

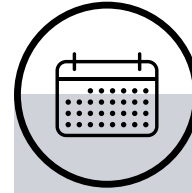


MUSH ON!

YOU CAN LEARN A LOT FROM A TEAM OF DOGS

SEPTEMBER 2026

VOL. 7, NO. 1



WELCOME BACK

This is the beginning of the 7th year of our *Mush On!* Newsletter. The goal of this Newsletter is to bring you new lessons and remind you of lessons already out there. We also use this format to report the programs we offer throughout the school year.

Another goal is to educate students with IKIDAROD (in its second year). Each month it includes a vocabulary word, a short article, a checkpoint highlight, and an activity of some kind. This is meant to be an “off line” experience.

We’re starting the 2026-27 school year with a new look at our EDU website coming soon - please bear with us as we continue to make changes for a better experience.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December:

1 - **2028 Teacher on the Trail**
Application Due

31 - **Sign up for Conference**
Discount

March:

2-5 **Winter EDU Conference**



EDU Program Highlight: Iditarod EDU Winter Conference

Whether you are a “veteran” or “rookie” Iditarod educator, or just want to include an adventure learning project in your classroom, this conference will be one to remember. Walk away with full lessons and ideas to adapt for your own students and classrooms back home. Learn how to use the tools offered through the Iditarod, Iditarod EDU, and the many programs we offer during the school year.

Here’s the deal - **Sign up before December 31 and get 50% off the price of the conference. YES! \$300.00** includes speakers, field trip, Banquet Ticket, and “behind the scenes” pass for the Ceremonial Start. Please join us for a unique Iditarod educational experience.



TAMI'S TRAIL NOTES: TEACHER ON THE TRAIL

Welcome Back! Welcome Back! Welcome Back!

2028 Teacher on the Trail

Are you an educator that weaves the theme of the Iditarod into your required curriculum? Do you regularly use the Iditarod to engage and inspire your students to reach their learning objectives? Are you able to create lessons across all academic content areas and grade levels? 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 [here](#).

As your 2027 Teacher on the Trail, here is a sneak peek of lessons for September:

The 5th – Paws to Learn:

This month's lesson will focus on using friendly letters in a unique way for every age and ability. The inspiration for this lesson came from teaching with the Iditarod and a book from The Maine Chapbook Series, *A Letter from the Snow*. I hope you will “paws” and [check it out](#) on the Iditarod EDU website.

The 25th – Paths to Connect:

This month's path will lead to a quick and easy connection to get your students familiar with the checkpoints on the trail and add a little competition for their year-long reading goals.

I hope you'll take a few minutes to check it out, give it a try with your students now, or save it in your teaching sledbag for when Iditarod 2027 gets closer. However you choose to use it, I hope it gives your students a chance to have fun, make connections, and learn as they follow the trail toward new discoveries!

2026-27 PROGRAMS

A FEW IDITAROD EDU PROGRAMS TO LOOK FOR THIS YEAR!

- **Musher Letter Writing:** Allow your students to feel connected to the race like never before! In this program, teachers will be given the addresses of the mushers who agree to participate in this program each year. Have your students write to a musher with the chance to receive something back!
- **Postcard Challenge:** This is one of our most popular programs. If you join the project, you are committing to sending postcards to other classes around the U.S. and abroad.
- **Trail Mail Artwork Contest:** Open to 3rd-12th Grade artists. This year's theme is 50 Years of Junior Iditarod. More information in next month's Newsletter.
- **Trail Mail:** Send a letter down the trail! Your piece will be put in one of the 2027 student designed cachets, placed securely in a musher's sled where it will arrive under the Burled Arch and then mailed back to you.
- **Banquet Centerpieces:** Provide your students with an opportunity to be involved in a service learning project. You can't always be somewhere 'physically', but what you can do is help to create an environment for this exciting event. Be with us through your students' art and creative endeavors.
- **IditaRead:** Always a favorite, IditaRead projects motivate students to read more, read more often, and keep reading! Now your students can travel the Iditarod Trail race route as they achieve reading goals just as they watch the mushers move along the race route. (We are hoping to have this site updated soon.)
- **Return Dog Blankets:** Help keep our return dogs nice and cozy. More information will be coming out in a few weeks.

