

The Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Council's

2018 Biennial Report to the Governor and Legislature



State of Alaska

Division of Community and Regional Affairs

Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council

Appointed members:

Annette Evans Smith, Chair

X'unei Lance Twitchell, Vice-Chair

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Legislative member:

Senator Donald Olson

LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL

January 1, 2018

Dear Governor Bill Walker, Alaskan State Legislators, and People of Alaska:

As members of the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council (ANLPAC), we present our 2018 report to the Governor, the Alaska State Legislature, and the people of Alaska. The theme for this, our third report, is *self-determination* and focuses on the right of Indigenous peoples to shape the future survival of our languages.

The basic human rights and fundamental freedoms which these Indigenous populations are entitled to are enshrined within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples. Those basic human rights, as stated in the UNDRIP, are:

- The right to unrestricted self-determination
- The unalienable right to the ownership, use and control of lands, territories, and other natural resources
- The rights to maintain and develop political, cultural, religious and educational institutions
- The requirement for prior and informed consultation, participation and consent in activities that impact Indigenous peoples
- The requirement for fair and adequate compensation for violations of the rights in the Declaration

While much attention has been paid to reaching political equity and social justice for Alaska Native peoples through acts of Congress and in the judicial system, we must now turn our attention toward achieving another type of equity and justice: *cultural justice*.

Aimed at protecting what we must remember in order to maintain our identity as Indigenous peoples, cultural justice is the reclamation of our traditional and cultural forms of practice. These are precious and renewable, but also fragile. We are at a critical tipping point and while Alaska Native peoples have fully realized the cumulative effect of policies that led to the banning of our languages and loss of identity, we know the power and resilience gained when we bring them back and we truly begin to heal.

Sincerely,

Annette Evans Smith,
Council Chair

April Counciller, Ph.D.,
Council Member

Bernadette Yaayuk Alvanna-Stimpfle,
Council Member

X'unei Lance Twitchell,
Council Vice-Chair

Walkie Charles, Ph.D.,
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Sally Swetzof challenged her students with flash cards during her Unangax, or Aleut, language class.

Front cover: Dancers from Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup’ik Immersion School perform on Saturday, April 1 at the 2017 Cama-i Dance Festival. Photo courtesy of KYUK

Back cover: Indigenous peoples and Languages of Alaska map. Alaska Native Language Center, 2011; Michael E. Krauss, Gary Holton, Jim Kerr, and Colin T. West. <http://www.uaf.edu/anla/collections/search/resultDetail.xml?id=G961K2010>

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNCIL

The Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council (ANLPAC) was created by the State Legislature in 2012, finding that Alaska Native languages are critical, and the Council is charged with recommending programs which support the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Alaska Native languages. The voting members of the Council are language professionals who work with their Alaska Native languages to see that our languages continue and flourish as living languages.

Among other tasks, the Council must meet at least twice annually, and produce a biennial report by January 1st of each even-numbered year. This, *2018 Report*, is the third from the Council, following upon the 2014 and 2016 *Reports*. Photographs and short biographies of each Council member appear in Appendix A.

Note on Recommendations in This Report

When the Council has made formal recommendations to an intended audience; the following will be used or in combination:

- **Policy Making Recommendation:** Means they are directed at State of Alaska policy-makers.
- **State-wide Institution Recommendation:** Means they are directed at other statewide institutions.
- **Individuals and Communities Recommendation:** Means they are directed at individuals and communities.



David Boxley teaching Tsimshian Language, August 26, 2015

2. METHODOLOGY

The ANLPAC meets regularly via audioconference—typically once a month—in open, public meetings and invites participation and input from the public. The Council has worked since late 2012 to meet with Alaska Native language stakeholders and gather information critical for:

- Understanding which events have led us to the dire situation we are in now, with every Alaska Native language either vulnerable to becoming endangered;
- Discovering which Alaska Native language learning opportunities exist across the state; and
- Planning how to strengthen the status of Alaska Native languages as living, vibrant treasures used in everyday life.

Since our 2016 report, we have participated with the Alaska Native Studies Department of the University of Alaska Anchorage to hold a language conference in April, 2016 aptly named, "Breathing New Life Into Our Languages: *Promoting Wellness In Our Language Communities*." That same year we also participated in the *Elders and Youth Conference* of the First Alaskans Institute and presented information at the Alaska Federation of Natives in 2016 and 2017. At each of these events, a key component of the Council's work has been to invite the public to tell us their stories of what has happened with their languages.

Especially important in 2016 and 2017 has been the Council's work with the Inuit Circumpolar Council – Alaska, operating under a memorandum of understanding, to combine and support each other's efforts to increase the vibrancy of languages and culture.

This work continues to be the basis for this 2018 report. Four methods were used to determine the findings and recommendations: 1) building partnerships, 2) hearing public testimony, 3) collecting data from across the state and from other Indigenous regions in other countries, 4) and strategic planning and work sessions.

The ANLPAC meets and consults with statewide Native organizations such as the First Alaskans Institute, Alaska Federation of Natives, Alaska Native Heritage Center, Alaska Native Language Center, Alaska Native Language Archive and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference—Alaska. The Council and staff meet with representatives of many regional Native non-profit corporations, foundations, and institutes to discern the pressing needs that each region and organization has for the survival of Alaska Native languages.

3. INTRODUCTION TO ALASKA'S LANGUAGES

Alaska is home to twenty, officially-recognized Native languages, alongside English. The Official Languages Act, updated by our State Legislature in 2014, was the culmination of many hundreds of hours of effort by legislators and grass-roots efforts by Alaska Natives and others in Juneau. Alaska has now joined with the state of Hawaii in recognizing Indigenous languages as *official* languages within their own state. Alaska has formally recognized Inupiaq, Siberian Yupik, Central Alaskan Yup'ik, Alutiiq, Unangax, Dena'ina, Deg Xinag, Holikachuk, Koyukon, Upper Kuskokwim, Gwich'in, Tanana, Upper Tanana, Tanacross, Han, Ahtna, Eyak, Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian in Alaska. This public recognition is a

powerful symbol of the value that Alaska's Native languages have to all Alaskans at a time when every Alaska Native language is threatened or endangered.

Language endangerment is a serious problem in Alaska but is not unique to the Great Land. Across the globe—if current trends were to continue—at least 50% of the world's 7,000 languages are expected to die out and another 40% are threatened with loss before the year 2100. What does it mean when up to 90% of all living human languages may be lost during this century? What would it mean if 90% or more of Alaska Native languages were lost? Each human language is literally unique, providing its own view on the human world and the natural world. Grammatical features of different languages provide unique means of understanding the relationships between people, objects, and events—including things not noticed by other languages. Alaska's Native languages literally are a unique cultural and social treasure.

