

Spring Semester 2020: AGSD SCHOOLS participating in A-CHILL

Tanacross

The cold air temperatures of January did not stop students from learning about sled dogs. The semester started by the Tok dog musher teacher leading activities and games for students to learn dog positions in a team. Dogs were brought into the classroom for hands-on learning about health including foot care, grooming, cutting toenails, and checking for injuries. To prepare to run dogs, students practiced harnessing dogs and reading their behavior in a controlled setting. A sled was brought into the classroom for students to practice how to ride it. Students were reminded how to dress warm, how to stay safe on a sled, and how take care of dogs before and after a run. A local culture expert groomed the nearby trails before students ran two-dog teams. Back in the classroom, students shared their experiences with dogs and discussed how they could improve. SKIKU traveled to Tanacross to teach and share tips about exercising outdoors in the winter. Students enjoyed watching the movie, TOGO. They learned about distance dogs and also about empathy.



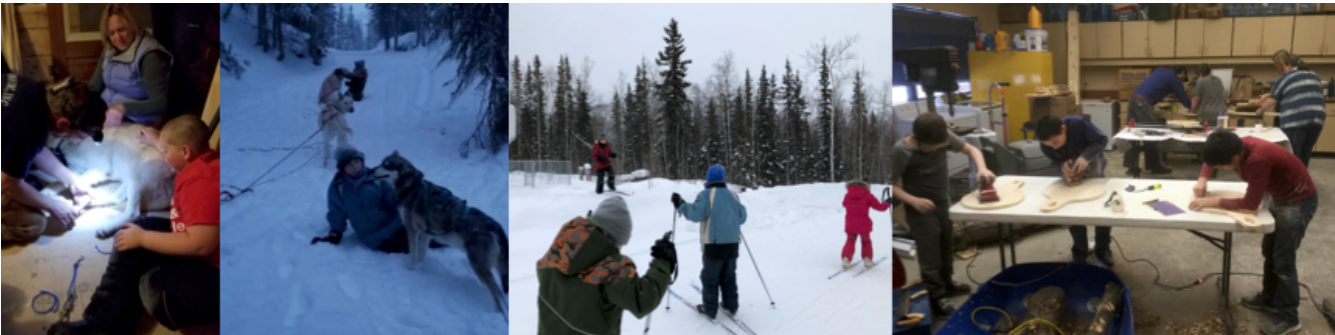
Mentasta

Students were happy to start the spring semester with lessons taught by the Tanacross dog musher teacher using her dogs. In the classroom, students learned about the history of dogs including how they were used to travel compared to snow machines. Students studied the local trails and their historic significance. They practiced handling dogs including health checks and observing behavior. With the increasing daylight and warmer air temperatures, students got back outside and on the trail by snow machine, skis and dog team. Students greatly improved cross-country skiing. With a good snow pack, a semester highlight was a field trip to a Tok dog kennel to run dogs. Local dog musher teachers, an LCE, and the A-CHILL Itinerant teacher worked together so all students could run a dog team. Students were involved in dog care before and after the run.



Eagle

Students participate in an after-school program taught by the A-CHILL teacher-principal and her dogs with help from community volunteers. On the cold days, students stayed indoors for hands-on time with dogs. In the controlled setting, they learned to observe dog movement and behavior to spot injuries. Many classes ended with students playing a fun card game to learn dog facts. The increased daylight and warmer temperatures allowed more time in a dog yard and students learned about the special care of older dogs including how to maintain their weight in different weather conditions. In early February, the A-CHILL itinerant teacher traveled to Eagle to support students shadowing Yukon Quest veterinarians, dog mushers, and race officials. Students learned about feeding and caring for a long distance racing team including the importance of rest for dogs and mushers. Visiting skiers gave students tips on skiing and the A-CHILL itinerant teacher taught the confident skiers how to skijor. In early March, a carpenter instructor traveled Eagle to teach students to use math skills to design to make a cutting board. Students also learned to use raw wood to make a stool and a ladder.



