



# Uqapiaqtaurat

The Parent/Community Newsletter of Iḷisaḡvik College's Uqautchim Uglua Language Nest

## Upinḡaksralluataq (Happy Spring)!

Hello and a happy spring season to all our students and their families! With snowbirds back in Barrow, increasing sunlight and the whaling crews ready to go when the ice opens up, the Language Nest is full of the excitement of the season. We are keeping busy as we continue to learn and grow, and are excited to share our goings-on. So take a moment to read about what we have been up to this month and what we are planning for the future. Don't forget that we are eager to work together as partners in the early education of your children. Any suggestions or ideas you have are always welcome!

## WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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## Academics

Uqautchim Uglua is hard at work laying an Iñupiaq framework for early childhood learning. We have established a consistent routine to help our learners acquire basic Iñupiaq words, phrases and concepts. Among other activities, Language Nest staff Aalaak Emma Ferguson, Panikpak Clara Tagarook and Ikayuaq Martha Stackhouse lead the students every day in the number song from 1-20, the Atchagat song, the Uvaḡa aḡnaiyaaq/aḡutaiyaaq dance and song, and the Ikka, pikka, kannu, uvva direction song. Each of your children takes a turn singing the numbers and atchagat every single day, and every child is praised, taught and encouraged on an individual basis as they continue to progress.

Our immersion teachers are also encouraging the kids to describe how they feel emotionally, using basic sen-

tences such as “Quviasuktunḡa (I am happy),” “Ipiqtusuktunḡa (I am sad),” “Iqsiuraqtunḡa (I am nervous),” “Uumisuktunḡa (I am mad),” or “Quviasalaaqtunḡa (I am excited).” Everyone is expressing how they are feeling in the Iñupiaq language more and more, which is needless to say something that we are happy about!



## Arts & Crafts

Uqautchim Uglua staff has put great effort, since the Nest opened, into creating lesson plans that follow the Iñupiaq cultural calendar as much as possible. As part of these lessons, we design arts and crafts activities to reflect the skills and terminology of traditional, seasonally appropriate Iñupiaq activities. For one example, as the spring sun came up, we worked with our students to make a paper version of traditional Iñupiaq sun goggles that they could use while playing outside. During Kivḡiq, we also had them

make Kalukaq mittens and took them to Barrow High School to join the K4 and Kindergarten performance.

In the modern world, there are Western holidays, and our lesson plans often reflect this, as we have taught units on Christmas and Easter. However, we always make sure that these are taught from the Iñupiaq perspective, and using proper Iñupiaq terminology. It is our hope and design that whatever is going on in the classroom will be reinforced by what is going on at home and in the community, as this is what will help make our lessons stick with students as they grow older.

## Physical Activities

Given the frigid winter climate prevalent through most of the school year, we sometimes have to be creative in making sure that the students get adequate physical activity. Nearly all of our exercise activities take place indoors, and we have the students alternate different physical activities throughout the week to keep their interest. On one day they might jump

rope; on other days they may ride tricycles and scooters. They will also take out our “ice blocks,” which are white and beige colored squares of rug, and jump from one piece to the next in imitation of the traditional hunting skill. Mild calisthenics, such as jumping jacks, somersaults and cartwheels are very popular. No matter how much fun we have indoors, we are glad for spring, because as weather continues to warm up, we will be able to take the kids outside to play and get some fresh air more often.

## Quvianquvik (Fun time)!

For a fun holiday activity the students dyed Easter eggs and had an Easter egg hunt followed by a party to which all staff and family members were invited. Quyanaaqpakkivut (special thanks) goes to Jonas & Heidi Ahsoak for bringing beautiful cupcakes that looked like Easter baskets! A belated quyanaqpak is also due to Qaiyaan Harcharek & Jamie Smith, who gave Valentine chocolates to each of the children on Valentine’s Day. We appreciate all you do!

## Easter Fun!