How does the transmission of languages from one generation to another get halted? Broadly speaking, wars, colonialism, and globalization have led a few languages to replace many others. In some cases, parents stop speaking their language to their own children because they fear for their children's safety. In other cases, young children stop speaking their parents' language due to peer pressure and broader societal pressures. Both have been—and some continue to be—factors that are leading to a reduction in the numbers of speakers of every Alaska Native language. As it stands, every one of Alaska's Native languages is currently threatened. According to the UNESCO Scale of Language Endangerment (see Appendix G in this Report), Central Yup'ik—as the healthiest Alaska Native languages—is at best considered as *vulnerable*, in perhaps five-to-eight villages and *definitely endangered* or *severely endangered*, in all other villages. St Lawrence Island Yupik is now *definitely endangered*. All other Alaska Native languages are generally *critically endangered*, with the youngest speakers being of the grandparental generation and older. Eyak and Tsetsa'ut—an Athabascan language once spoken in southernmost Southeast Alaska—are *extinct* (or dormant) with no fluent speakers at present.

Despite these declines in numbers, there are some very promising signs of language revitalization in Alaska Native language communities. The Ayaprun Elitnaurvik Yup'ik immersion school in Bethel has produced approximately 300 new, fluent speakers of Yup'ik since it began in 1995. Some highly motivated individuals have learned their heritage languages to the point of fluency as young adults, through a combination of university courses and—especially—with very intensive one-on-one interaction with fluent elders, practicing speaking only in the language. These young adults are Tlingit, Gwich'in, and Alutiiq (*Sugt'stun*) speakers (though there may be others). These newly fluent, second language speakers are raising their own children with their heritage language in the home; this may be the beginnings of new generations of first-Native-language speaker again for the first time in twenty to sixty years!

Existing Community Programs

Formal programs of instruction in Alaska Native languages exist in many public schools and at many branches of the University of Alaska. Some Alaskan tribal and non-profit organizations have formal language instruction programs and there are informal language study groups in some communities. But there are still many—perhaps most—Alaska Native communities in which there are no programs at all for learning the local Alaska Native language. (See Appendix E for detailed breakdowns by language and by community).

Information Scarcity

Across Alaska, there generally are only rough approximations of the numbers of fluent speakers and their age ranges for each Alaska Native language. Likewise, there has not been any central listing of the many, organized opportunities to learn Alaska Native languages across the state. Yet, such basic language demographics are necessary if the people of Alaska are to make the best-informed decisions about the future of each Alaska Native language. The Alaska Native Language section at the Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) has begun working on a database that will allow people to search for Alaska Native language learning opportunities, searchable by name of language, village or region.

During 2013 and 2014, ANLPAC contacted school districts across Alaska regarding their Alaska Native language programs. It turns out that many districts are unclear on whether they have Native languages in their schools. In some cases, the district office does not know whether a class is to teach “language” or “culture” and, if it is a language class, whether the teacher speaks the language with the students or just talks about it in English. To know if there are potentially effective language programs in particular schools, such information needs to be gathered. Please look the sample Language Needs Assessment, Appendix F and consider using it in your community.

Information on the status of individual Alaska Native languages is a tool to help Alaska Native communities most effectively in developing their own language plans and setting language policies that will support the continued vitality or revitalization of their languages. Knowing how many fluent speakers there are, their age ranges, and which villages and towns they live in, is important in deciding which steps need to be taken to promote each language.

The ANLPAC staff has been meeting with other DCRA Research and Analysis staff and coordinating how ANLPAC may make use of DCRA’s *Community Online Database* to store information on the traditional language(s) of each Alaska Native community. Beginning in January 2018, the Council’s own research analyst will be providing data village-by-village for inclusion into the Community Online Database, indicating names of traditional languages, but also including (if known) the status of the language and which language-learning opportunities exist within the community.

As mentioned above, the Council has been collecting its own data, informally and with no special funding, by inviting members of the public to describe language programs they know of and post these on sticky notes onto a map, *Alaska Native Peoples and Languages* (see Appendix E). The Council calls on each individual Alaska Native community—each village, region, and language community—to assess the state of its language, to share this information with ANLPAC, and to begin using these data to form plans for the future of your language. Please share your findings with ANLPAC at anlpac@alaska.gov. The Council continues to collect such data and see that they are compiled into a user-friendly, publically available electronic database—the DCRA Community Database Online also referred to as the CDO.

Acts of the Alaska Legislature, and subsequent Alaska Statutes, affect policies regarding Alaska Native languages. Please see Appendix B for full texts of the following statutes:

- 1972, Establishment of the Alaska Native Language Center, AS 14.40.117
- 1995, Native Language Education, AS 14.30.420
- 2012, Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council, AS 44.33.520
- 2014, Official Languages Act (revising the 1998 English-only version), AS 44.12.310



Skil Jáadei Linda Schrack, Haida advanced learner and teacher

Linguistic Emergency

Finding: While programs exist at many levels, Alaska’s languages are in crisis and most are predicted to become extinct (or dormant) before the end the 21st century (Krauss 1980; 1992) unless there are well-planned, well-implemented policy changes which support people learning and speaking Alaska Native language daily throughout Alaska. U.S. Federal and State of Alaska policies have played a large part in the decline of Alaska’s language since the early 20th century.

Policy Making Recommendation: The Council strongly urges that the Governor issue an Administrative Order, recognizing the linguistic emergency that exists, and clearly stating that it is the policy of the State of Alaska actively to work to promote the survival and efflorescence of all of Alaska’s 21 official languages. English language is surviving and expanding while each of the Alaska Native languages is in decline.

Key background factors of this linguistic emergency are:

- Twenty Alaska Native languages are recognized as official languages of the State of Alaska, along with English.
- Every one of Alaska's twenty Alaska Native languages has suffered an ongoing loss in the number of speakers over the past 40 years.
- One Alaska Native language, Tseta'ut, lost its last, fluent speaker in the early 1930s.
- One Alaska Native language, Eyak, lost its last, fluent speaker in 2008.
- If current rates of decline were to continue as they have been since the 1970s, all Alaska Native languages may lose their last fluent speakers by the end of the 21st century.
- Fifty years of educational research clearly shows the value of early, total language immersion education for English speakers in promoting increased academic proficiency in both English and the immersion language as well as increased academic proficiency in mathematics, science, and social studies.
- 2019 has been declared by the United Nations to be the Year of Indigenous Languages.

