

BEC August Presentation

August 9, 2023 7:30-9:00 am

Anchorage School District's Bold New Shift: Career-Themed High School Academies

Kersten Johnson, Sr. Director of Teaching and Learning for the Anchorage School District, **Cindy Chaput**, Anchorage School District's Director of College, Career and Life Ready; and **Devon Roberts**, Asst. Director of Career and Technical Education and **Donna Woods**, community coach with Ford Next Generation (NGL) Learning will present on the transformative shift to a career preparation model the Anchorage School District is making and how they will prepare students for life, college, and careers within Alaska and across the globe. This reimagined model will feature career-themed academies in all ASD high schools. The academies will provide students with planned elective pathways aligned to a viable college, trade school, and career pathway that is completed during the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Students will additionally prepare for career academies through career exploration in middle school and be enrolled in Freshman Academies during their freshman year of high school.

Speaker Information:

Dr. Kersten Johnson is a third-generation Alaskan, graduating from Service High School and the University of Alaska, Anchorage. She currently serves as the Senior Director of Teaching and Learning for the Anchorage School District. Prior to this position, she served as the Senior Director of Secondary Education and South Anchorage High School Principal, earning Principal of the Year honors in 2017. She additionally has served as an assistant principal, teacher expert, and special education teacher in her twenty-four-year career in the Anchorage School District. She has dedicated her career to providing exceptional education opportunities to all students in the city of Anchorage. Outside of her education career, she enjoys being the mom to two busy girls, flying with her husband to their cabin, and enjoying the outdoors of Alaska.

Cindy Chaput, an Alaskan resident for 28 years, has spent three decades in the education sector, bringing valuable experience in administration and counseling across various schools in the Anchorage School District. Her recent appointment as the College, Career, and Life Director highlights her dedication to expanding technical and real-world opportunities for all students, bridging the gap between education and the workforce. With a background as a former Curriculum Asst. Principal at West High School, Cindy is focused on implementing an Academy Model to provide enhanced pathways to success. Beyond her professional life, Cindy and her husband Dave enjoy engaging in building projects with their four adult children, retreating to their cabin and hikes in the mountains. As her last two children prepare to leave for college, she remains excited about her career and the positive impact she can make on the lives of students.

Devon Roberts, Service High Graduate and lifelong Alaskan, is the Assistant Director of Career & Technical Education. Prior to this work, he served as a teacher leader working as the CTE Department Chair and ASD Information Technology/Computer Science Cluster Chair. In these positions, he has worked to support the Biomedical Career Academy (BCA) at Service High, and partnered with Service High administration to create a Computer Science Pathway at Service High School to provide students with relevant hands-on courses to pursue coding, animation and modeling, game design and virtual

reality development. Recently, he worked as part of a team to bring contextualized learning programs to Service High in which students learn mathematics through construction, fabrication and business. He is a 25-year English and computer science teacher, and outside of work he stays busy as a parent of two teenagers, and loves to travel to new places with his wife, Sarah.

Dr. Donna Woods, a community coach with Ford Next Generation (NGL) Learning, will be presenting on the assistance and partnership they have been providing to the Anchorage School District as the College, Career, and Life Ready program implements the Ford NGL Framework, which includes a transformation of partnerships between schools and their communities. Dr. Woods will give examples of how these programs have helped reshape school districts and communities in comparable U.S. cities. She spent 42 years in public education in Hampton, Virginia, leading the transformation of high schools into college and career academies.