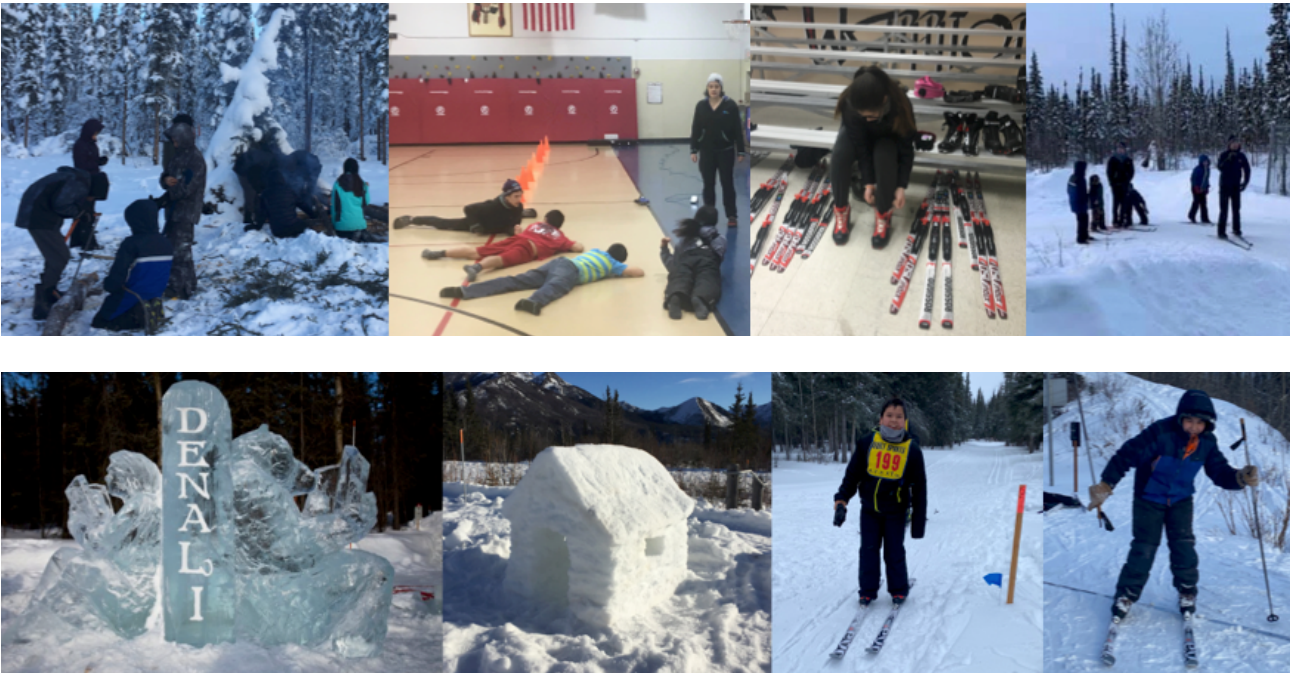
Tok

Starting in January, the Tok and Tanacross A-CHILL dog musher teachers teamed up to run an after-school dog obedience class for GAP and A-CHILL students. The focus was teaching students basic dog obedience including leash training. The class was popular and students learned how to read dog behavior and teach dog commands like heel, sit, and stay. They learned how to handle shy, anxious, and high-energy dogs and how to correct bad behavior. Students advanced to teaching dogs a few tricks. They also watched dog training videos discussed various training methods used for different kinds of dogs. Student researched service dogs and the many ways to work with dogs as a career.



Northway

With early semester cold air temperatures limiting outdoor activity, the Northway A-CHILL dog musher visited the school to teach students about the rich sled dog history and culture of the area, including stories about the importance of dogs for survival. Students learned how dog breed and care has changed over time. When the weather allowed, students ran a small dog team and practiced skiing. In early February, SKIKU traveled to Northway to teach skiing, biathlon skills, and about exercising in the winter. The highlight of semester was a field trip to Denali National Park for **DENALI WINTERFEST 2020**. Four Northway middle school students with a teacher and their principal enjoyed a winter weekend with students from other parts of Alaska. Activities included a ski race and ice block sculpture contest. Park staff taught students about the vital roles that snow plays in climate, water resources, and human lives in Alaska and around the world. Students dug a snow pit and learn what the layers mean for animals, plants and people. Park staff led a snowshoe walk and talked about the physical and mental endurance of winter travel by foot. Students met the Denali Kennel sled dogs and learned about their work in the Park. Healy and Denali community members provided a potluck dinner and the evening ended by gathering to view constellations and planets.



Tetlin

Students were eager to continue the A-CHILL Animal Science class to learn more about dog health and animal husbandry. The Tanacross dog musher teacher traveled to teach students about dog organs and their functions. Students also learned about farm animals and ruminant's multi-chamber stomachs. In the coldest part of January, the Tok dog musher teacher brought a goat into the classroom to explain how a multi-chamber stomach works. When the weather allowed, students took a field trip to her farm to learn more about goats, and also about horses and pigs. In mid-February, A-CHILL Itinerant teacher visited Tetlin to support the upcoming **Tetlin Canine Health Spay & Neuter Clinic** sponsored by ARVO and A-CHILL. Students learned about parasites, distemper, rabies and diseases in dogs and also in humans. Students were praised for being involved in the health of the village dogs.

Students also learned about dog sports in Norway including skjoring. SKIKU traveled to Tetlin to teach skiing and give tips about winter exercise. Students excelled with the one-on-one skiing instruction.



Tetlin Canine Health Spay & Neuter Clinic

For a second time, students stepped up to help run a village endorsed 3-day dog health spay & neuter clinic. Mentasta students traveled to Tetlin to help for one day. ARVO gave generous support by providing surgery and clinic supplies. Two veterinarians from North Pole and Fairbanks volunteered to do the surgeries and also gave supplies. Tanacross and Tok A-CHILL dog musher teachers mentored students starting with determining the dogs to be treated. Students learned to check in a dog; prepare them for surgery including evaluating condition and obtaining weight; observe surgeries and support veterinarians as needed; conduct dog post-operation care including monitoring the heart and using cold packs and heat; fill out paperwork and discharge dog to owner. Students informed dog owners about post-surgery dog care and general dog health. Students learned about de-worming and vaccinating dogs for both rabies and distemper, and also parvo for puppies. The clinic was a great service to the community and at least two students are considering careers in veterinary science!

