would likely serve as a positive incentive, and perhaps a similar form of social pressure to discourage negative behaviors, such as domestic violence, might be considered.

The Tsimshian Tradition of Creative Adaptation is very real, and teaching Tsimshian values in such a way where everyone recognizes their daily actions are public testimony to their Tsimshian values, as a model for all other Alaska Native citizens, might be considered for the stories that will someday be told about how the first successful Alaska Native Digital Village came to be.

Canoe Club director, Johon Atkinson, shared it took him two years to internalize the impact of the 2013 web-raising which he credits with inspiring his new career direction working with at-risk youth as a counselor, and as director of Canoe club. Johon’s first experience with Skype resulted in a two-hour exciting discussion with Incubator director Frank Odasz, on all the possibilities. While this pilot project is ending, many new innovative ideas are just emerging. Key relationships have been created that will continue well past this demonstration project.