

## The Common Thread Quilt Project

The Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race brought together people from all over the world and still does today. We all have something in common with the people, places, and dogs that are part of the Last Great Race. These common threads go beyond the fact that we are all teachers or people who need food and shelter, although those are important to understand because they show how we are alike. But if you dig deeper, there are amazing instances of commonalities between people.

Iditarod Quilt Project was started at the summer conference 2005 to join together character education – students learning values of good character. Teachers designed quilt squares that gave messages of successful living and good character.

My goal for The Common Thread Quilt Project is to “sew” together people from outside of Alaska with the school contacts along the northern route through a quilt/quilt square exchange. Like the poem says, it would be meaningful for them to receive a quilt made specifically for them.

Why is this important?

- This opens up communication between your students and students who exist in a very different world.
- It teaches your students how to serve people they don't know and may never see.
- In this electronic age, it gives students some tangible communication that lasts and can't be deleted.

What kinds of quilt squares?

- telling about the culture where you live
- telling about the students in your class
- telling about the Iditarod
- the sky's the limit!

YOU can help.

I'm looking for ways to get entire quilts sent to the schools. This could happen in a variety of ways:

1. Teachers have each student in their class create a quilt square. (enough to make a quilt)
2. Teachers have different classes in their school create squares. (enough to make a quilt)
3. Teachers have different schools in their district create squares, maybe all the 4<sup>th</sup> graders of the district, etc.

I see myself as the coordinator. I can gather quilt squares and get them finished, I can gather quilts and get them distributed, or I can coordinate “commitments”. If you want to make a commitment to a school along the northern route and send the quilt yourself, I can keep track of that and make sure the quilts get to places that need them.