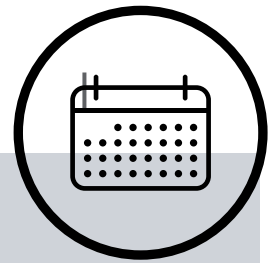




# MUSH ON!



MAY 2026

VOL. 6, NO. 9

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 21-24: Iditarod EDU Summer Conference



## EDU PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### EDU Summer Conference!!!

If you were not able to attend our Winter Conference in Anchorage this year, but would still like to have an incredible PD opportunity a little closer to home, then this is your opportunity! The Iditarod EDU department will be coming to the lower 48 again this summer to help spread the spirit of the race to a new area of the country.

Location: Poland Spring, Maine (~30 minutes north of Portland)

Dates: July 21-24, 2026

Cost: \$150

Poland Spring is located about 30 minutes north of Portland, but has an incredible connection to Alaskan dog mushing history. The famed Serum Run musher, Leonhard Seppala, had one of the most famous sled dogs of all time retire in Poland Spring. That dog was Togo. The area has a walking trail dedicated to the famed sled dog and other rich, historical markers, including a statue of Togo himself! To find out more about the full history, read the article listed here: [Poland Springs](#). In addition to our great lineup of speakers and presenters, we will also do a "field trip day" to [Muddy Paw Kennel](#) in Jefferson, NH, and enjoy plenty of time with dogs!!!

Presenters are still being lined up, but so far include:

Erin Montgomery - 2015 Teacher on the Trail

Annie McGuire - 2017 Teacher on the Trail

Jim Deprez - 2021/2022 Teacher on the Trail

Kari Wright - 2026 Teacher on the Trail

Tami Schoff - 2027 Teacher on the Trail

Lara Renner - 2018 Junior Iditarod musher

Jonathan Hayes - 2025 Centennial Seppala Expedition Musher, author, teacher

Sarah Brooks - Can-Am Crown Dog Sled Race Board VP (a qualifier for Iditarod)

Nick Presut - Can-Am Crown Chief Veterinarian ~30 years

Lodging accommodations at the Poland Spring Resort are available with our special promo code to receive a discount on all levels of rooms available!

Find all the information and register here: [Summer Registration](#)

## 2025-26 Iditarod EDU: By the Numbers

IditaRead: **2,037 Registered Students**

Trail Mail: **137 Classrooms/Schools**  
**4,186 Students**

Post Card Challenge: **52 Classrooms**  
**About 1,040 Students**

Newsletter: **Sent to 3,658 Teachers**

FaceBook: **11,000 Followers**

TikTok: **40,000 Followers**

Musher Letter Writing: **7,000 Students**

Thank you all for using Iditarod in your schools. We know the impact on student learning in all areas of the curriculum. Please join us as in the fall as we gear up for the 2027 Iditarod.



## KARI'S CORNER TEACHER ON THE TRAIL

As my time comes to an end as the 2026 Teacher on the Trail, I am reflecting on all those that made this journey what it was. I want to first thank the Iditarod Education Department of Linda Fenton, Jim Deprez, Terrie Hanke, Erin Montgomery, and Angie Taggart, for believing in me and my ability to do this important job as well as so much help along the way. It was an honor to be chosen and one I will cherish forever.

I want to thank my incredibly supportive work family: Superintendent Barb Schwamman, Principal Bill Carlson, Nathan Muhs, Ivy Sickels, Andie Olson, and Mary Jo Urbatsch for your endless motivation and always pushing me to be my very best. Thanks to the schools of the Wasilla and Girdwood areas for welcoming me as a presenter.

On the trail, I met and now care for far too many people to count, but I want to give special recognition to Jo Miller and Deb Menendez for taking such great care of me when I became sick, Whitney, my new favorite photographer, for your friendship out there, and Merri Shunk in Nome for just being an incredible person to be with, cook with, and laugh with. Thank you to the community of Osage, Iowa who never failed to stop me in the street, share social media posts, and congratulate me whenever possible. I felt truly supported this past year.

Above all, to my husband and daughters... I am humbled by your belief in me. You never doubted my ability and encouraged me endlessly. I love you all so very much and couldn't have done it without you. A dream I've held for so long is now in the history books. I'm eternally grateful for this experience.

## 2028 Teacher on the Trail

**Are you an educator that weaves the theme of the Iditarod into your required curriculum?**

**Do you teach using the Iditarod rather than teach about the Iditarod?**

Represent the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race and educators everywhere in the teaching adventure of a lifetime. Apply to be the next Iditarod Teacher on the Trail. The 2028 Application is now available. The first step to join our team of dedicated teachers is to click the application below. NOW IS THE TIME!

Click [here](#) for the 2028 Teacher on the Trail Application.



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## Iditarod EDU

### EDITORS:

Linda Fenton  
Terrie Hanke  
Jim Deprez

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Linda Fenton  
Kari Wright  
Jim Deprez

### PHOTOGRAPHY:

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Newsletter feedback, questions, or suggestions?  
email: [linda.fenton@iditarod.com](mailto:linda.fenton@iditarod.com)