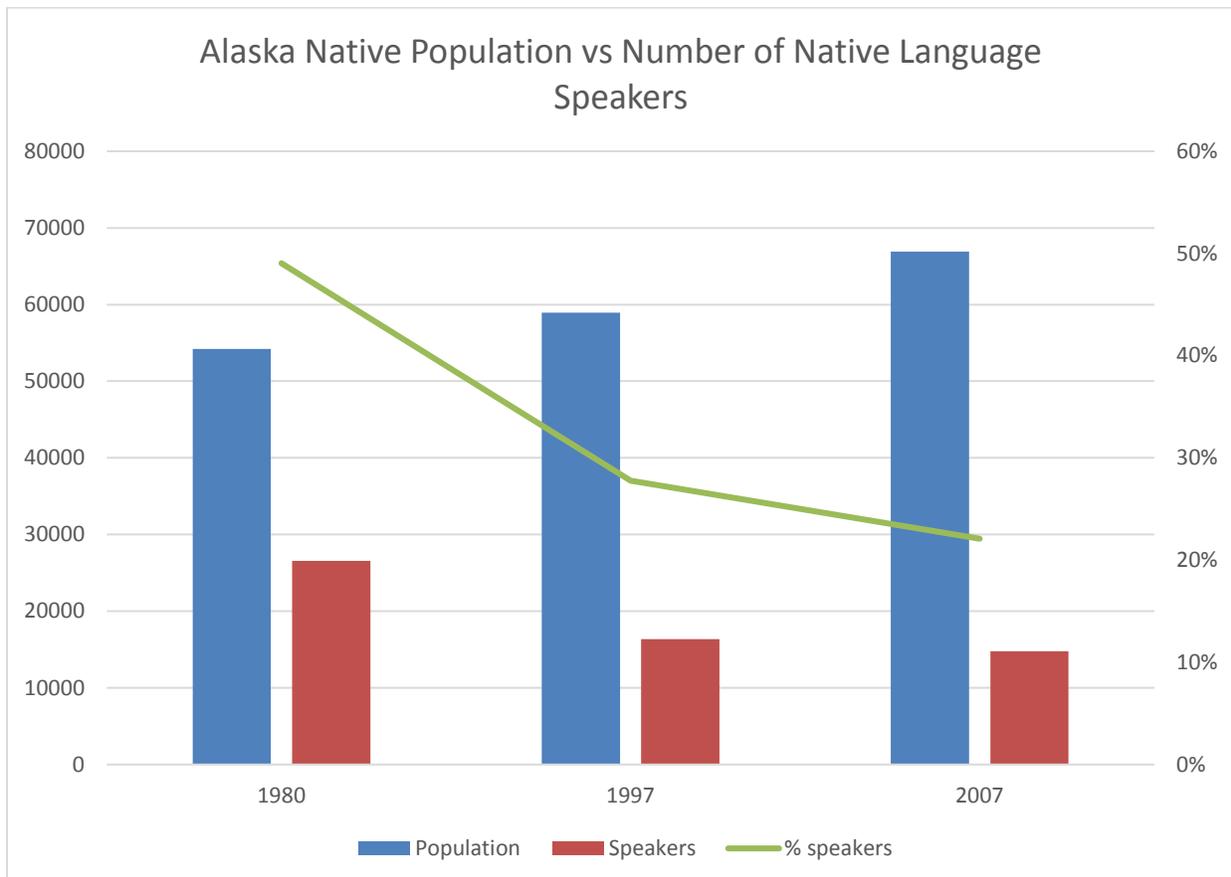
Specifics which we urge the Governor to include in his administrative order are to:

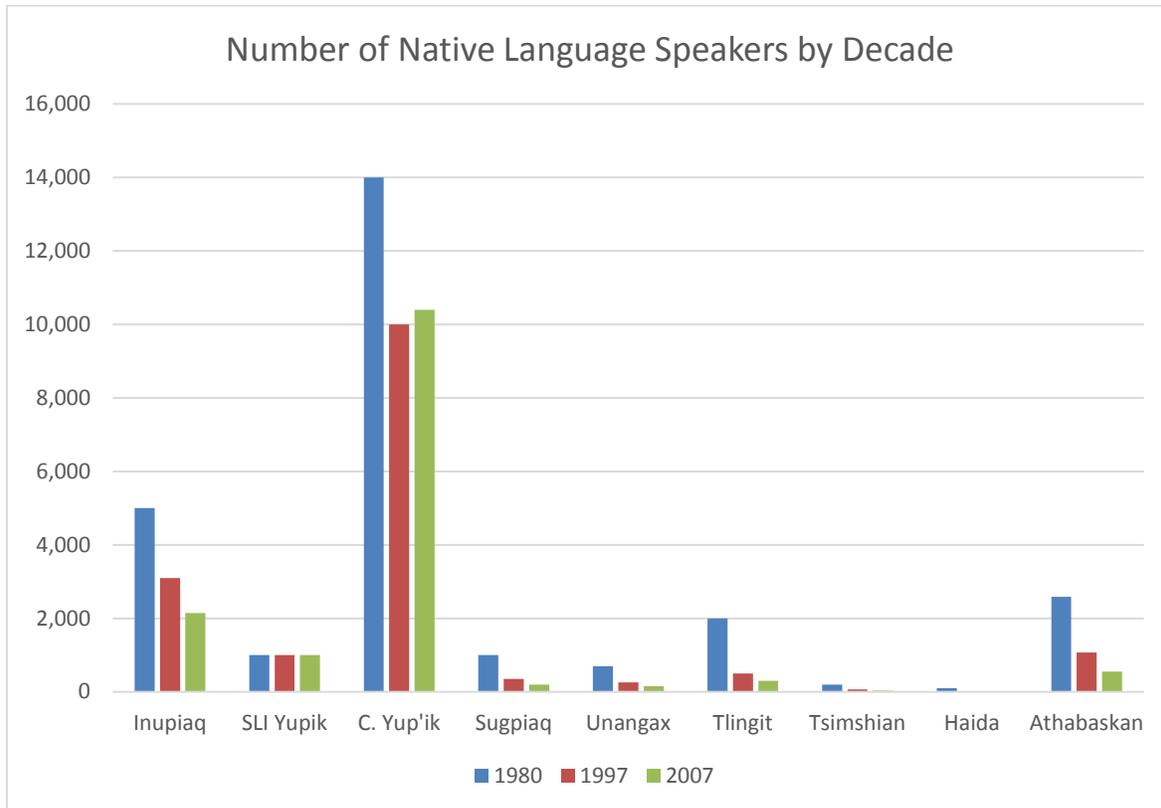
1. Clarify and strengthen the wording in AS 14.30.420 to 1) make it clear that the statute applies to *every school* which has a majority of students who are Alaska Natives and that 2) school districts *shall* offer instruction in the local Alaska Native language(s) if their local Native language curriculum advisory board directs them to.
2. Clearly indicate that it is the policy of the State of Alaska to promote the establishment and functioning of Alaska Native language immersion schools wherever possible.
3. Authorize the creation of an Alaska Native School Board that would represent and promote Alaska Native tribal and charter schools across Alaska.
4. Support the use of Alaska Native place names wherever and whenever possible in Alaska, including the recognition of traditional Alaska Native place names, and the use of such place names in State-supported projects and in public signage.
5. Apologize on behalf of the State of Alaska for the earlier role that Alaska had in suppressing and forbidding Alaska Native languages in village schools and in boarding schools across the state.
6. Direct all branches of the University of Alaska to provide high-quality instruction, leading to fluency, in the Alaska Native language(s) Indigenous to the region of each of its campuses, and to partner with other Alaskan organizations to underwrite tuition costs for all students for their Alaska Native language coursework.

