

Adams Elementary ALO Program Description 2007-2008 School Year

Adams is a K-5 school with 360 students. Our school vision is an “Arts Rich Community”. Our arts-integrated curriculum challenges and engages all students, increases academic performance and instills a sense of fun and discovery in every student and teacher.

The Adams school community is committed to serving the needs of all students. Students have an opportunity to participate in advanced learning, regardless of whether they have tested into the program or not. Advanced learners are challenged by more complex interpretations of assignments and through flexible groupings, differentiated instruction, inter- and cross-grade level sharing, challenging materials, enrichment opportunities and arts integration. All of our teachers have worked with artists and have been trained in integrating music, movement, and fine arts into all aspects of our curriculum. We have an after school program with tutors, a homework club, art, Spanish language and sports. These activities are all very well attended and supported by staff, parents and the Ballard community. We are currently revising our ALO offerings at each grade level and these specific units will be available to view on our school website by September.

Our professional development will continue to focus on integrating the arts into classroom academics in order to broaden and deepen the learning experience. Teachers will continue to expand their repertoire of units and activities which encourage higher level thinking skills and more complex projects.

Areas of Development

We are continue to challenge our Advanced Learners so that they do not simply “meet standards”, which they are easily capable of doing, but that they surpass standards, that they WANT to learn more because their curiosity is piqued and their imagination is fired.

Teachers use the Integrated Curriculum Model in which a single theme is studied in depth in several different subject areas. An example might be the Iditarod. Fiction and non-fiction works dealing with this event would be studied to fulfill the literature component. The math strand could deal with estimation, graphing and computation. The social studies strand could examine the culture and geography of Alaska, and the science unit could examine the weather of Alaska. Of course, this would lend itself quite well to differentiated instruction, with the Advanced Learners reading more challenging works and examining more advanced math problems than the regular- ed students. The appeal of this method is that all students are working on the same subject, but at a level that satisfies their particular academic requirements. Equity of instruction is assured for all students.

Adams has always prided itself on its inclusiveness with its academic grouping, and we do not intend to abandon that practice, merely re-define it. Our ultimate goal with regard to representation and access in an Advanced Learning program is to see a representative cross-section of our population participating in our Advanced Learning community. This

will be accomplished through the strategies mentioned above, and through teacher-nomination of economically-impacted students who have the potential to “rise to the challenge” and perform well in the rigorous environment of high-achieving students.