



THE COMETS

Chevak School Monthly Newsletter

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(907) 858-7712



Parker Atchak (left) and Laiton Pingayak race toward the finish during the high school division of the XC Scammon Bay 2026 Cross Country Running Competition on Wednesday, Aug. 26, in Scammon Bay, Alaska. Atchak captured first place, while Pingayak finished second in the challenging race. Photos courtesy of Antonia Moses.



Top left: Student-athletes pose for a group photo before traveling to the XC Scammon Bay 2026 Cross Country Running Competition with their coach, Raylee Chayalkun. Top right: The team with Sports Supervisor Derrick McDonald. Bottom: High school and middle school winners proudly display their certificates after earning top finishes in their respective divisions. Photos by Antonia Moses.

CHEVAK SCHOOL WELCOMES NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

CHEVAK, Alaska — Chevak School officially welcomed the 2026-2027 school year with the introduction of its new leadership team: District Superintendent Lillian Olson, Principal Tony Meinerding, and Assistant Principal Kurt Morales. During the annual staff orientation, Superintendent Olson welcomed teachers and staff, expressing her appreciation for their dedication and encouraging everyone to work together to provide a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment for all students. The gathering also gave educators an opportunity to prepare for the new school year, review school goals, and strengthen their commitment to student success and the Chevak community.



Carlene Liesch of Alaska EXCEL presents the 2026-2027 program schedule, encouraging Chevak School students to explore career pathways and future opportunities. Photos by Leilanie Gil Abraham

YOUNG RUNNERS SHINE AT XC SCAMMON BAY 2026 MEET

SCAMMON BAY, Alaska (Aug. 26, 2026) — Determination and sportsmanship were on full display as student-athletes competed in the XC Scammon Bay 2026 Cross Country Running Competition held Wednesday in Scammon Bay. Runners from the high school and middle school divisions took on the challenging course, cheered on by coaches, families, and community members. In the high school division, Parker Atchar claimed the championship with a first-place finish, while Laiton Pingayak secured second place after a strong performance.

The middle school races also showcased the talent of young runners. In the boys' division, Cayson Ulroan captured first place, followed by Arjey McDonald in second and Rajon McDonald in third. In the girls' division, Melyssa Nanok earned first place, Eternity Ayuluk finished second, and Tasha Boy Scout took third. Guided by Coach Raylee Chayalkun, the athletes demonstrated perseverance and teamwork throughout the competition, making the annual meet a memorable event that celebrated athletic excellence and community spirit.



Chevak School leaders welcome a new beginning for the 2026-2027 school year. (Clockwise from top left) Newly appointed District Superintendent Lillian Olson, School Principal Tony Meinerding, and Assistant School Principal Kurt Morales are welcomed to their new leadership roles. In the lower right photo, Superintendent Olson addresses faculty and staff during the annual opening meeting, sharing words of encouragement and outlining the district's vision as teachers prepare to welcome students for another year of learning and growth.

ALASKA EXCEL OPENS DOORS TO CAREER AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHEVAK STUDENTS

Representatives from Alaska EXCEL, led by Carlene Liesch, visited Chevak School to introduce students, faculty, staff, and community members to the 2026-2027 Alaska EXCEL Session Schedule. They shared that the program offers three types of sessions: Foundation (for students in Grades 9-10), Specialty (for students in Grades 10-12 who want to explore specific career pathways), and Senior Transition (for Grade 12 students preparing for college, career training, apprenticeships, or employment after graduation). The team also explained that several school districts across Alaska participate in the program and highlighted the assistance available to students interested in training opportunities in fields such as aviation, carpentry, construction, and other skilled trades. The session encouraged students to explore career options, develop practical skills, and take advantage of the opportunities Alaska EXCEL provides to help them prepare for a successful future.



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RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE. Chevak School Staff of the Month awardees pose with their certificates in the school library. From left are Vincent Matchian, Maintenance Staff; Linda Matchian, Cafeteria Staff; Cecelia Atchak, Secretary; Kurt Morales, Assistant Principal; and Jewel Bolo, SPED Teacher. Not in photo is Monica Friday, a 3rd Grade Teacher. The recognition honors their hard work, dedication, and contributions to the Chevak School community. Photo courtesy by Kurt Morales.

CHEVAK COMET RUNNERS QUALIFY FOR STATE AT XC REGIONAL BOUND 2026

The Chevak Comets delivered an outstanding performance at the XC Regional Bound 2026, with several runners earning top finishes and securing their spots in the upcoming Alaska State Cross Country Championships.