The following two charts portray trends in the number of Alaska Native language speakers since 1980. The first chart shows that, while the number of Alaska Native peoples overall has increased, the number of Alaska Native language speakers has decreased. The second chart breaks down the number of speakers over time, divided into language groupings. There is a consistent trend for every Alaska Native language; the apparent increase in the number of Central Yup'ik speakers from 1997 to 2007 appears to be an error in the 2007 estimate by the Alaska Native Language Center.

Note that the 2007 figures are rough estimates. For 2017, we know that the language situation has declined substantially. It appears likely that there now are fewer than 10,000 speakers of Central Yup'ik, fewer than 2,500 speakers of Iñupiaq, fewer than 1000 speakers of St. Lawrence Island Yupik, fewer than 200 speakers of Unangax Aleut, and fewer than 50 speakers of Alutiiq (Sugt'stun). Gwich'in has fewer than 300 speakers, Koyukon fewer than 200 speakers, Tlingit is down to about 50 or 60 fluent speakers, and Tanacross has fewer than 50 speakers. Tanana, Dena'ina, and Ahtna each have about 25 fluent speakers; languages with fewer than 10 speakers each in Alaska include Haida, Tsimshian, Han, Deg Xit'an, Holikachuk, Upper Kuskokwim, and Upper Tanana.

The precise number of speakers currently is difficult to assess because we still need an accurate survey of Alaska Native speakers: those speakers who learned it as a first language plus those who have learned it as a second language. This important work, vital to making accurate language plans, is part of the effort for which the Council seeks funding.





4. HISTORICAL TRAUMA RELATED TO LANGUAGE LOSS

4.1 Historical Trauma

Finding: Significant historical trauma documented due to language loss; the loss of heritage languages has created additional traumas which reverberate through subsequent generations.

Policy Making Recommendation: Modeled after Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, we urge the State of Alaska 1) to sponsor a series of listening sessions around Alaska, to allow people to come together and talk about what they went through, what their ancestors may have gone through, and 2) to encourage partnering with communities and Indigenous organizations to hold healing ceremonies. These instances of historical trauma need to be documented, publically recognized, and survivors need to be provided with options for healing.

Individuals and Communities Recommendation: Tribes and non-profit organizations are urged to host community-based healing sessions, along the lines of Calricaraq, the “Healthy Living” program created by the Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation’s Behavioral Health Department.

Alaska Native peoples have always had their own systems of education within the residential family, the extended family, and the community. For thousands of years, structured play, observation, careful apprenticeships with family members, and careful stories of instruction have educated each generation in what they needed to know to survive and thrive.

"There is trauma connected to language loss, and healing associated with language revitalization. This historical trauma was passed from one generation to the next. The first generations of language speakers were punished for speaking in their first language. In turn, they spoke to their children in English." –Yaayuk Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle

Schools, by way of contrast, were something different: organized structures in which students are to be educated by strangers. The Russians created a few schools in the early 1800s, for children of Alaska Native mothers and Russian fathers. In these schools, children were taught to read and write in Russian as well as in their own, Native languages; the Russians, working with Alaska Natives, developed alphabets for five languages: Unangam Tunuu (Unangax Aleut), Alutiiq (Sugt'stun), Central Yup'ik, Dena'ina, and Tlingit (Krauss 1980).

Almost two decades after Russia's sale of their Alaskan claim to the United States, the U.S. federal government became involved in public schooling in the Territory of Alaska. In this, Sheldon Jackson (below) instituted a formal program aimed to eliminate all Alaska Native languages. Forceful and violent oppression of children speaking their home languages—both in village schools and in boarding schools—took its toll in obvious and subtle ways. Many who experienced this first-hand made the conscious decision to save their own children from such hateful treatment and, therefore, did not pass their own language on. For other parents, it was not so much a conscious decision but the subconscious result of the "brainwashing" provided by non-Native schools that led them to speak only English to their own children. Both often had the same result: for many parts of Native Alaska, the violent English-only policies of the schools led to a disconnect between the generations, halting the transmittal of language and depriving further generations of their traditional language.

Official U.S. policies since the 1880s actively worked to destroy Alaska Native languages, along with all other important aspects of Alaska Native life. The missionary, Sheldon Jackson, was appointed federal minister for education in Alaska in 1885 and immediately forbade the use of Alaska Native languages in all schools. Teachers were instructed to punish students for speaking their own languages in schools and teachers were forbidden to learn their students' languages; additionally, teachers were supposed to convince parents not to speak their own language to their own children. (Krauss 1980).

"[W]e required them to speak nothing but English except by permission; but they often would get into the washroom or in the wood shed, and having set a watch, they would indulge in a good Indian talk. A few cases of this kind, and we applied a heroic remedy to stop it. We obtained a bottle of myrrh and capsicum: myrrh is bitter as gall and capsicum hot like fire."

– Charles Replogle, 1904, 'Among the Indians of Alaska'. London: Headley Brothers
(See Appendix H for the full quote)



U.S. Government School. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collection Division

Additional forces of assimilation were the largely involuntary boarding school programs which removed young Native American children from their homes for months or years at a time. There, not only were their home languages forbidden, but they were largely boarded with students of other Native languages, leaving English as the one, common language. As part of the “kill the Indian, save the man” point of view, English-only schools promoted the concept that “civilized” Natives were those who no longer spoke their own languages, ate their own foods, wore their own clothes, or lived lifestyles of their own choosing (see Hirshberg and Sharp 2005).

Small changes in this English-only policy in Alaskan schools began with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the Lower Kuskokwim region in 1969 when they designed an experimental program of “Yup’ik First Education” for students who spoke only Yup’ik. In the fall of 1970, one kindergarten in Bethel and one each in four Yup’ik villages piloted a program of teaching Yup’ik speaking children in their own language. The results were so profoundly superior to the previous English-only schooling that the BIA quickly expanded it to several other Lower Kuskokwim schools. Also during the early 1970s—partially in response to the 1968 federal Bilingual Education Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (which authorized bilingual education in the United States) some public schools in Alaska Native villages began to offer small amounts of instruction in local Native languages. Not all Alaska Native communities have had Native language programs in their local schools and—sadly—almost all such school programs provide only very short amounts of time for instruction in the local language.