Watch for announcements and updates on all of these programs on social media and our EDU Website.

THANK YOU JON VANZYLE!

This past summer, we reached out to our talented friend Jon VanZyle, inviting him to design a new logo for Iditarod EDU. True to his artistic genius, Jon presented a concept that resonated deeply with us. After implementing a few adjustments, we proudly unveiled the final masterpiece, as showcased below.

Thank you, Jon! Your exceptional talent is greatly appreciated.



You can learn a lot from a team of dogs!

Check out the new pricing for Insider: School Subscription is now \$99.95 and Classroom is \$59.95.

Get more information [here](#).



Iditarod[®] EDU

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VOCABULARY WORD OF THE MONTH

gangline: the line/rope that connects the sled to the team of dogs.



Photo by Terrie Hanke

Checkpoint of the Month

McGrath

POPULATION: 301

Welcome to McGrath, AK, the charming little village snuggled along the Kuskokwim River. With roads that lead nowhere for cars, getting here is an adventure! Whether you opt for a boat, plane, snowmachine, or even a dogsled, the journey's an experience in itself!

Yes, there's a school with around 40 bright young minds from Pre-K to 12th grade, learning and playing in this cozy corner of the world.

McGrath's claim to fame? It's a bustling hub for the Iditarod! This small powerhouse boasts an impressive airport, hosting the Iditarod Airforce as the teams race through Alaska's wild interior. Supplies and eager volunteers often touch down here before zooming off to another checkpoint.

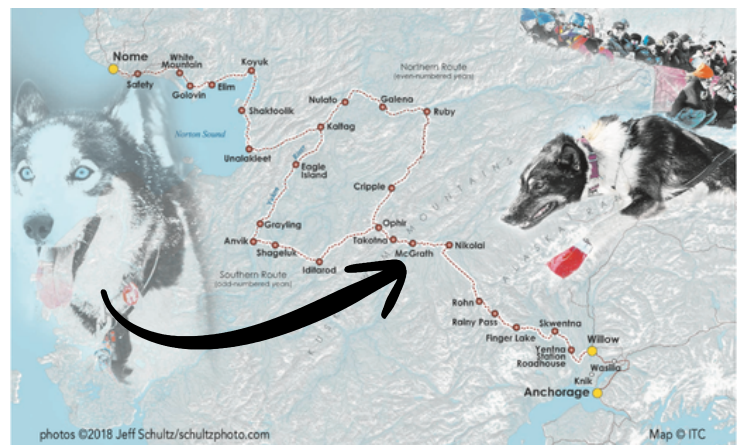
THE IDITAROD SLED DOG RACE

What, exactly, is the Iditarod Sled Dog Race? It's a 1,000 mile adventure across Alaska from Willow to Nome. Mushers, the men and women who drive the sled, hook up their teams of 16 dogs to race through the frozen tundra. They cross mountains, rivers, lakes, and snowy plains to reach their destination.

There are checkpoints along the way where teams must stop and check in. This year they will be traveling across the Southern Route - see the map below - once they go through Ophir, they will turn southwest to the next checkpoint of Iditarod.

This year's race begins with a Ceremonial Start on March 6 with the official start or Restart happening on March 7. So far there are 24 mushers signed up, but we expect more as we get closer to race time.

Follow the race at iditarod.com!



McGrath

Word Scramble

sertart	_____
gdo	_____
amte	_____
Innaigge	_____
hermsu	_____
vrire	_____
alek	_____
vialgel	_____
swno	_____
gdseldo	_____
tudran	_____
imsnotnua	_____
fenzor	_____
eotikpcnch	_____

**You can find all of these words in the articles.
GOOD LUCK!**

