



Pegge Erkeneff  
Director of Communications, Community, and Government Relations  
907.714.8888  
Fax 907.262.5867  
148 N. Binkley Street  
Soldotna, Alaska, 99669

e: [Pegge@KPBSD.org](mailto:Pegge@KPBSD.org)  
Facebook: [KPBSD](https://www.facebook.com/KPBSD)  
Twitter: [@KPBSD](https://twitter.com/KPBSD)  
[www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us](http://www.kpbsd.k12.ak.us)

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## NEWS RELEASE

### ***KPBSD educator and graduate Jason Daniels receives presidential award for teaching excellence in science***

**Soldotna, March 1, 2022—An educator at K-Beach Elementary for 24 years and Kenai Central High School graduate [Class of 1990], Mr. Jason Daniels received national recognition as the Science Awardee for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching (PAEMST). His Mom and Dad were educators in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and inspirations for his career.**

“The Presidential Award is a symbol of teaching excellence,” said Mr. Daniels. “I work with many excellent teachers who are deserving of recognition and I am humbled to receive this honor. The award process is a reflective journey of professional development and I am a better teacher as a result. It honors my students and families, colleagues, and administrators that believed in me and I am thankful for their support. The greatest reward in my teaching is to see my students succeed in their learning.”

“Mr. Daniels is an outstanding longtime educator with the KPBSD and I can think of no one more deserving of this recognition,” said Superintendent Clayton Holland. “He is not only an exceptional educator who makes learning real and relevant to his students, he is an even better person who develops positive and trusting relationships with his students, their parents, and his colleagues. Please join me to celebrate Mr. Daniels.”

K-Beach Elementary Principal Janae Van Slyke said, “Mr. Daniels is an outstanding educator who personalizes his instruction to meet the needs and interests of individual students. Mr. Daniels creates an immersive classroom experience focused on mathematics and science inquiry. His students are engrossed in science and learning how it impacts their daily lives. This honor is well deserved!”

**In his words...**

#### **Early life inspirations**

*My parents inspired my career path. They were both teachers. They came to Alaska in 1969 from Oregon and settled in Seldovia. I was born there—actually in Homer because there was no hospital in Seldovia. My Mom’s teaching superpower was her love for her students. She earned a reputation by her colleagues for her nurturing caring teaching style. I joked that she treated her students better than she treated me! All*

**KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-TWO DIVERSE SCHOOLS**

**The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.**  
ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM  
RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

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*kidding aside, she was a great role model for putting kids first. My Dad went on to get his principal endorsement and was the first principal to open the doors at Redoubt Elementary. I learned a great deal from him as well. As a marine science teacher in Seldovia, he introduced me to science at an early age in the tide pools near Seldovia. I was hooked on science from then on. My Dad demonstrated the traits of a strong leader who was dedicated and who always strived to be the best educator he could be. To this day he gives me advice, whether requested or not, about how to handle challenges in teaching. I joke with him that he has never stopped teaching.*

### **Advice to my younger self, or a current K-12 student**

*Stand on your own two feet. Do not worry what others are doing. Start now to decide what you want to do with your life. Start thinking of small things you can do now to get you to your goal. You are not too young to start pursuing your passions.*

### **Favorite part of the school day**

*Certainly one of my students' favorite parts of school and one of mine as well is the opportunities to experience STEM through hands on learning. English and Language Arts are an important part of science learning, and there is nothing more engaging, exciting, and sometimes surprising, in my experience, than getting your "hands dirty". Whether it is taking apart an owl pellet, solving a real world-engineering problem, or walking to Slikok Creek to conduct water quality tests, experiential learning adds color to an otherwise pastel science learning canvas.*

[Read more of Mr. Daniels thoughts about teaching, play, and learning.](#)

Mr. Daniels earned a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from UAA, and an MEd in educational technology from UAS. He is a National Board Certified Middle Childhood Generalist, and holds a master teacher certificate with an endorsement in educational technology.

### **Links**

- [PAEMST awards](#)
- [K-Beach Elementary School](#)



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