Schools in Alaska have historically played a major role in undermining and threatening the survival of Alaska Native languages. Even though school-based programs alone cannot reverse the decline in Alaska Native languages, highly effective programs in schools can increase the number of fluent language

speakers. Sadly, most Alaskan schools and school districts do very little or nothing to support Alaska Native languages and several school districts are not in compliance with AS 14.30.420 (see Appendix B).

It is indeed unfortunate that the number of speakers of Alaska Native languages has continued to decline even after the languages were no longer officially forbidden. Part of this is due to continued prejudice against Alaska Native languages in the schools—and generally in public places—in Alaska.

The ANLPAC recognizes that four generations of Alaska Native children who were punished for speaking their languages created huge problems for those generations, contributing to part of a larger, longer history of damage inflicted upon them. Additionally, the children and grandchildren of those punished for speaking their language have inherited their own trauma and grief in being denied what is their birthright—the ability to speak their heritage language. While some might feel that language loss and its associated suffering is in the past, many who spoke out in public testimony to the Council expressed ongoing trauma because of language suppression and the continued erosion of Alaska Native languages and cultures. While this finding may be surprising or discomfiting to many, it was clear from public testimony collected by the Council that historic wounds run deep and are exacerbated by the continued struggles of individuals and communities to retain their languages. This intergenerational trauma will continue to shadow Alaskan communities unless widespread reconciliation is achieved. To transcend these traumas, Alaska Native peoples need to re-frame our ideology, to decolonize our minds.

4.2 Honoring Loss, Promoting Healing

Finding: Generations of physical and psychological punishments in local schools and in boarding schools for speaking their own languages not only traumatized those who received the punishments directly but have created additional problems for the generations who have been unjustly denied the heritage languages that are their due inheritance. The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs in 2000 formally apologized for its role in the destruction of Native American peoples, cultures, and languages. The U.S. Congress in 2009 formally apologized in Public Law 111-118, Section 8113, stating that:

“[T]he United States, acting through Congress—

- Recognizes that there have been years of official depredations, ill-conceived policies, and the breaking of covenants by the Federal Government regarding Indian tribes;
- Apologizes on behalf of the people of the United States to all Native peoples for the many instances of violence, maltreatment, and neglect inflicted on Native peoples by the citizens of the United States; and
- Urges the President to acknowledge the wrongs of the United States against Indian tribes in the history of the United States in order to bring healing to this land.”

“We need to apologize to our young people and children that we didn’t speak to them like our grandparents and parents did for us. Since we haven’t spoken to them in our Native language some unspoken rules or protocols are forgotten. We need to reconcile our intergenerational grief of losing our languages. On behalf of the King Island Native Community elders committee, I apologized to the young shareholders of King Island Native Corporation. I had to think of a way to honor every generation because the letter dealt with sensitive issues around Native dancing.” – Yaayuk Bernadette Alvanna-Stimpfle

The ANLPAC has repeated this process of public apology several times, inviting first fluent speakers to stand, and then inviting non-speakers to stand. When they do so, only about one quarter of the room stands up as speakers; three-quarters stand up as non-speakers. The Council has found that this helps people heal and realize that they can move on, ready for language acquisition of their heritage languages.

Policy Making Recommendation: In order to localize these apologies from the federal government to Alaska, the ANLPAC calls on the Alaskan legislature to provide a formal apology, on behalf of all Alaskans, to the generations of Alaska Natives who were involuntarily separated from their families and home communities and sent away to boarding schools. The Council realizes that this Governor and Legislature had nothing to do with creating this problem themselves but they can have a very constructive role in healing through the public acknowledgement and apology to Alaska Native peoples.



Letting go as a step in healing: burning hand-written notes by Alaska Natives who had expressed their own personal grief over language loss and the system that created that loss; summer solstice 2017, near the Arctic Circle.

“At the core of many problems in the Alaska Native community are unhealed psychological and spiritual wounds and unresolved grief brought on by a century-long history of deaths by epidemics and cultural and political deprivation at others’ hands; some of the more tragic consequences include the erosion of Native languages in which are couched the full cultural understanding, and the erosion of cultural values.”

- Alaska Natives Commission Final Report, 1999.

There are outstanding examples of Indigenous, community-based efforts in Alaska of Indigenous peoples working to recognize and recover from historical trauma. One of these is the Qungasvik Project which addresses trauma, language loss, cultural loss, and moving forward (UAF’s Center for Alaska Native Health Research: Stacy Rasmus, Ph.D.). Another outstanding example is Rose Domnick’s structured talking circles which allow participants to experience different community interaction styles through the way people are standing—together or apart—within a series of concentric circles.

5. DECOLONIZATION

Finding: Decolonization is a powerful way to heal from historical trauma.

Individuals and Communities Recommendation: Alaska Native groups and organizations are urged to hold decolonization sessions with facilitators who are familiar with this type of work. This is where people can brainstorm and strategize how to best teach Indigenous peoples to reclaim their languages through cultural activities.

Decolonization for Indigenous peoples is a way of exploring how learning takes place from their own worldview in their Native language. Since colonization took place for Alaska Natives, many young Natives were sent away to boarding schools, thus losing a critical part of learning to become parents to the next generations. Education was taught only in English, where the Native language was not tolerated. In this way, Native peoples became “brainwashed” or colonized to teach using English only and using typical English ways of teaching instead of using their cultural ways.

“If times change, can we make new realities too? Can we also dare to be brave, and long once again to be free? If there is anything that we need to reclaim most of all in translating the ideas of mana motuhake of self-determination into action, it is the belief in our right to be free. If colonization does more than anything else to damage our people, it is to make our people lose faith in ourselves.”

– Moana Jackson. He Manawa Whenua 2017 Day 3. Te Kotahi Research Institute. YouTube.

Retrieved from youtu.be/zV2P0RbBQsM

Decolonization is a process of establishing resiliency by building on a community's own strengths and protective factors. It is a process of facilitated consciousness-raising and awareness-building for Indigenous communities to reverse the negative effects of historical trauma that result from generations of colonization from a dominant culture.

“The social settings of the non-Indigenous world into which Maori people were compelled to move—such as the school, the health system, the welfare system, the justice system—have at the same time provided researchers with a point of entry into Maori society. Essentially, this has been crisis research, directed at explaining the causes of Maori failure and supposedly solving Maori problems.”

– Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*

What results is a powerful expression of an Indigenous community's self-determination based on a community's own definition of healing and cultural practice. This results in both a shift in mindset around their collective history, but also recognition of cultural strengths and values.

Critical to this work is the Indigenous community's own ability to heal themselves as a result of deeply-rooted traditional and cultural practice and that each community focuses on building in resiliency in order to overcome adversity.

“...colonization is not some abstract theory. It is a belief assumed by most of the states in Europe that they had the right to dispossess Indigenous peoples who had done them no harm and posed no threat, and that presumption in itself is an act of violence...”

– Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, *‘Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples’*
(See Appendix H for the full quote)

“...we’re working at ways where we can actually make systematic change, not just ‘let’s change something in this one classroom’. We want to make systematic change.”

– Siqupsiraa Pauline Harvey, AFN meeting of ANLPAC, October 20, 2017
(See Appendix H for the full quote)

6. LANGUAGE NORMALIZATION

Finding: Language normalization is an important part of a community's overall language revitalization. There is a need for some speakers to become highly fluent and become teachers of others. But for those who have no intention of becoming fluent, language normalization helps support those in the community who are learning the language.

Recommendation (to policy makers, statewide institutions, and individuals and communities: The Council strongly urges individual people, Native communities, regional corporations, institutions, radio and television stations, and all branches of the State of Alaska to find ways of using Alaska Native languages in their daily operations.

One of the goals throughout Alaska should be working towards the normalization of its Indigenous languages. Normalization means that it is common to hear and see a language. One of the challenges that Alaska Native languages face is a reduction in the places that it is spoken and the subjects that the language discusses. It is important for Alaskans to understand that this did not occur through any sort of natural process, but is the result of generations of cultural oppression and discrimination. Language communities can strategize on places they want to take their language and then collect or develop the vocabulary needed to take the language into that domain. For example, if a community would like to play basketball in the language, then work needs to be done to gather or create all of the things that players might want to say in that realm and then make sure there are ways to teach and have it available. Once that is done, then the language can be taken into that domain.

On a larger level, language normalization can be viewed as a series of interlocking components. The level of work and focus needed in each of these areas to create normalization will vary within languages and communities.

6.1 Fluency

Fluency refers to an individual's familiarity with the language. At the most basic level, it comes down to the likelihood that something being said is understood (comprehension) and the likelihood that someone can say what they would like to in the language (speech). Communities might consider conducting studies to determine what is possible at different levels of fluency, and then develop concerted efforts to help everyone reach high levels of fluency as quickly as possible. Within the realm of fluency there are a number of critical factors that determine whether an individual will reach fluency and how long that might take.

Language communities need to keep many factors in mind, such as historical trauma, guilt, shame, lateral violence, and value shifts that leave the language as more of an occasional hobby than a way of life. Advocates for languages should be pushing their community members to maximize their time in the language and to make it the language of power and use as often as possible. If the language is around and has genuine social uses and benefits, then the path to fluency is clearer and more possible.

“[W]e always focus on fluency, fluency, fluency, fluency, fluency. And because of that—and that's what we've been doing in Kodiak; we want to get people fluent. We're desperate to get people fluent. But the message that they brought home was that sometimes that sort of communication style of, you know, fluency or bust can maybe drive people away. And that perhaps focusing on language normalization throughout the community, getting a lot of people a little bit familiar with the language might be sort of the new wave of these language movements.” – April Counciller, AFN, October 20th 2017

At the ANLPAC’s 2017 workshop at the Alaska Federation of Natives, special Hawaiian guest, Amy Kalili, responded that the Hawaiians are focusing on expanding their language efforts. She said that they now realize that there is a core group of language activists who are becoming highly fluent in the language—and that is critical for the survival of their language. Highly fluent speakers are needed to become language teachers and models for future generations. But at the same time, an even larger number of Hawaiians can be a real part of language revitalization, learning and speaking some Hawaiian in daily life, supporting the revitalization by making the language heard around the islands.

It is critical to increase the number of fluent speakers, a number that presently is decreasing in every Alaska Native language. Fluency does not mean speaking a language perfectly; rather, it means being able to converse on most any topic that the speaker is knowledgeable about. Our fluent speakers who learned Alaska Native languages as young children are our valuable resource for bringing new life to our languages. Additionally important are the new, younger, second-language learners who have achieved fluency in an Alaska Native language; these dedicated individuals are the inspiration to us all.

There are levels of conversational ability that come before fluency in a language. Conversational speakers of a language can hold up their ends of conversation, maybe for only five minutes, maybe for a half an hour, before they reach a “wall” and are not able to express themselves further. Such conversational abilities are very important milestones on the way to fluency in a language and are worthy goals of themselves; even if a learner does not go beyond conversational ability to fluency, they still have become a member of that language’s speech community and are an important part in bringing Alaska Native languages back to their rightful places in Alaska.

6.2 Normalization

As one moves around in a community, they will notice how present the Indigenous language of that place is. Normalization answers the question: how familiar is the language within the landscape? How likely are we to hear the language on the land and in the homes and institutions that are there? How likely are we to see the language and how likely are the residents of the community to recognize what they are seeing when looking at written forms of the language or hearing it? One of the outcomes of colonization is often alienation of Indigenous languages from the land and its people.

Language communities should make normalization an active part of their planning and policy processes. These discussions might begin with listing all the places where the language should be heard and seen and then developing and executing plans that put the language back onto the land.

Alaska Native languages are *modern* languages with deep historical roots. They have evolved with the people for millennia and continue to do so. They are not “quaint” or just something that elders can use. Alaska Native languages can be used to express the real lives of modern, 21st century Alaskans. All Alaska Native languages have functional alphabets and have books which have been published in them.

Many Alaskans have visited our sister state of Hawai‘i and noticed the prominent, public places in which one hears Hawaiian language spoken and sees it in writing. Through the diligent work of more than two generations of Hawaiian language activists, the Hawaiian language is now a familiar and *expected* part of the linguistic landscape of the Islands.

“I mean, why do you got to say hi? You say Aloha. We're in Hawai'i. Anybody can say Aloha. It's not hard to say and it should kind of be normal.” – Amy Kalili

We are making small steps in the right direction in Alaska but need to work together to bring Alaska Native language back to the point where we hear them spoken every day and expect to hear them every day.

Although there are some uses of Alaska Native languages in signs around towns and along highways in Alaska, we know that many businesses, public offices, and public places can make use of Alaska Native signage to make all people feel welcome and to let everyone in Alaska know that Alaska Native languages are home here.