Leading the Comets was Parker Atchak, who claimed 1st Place with an impressive race from start to finish. Edward Bukowski followed with a strong performance to earn 2nd Place, while Lawson Pingayak crossed the finish line in 3rd Place. Laiton Pingayak finished 4th, and both Canon Nayagak and Louiza Slats secured 5th Place, completing an exceptional showing for the Chevak team.

By placing among the top finishers, these athletes officially qualified to represent Chevak at the state championship. Their success reflects months of dedicated training, perseverance, and teamwork throughout the cross-country season.

Adding to the school's achievements, Ali Night also earned recognition by placing 3rd at the meet held in Scammon Bay on September 23, 2026, demonstrating the continued strength and depth of Chevak's cross-country program.

The accomplishments of the Chevak Comets are a source of pride for the entire school and community. Their determination, sportsmanship, and commitment to excellence have earned them the opportunity to compete against the best runners in the state. Congratulations to Parker, Edward, Lawson, Laiton, Canon, Louiza, and Ali for their remarkable achievements. As they prepare for the state championships, the Chevak community proudly stands behind them and wishes them continued success on the trail.

CHEVAK HOSTS CROSS COUNTRY MEET, WELCOMES THREE VILLAGES

CHEVAK, Alaska — September 18, 2026 — Chevak School hosted the Chevak Cross Country 2026 on September 18, bringing together student-athletes from Chevak, Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, and Mountain Village for a day of competition, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

Runners from the participating villages gathered in Chevak to compete on the cross-country course and represent their respective schools. Athletes challenged themselves through the course while coaches, teachers, classmates, and community members provided encouragement along the route. The meet also gave students an opportunity to meet competitors from neighboring communities and strengthen connections through sports.

The event featured competition among young runners from the four participating villages. Each athlete worked to complete the course while demonstrating endurance, determination, and discipline. Beyond the race results, the event highlighted the importance of preparation, teamwork, and sportsmanship among student-athletes.

Hosting the cross-country meet also allowed Chevak School and the community to showcase their hospitality to visiting teams. The participation of Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, and Mountain Village made the event a regional gathering that brought students and supporters together through athletics.

The Chevak Cross Country 2026 concluded with athletes and teams returning home with experience gained from competing against runners from neighboring villages. The meet demonstrated how school sports can bring Yukon-Kuskokwim communities together while encouraging students to stay active and pursue athletic goals.

CHEVAK SCHOOL RECOGNIZES FACULTY AND STAFF FOR DEDICATION

CHEVAK, Alaska — Chevak School recognized five faculty and staff members through its Teacher of the Month and Staff of the Month awards, honoring their contributions and service to the school community.

The awardees are Vincent Matchian, Maintenance Staff; Cecelia Atchak, Secretary; Kurt Morales, Assistant Principal; Linda Matchian, Cafeteria Staff; Jewel Bolo, SPED Teacher and Monica Friday, 3rd Grade Teacher. The recognition highlights the work of employees who contribute to the school through their daily responsibilities and support of students and staff.

The awards are presented as a way to acknowledge the recipients' hard work and dedication to Chevak School. Their responsibilities range from maintaining school facilities and supporting administrative operations to serving meals, assisting students with special education needs, and supporting school leadership.

The recognition also highlights the importance of the different roles within the school community. Teachers, administrators, and support staff each contribute to the daily operation of the school and to providing students with a supportive environment for learning.

By recognizing its faculty and staff, Chevak School gives attention to the people who help keep its programs and daily activities running. The Teacher of the Month and Staff of the Month awards provide an opportunity for the school community to acknowledge their continued service and contributions.



Top: Chevak Comet runners celebrate a successful showing at the XC Regional Bound 2026 awards ceremony. Parker captured 1st Place, followed by Edward (2nd), Lawson (3rd), Laiton (4th), and Canon (5th), earning state qualification. Louiza also placed 5th in the girls' division, while Ali finished 3rd at the Scammon Bay meet on September 23, 2026, adding to Chevak's strong cross-country season.

Bottom: State-bound Comets gather before departing for the Alaska State Cross Country Championships, proudly representing Chevak School after their outstanding regional performances. Photos by Xavier Matchian and Marr Nass.



RUNNING WITH SCHOOL SPIRIT. Chevak School Assistant Principal Kurt Morales joins students Lea Slats and Qetuna Imgalrea in cheering for runners during the Chevak Cross Country 2026 on September 18, 2026. The other photos feature student-athletes from Chevak and visiting villages competing in the cross-country meet hosted by Chevak School. Photo by Kurt Morales.