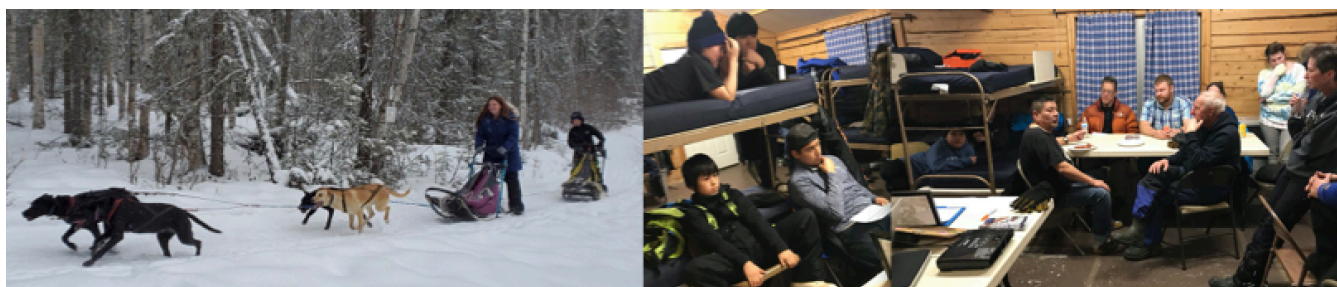


RONDY EDU WEEKEND Student Field Trip

At the end of February, students from AGSD and YKSD showing great interest and participation in A-CHILL over the grant period traveled to Anchorage for a special RONDY EDU student field trip. Chaperoned by A-CHILL teachers, dog musher teachers, and volunteers from both districts, four middle and high school students from two AGSD schools joined six middle school students from four YKSD schools for a unique opportunity to learn about sled dog health, history and culture through a historic world championship race. The A-CHILL itinerant teacher and AGSD dog musher teacher-coordinator facilitated students learning from professional veterinarians, veterinarian technicians, and race officials such as timers, trail guards, and public information specialists.

Students broke into groups by their interest; two AGSD shadowed veterinarians at race start and finish. They learned about sled dog racing condition including overall health, diet, and how to spot an injury or stiffness. Two other AGSD students assisted race timers managing real time checkpoint times called in from the trail. They learned how a winner is determined in running their dog team 25 miles through the city for three days in a row. Students were paired with YKSD students and Anchorage King Career Veterinary Science students interested in learning about sled dogs. Many were interviewed for live race broadcast and filmed by Channel 2 News. By working with professionals, students had the opportunity to talk about careers.

While staying at a camp outside of Anchorage, students participated in caring for the sled dogs brought on the trip. Students and chaperones also had time to run a dog team, snowshoe and cross-country ski around a lake. In the evenings, the A-CHILL village dog musher teacher told stories about the history of the RONDY including the life of past village champions. All enjoyed watching the ATTLA documentary and discussing the film.



A-CHILL- IDITAROD TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

A-CHILL collaborated with IDITAROD EDU to offer teacher professional development training during the week after the RONDY OWC and before the start of the Iditarod. By participating in the conference, teachers had an option to earn 500-level education credits through UAA. A-CHILL teachers and dog musher teachers had a day with A-CHILL teachers, Mari Hoe-Raitto and Roni Noonan-Agre, to learn hands-on lessons and activities about dog care, health, behavior, handling, and compassion. From a professional ski instructor, teachers learned tips on skiing and how to skijor. There were evening discussions about teaching sled dog history and culture. The veterinarian, who had taught students about dog conditioning while a Cordova Hill during the RONDY EDU weekend, gave a presentation about dog care.

For two days, A-CHILL teachers and staff joined lower-48 teachers to learn classroom curriculum. The IDITAROD EDU conference theme was *Integrate the Last Great Race on Earth into Your Existing Curriculum*. In classroom sessions, speakers experienced in delivering Iditarod instructional materials to students gave examples of lessons and activities applicable to common core and content standards. A focus on authentic learning techniques, technology, and STEM instruction were key elements.

Teachers visited Iditarod Headquarters in Wasilla, where they observed a team of Iditarod veterinarians determining if race dogs were fit for the trail by conducting physical exams, reviewing recorded data, and visiting with mushers. Teachers were encouraged to ask questions and take photos and videos to share with students. Lower-48 teachers visited a nearby kennel while A-CHILL teachers visited a nearby sled dog rehabilitation and re-homing center. In afternoon and evening, all teachers gathered at the *Chugiak Dog Mushing Association Clubhouse* to learn sled dog handling and behavior from Mari and Roni. Teachers practiced skiing and took a sled ride with Mari. The evening ended with presentations by local dog mushers and playing the ATTLA documentary.