6.3 Vernacularization

Another term related to normalization is vernacularization, which is sometimes referred to as re-vernacularization for Indigenous communities. This is a complex word for a relatively simple topic. When community members talk about day to day topics, how likely are they to utilize the Indigenous language? When languages are threatened, and even when they are focused intensely upon in revitalization efforts, the language often becomes a type of handshake where an initial greeting is made in the language—but then the conversation quickly shifts to English.

Another common part of a language being reduced in places and ways it is used is that the language becomes too sacred to bring into daily parts of life. The result is that the Indigenous language become ceremonial and every act in the language becomes a cultural performance with increased pressure and scrutiny. While Indigenous languages should be the languages of ceremony, they also must be taken into the streets and the homes, which requires using it for daily conversation about a wide variety of topics without the heightened realm of ceremony.

To ensure that this happens in a way that is balanced, conversations must occur about what is culturally appropriate in which situations, and strategies must ensure that the language can fit any situation with any audience.

6.4 Reclamation

In most of Alaska, concerted efforts were made to keep the language out of certain social and physical spaces. As language planners map out the areas where they would like to take their language, or to make sure that it remains there, they might adopt the term “domain reclamation.” For some areas, they may find that there is resistance or violence when it comes to bringing their language into certain spaces. For example, elderly speakers might grow uncomfortable or experience traumas when speaking the language in a place where they were shamed and punished for speaking it. This could happen in an immersion language gathering at a boarding school.

Also, it is common for Indigenous communities to keep their own language out of certain social realms that are under their control. This could be a board meeting or other type of meetings where English has become customary. As part of reclaiming our languages, we may need to expand our comfort zone and begin to use our languages—very intentionally—at public meetings where English has taken over.

6.5 Democratization

Democratization of Indigenous languages means putting control over the languages into the hands of the Indigenous peoples themselves. Our Alaska Native languages belong to the Native peoples, not to the (non-Native) linguists who have worked on them. It is a sense of ownership and decision-making of our own languages by our own people. On a larger level, language normalization can be viewed as a series of interlocking components. The level of work and focus needed in each of these areas to create normalization will vary within languages and communities. We need to find ways of making our languages accessible to everyone who wants to use them and to include everyone who wishes to use them. We must take ownership of our languages ourselves and not wait around for other people to decide for us.

6.6 Alaska Native Place Names

Finding: The Council encourages the reclamation of Alaska Native place names throughout the state, including local, state, and federal usage in signage and maps. Some progress is being made. The U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Sally Jewel, in September, 2015, ordered that North America’s highest mountain have its traditional Koyukon Athabascan name, Denali, recognized—in lieu of the former name for Ohio’s 1896 presidential candidate, McKinley.

Three rivers in Gwich’in country have had their traditional Gwich’in names recognized in 2015 for use on federal maps, replacing English or French language names given in the late 19th century: Ch’idriinjik River, Teedriinjik River, and K’iidootinjik River.

Recommendation (to policy makers, statewide institutions, and individuals and communities): The Council calls on all state, borough, city, and other regional groups to consider using traditional, Alaska Native place names when the local community desires and, to the degree possible, to recognize these

names formally with the state and federal governments and to use these names in maps, signage, publications, and school curricula. Information on proposing to restore traditional place names in Alaska may be found at: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha/designations/geonames.htm>

7. HEALTHY LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENTS

Finding: Dialect and regional variations are normal and signs of a healthy language (speakers should not be discouraging the diversity of our languages). For thousands of years, most Alaska Natives have been able to speak more than one language variety. Dialect differences are an ancient, authentic part of Alaska Native languages and teachers and learners are encouraged to learn and share dialectal variations as a rich part of their heritage.

Individuals and Communities Recommendation: Learners should not be made fun of, neither for their mistakes as learners nor for their use of dialectally different words.

Individuals and Communities Recommendation: As parents and as teachers, we need to love our children through our languages, creating loving environments that support healthy development and social identity along with multilingualism. For older learners, we need to remember how we treat infants when they first begin talking; we don't criticize them, but encourage them and celebrate their attempts.

Statewide Institutions Recommendation: The many institutions which work to support the survival of Alaska Native languages are urged to network with each other, utilizing their strengths, and leveraging these strengths, and assessing where more work is still needed. The way that regional health corporations in Alaska now link local, regional, and state efforts is an inspiring structure.

Even though we recognize that learners make mistakes—and these can seem humorous to fluent speakers—we all must work to make sure that learners are always encouraged, not discouraged, from speaking as they are able to do so. We must refrain from telling learners “Say it right or don't speak it at all.” We must give people the time and space to learn. We must have patience. For language learners, they are as children experiencing a re-birth as Alaska Native language speakers. Let us be as patient with them as we are with infants. Even for adults who are learning an Alaska Native language, we must remember to be gentle and encouraging with them, not discouraging them for their learners' mistakes. If learners are overly criticized for their efforts, this criticism becomes an affective filter (Dulay and Burt 1977; Krashen 1998), an emotional block, creating discouragement in the minds of the learners. In extreme cases, this can become shaming of learners, because of being shamed for their incorrect formation of words and phrases or even because of dialect differences.

"[I]t's also sort of interesting when we have people from Outside. We have a number of non-Native learners that have come in. And the elders love them. And if they even get close they're like, Wow. And then our own people, they're like, 'No. That's not how you say it. What village are you from anyway?' You know, so we're harder on each other than we are on those who come from the outside." – Anonymous, AFN, October 20, 2016



Kodiak and Chugach language speakers enjoy "Iqalluguwa" (Go Fish) at the 2016 Alutiiq Language Summit

8. ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES AND VOTING RIGHTS

Toyukak v Mallott

In November of 2014, Judge Sharon L. Gleason signed into effect the Toyukak Settlement (Settlement), resolving litigation that was brought forth by the Native American Rights Fund on behalf of plaintiffs in the Kusilvak, Dillingham, and Yukon-Koyukuk census areas against the State of Alaska (State) Division of Elections (Division, DOE), which is headed by the Lieutenant Governor's Office. Lt. Governor, Byron Mallott, recognizing the validity of plaintiffs' claims that the communities identified in the settlement were in need of language assistance in order to fully participate in the electoral process, supported efforts made by the Division to comply with the terms and the spirit of the Toyukak Settlement. As a result of the Settlement, DOE expanded its language assistance offering in 2015, and more fully in 2016, to provide translated election materials, convene language panels, and train bilingual workers for the Primary, REAA, and General elections in the Dillingham Census Area, Kusilvak Census Area, and Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area in the languages specified: Bristol Bay Yup'ik, Chevak Cup'ik, Hooper Bay Yup'ik, Yukon Yup'ik, Norton Sound Kotlik Yup'ik, General Central Yup'ik, and Gwich'in. Nunivak Cup'ig was also part of the settlement but as per the settlement, materials were not translated since it was not

requested by any of the communities in the region for the 2016 election cycle; however, in 2017 efforts began to translate materials into Cup'ig in preparation for the 2018 election cycle.

Languages Covered

Language Assistance for elections in the State of Alaska is determined by federal laws and regulations, specifically, the Voting Rights Act, Section 203. Section 203 language needs are determined via a formula applied by the U.S. Census; these determinations are binding and cannot be contested or modified. While the variables of the formula are known, the process and weights of these variables are unknown. Section 203 determinations are made every five years for minority languages; the latest was made in December of 2016. The State is therefore bound by both, Section 203 and the Toyukak Settlement, and must comply with both. Currently, all Settlement communities and languages are also covered under section 203, but not all section 203 communities and languages are covered under the Settlement. This adds complexity to the Division's efforts and strategies for allocating resources in order to meet the requirements of both legal mandates. Under current section 203 and the Settlement, the following languages are identified for translations in particular areas: Bristol Bay Yup'ik, General Central Yup'ik, Hooper Bay Yup'ik, Chevak Cup'ik, Norton Sound Kotlik Yup'ik, Yukon Yup'ik, Nunivak Cup'ig, Gwich'in, Koyukon Athabascan, Siberian Yupik, Inupiaq, Iñupiaq, Spanish, and Tagalog. New language families added under the new section 203 determinations include Aleut and Athabascan across a wider area of Alaska; in addition, the recent determinations reflect geographical changes for Yup'ik and Inupiaq/Iñupiaq coverage. In a recent Alaska Advisory Commission on Civil Rights hearing, it was noted that Koliganek was in need of translations in its own dialect and, therefore, the division has taken proactive measures to produce translations in the appropriate dialect.

Alaska Native Language Materials Produced

The Division of Elections has ongoing efforts to translate sample ballots for all state, federal, and REAA elections. In addition, the division translates Election Day phrases, Official Election Pamphlets, election term glossaries containing 180 terms, ballot measures, candidate statements, and public service announcement and advertisements. Audio materials are also produced of the materials translated.

"I'm so pleased that this case has finally been settled and we can move forwards. This settlement will strengthen our election process so that voters can have the opportunity to understand fully all voting information before they vote." – Lt. Governor Byron Mallott



Alutiiq oil lamp, photo taken at the 2016 Alutiiq Language Campout in Kodiak, AK. Photo by April Counciller

9. BEST PRACTICES FOR LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

Finding: A century of research on language teaching, and many decades of research on language revitalization, have demonstrated that there are language teaching strategies, and language revitalization strategies, which effectively promote the learning of languages and the survival of languages which have been suffering decline.

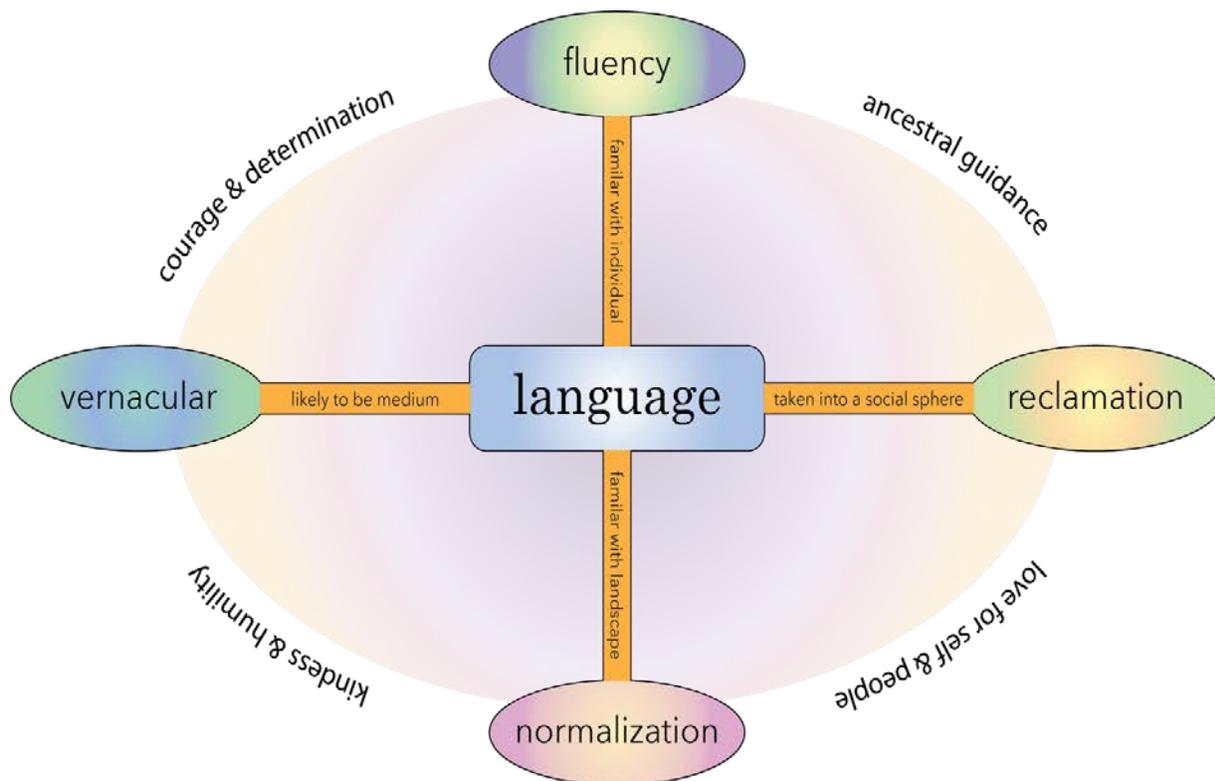
Policy Maker Recommendation: Indigenous individuals and their communities can take charge of revitalizing their languages through effective language teaching strategies and language planning for language survival. The demographic status of each language needs to be considered as individuals and communities make language plans.

Language revitalization—which involves bringing a language back to stability—and language maintenance—which is keeping a language from becoming endangered—are theoretically straightforward processes. Dr. William “Pila” Wilson has said that language revitalization is about two things: 1) protecting the speakers you have while making new ones, and 2) making sure your language is the language of power and use. To put it plainly, the primary goals are to make sure there is a stable population of speakers—which most often means creating more speakers than are lost—and making

sure the language is used in as many places as possible to communicate about as many things as possible. For languages to regain their place in populations that reside on that languages' ancestral territory; language planning efforts should be specific, decisive, and informed by local, regional, statewide, and national power structures and social tendencies.

The situation of Alaska Native languages and their health and stability is complicated by colonialism, oppression, value shift, fragmentation, and institutional racism. Stabilizing Indigenous languages is never about the language in isolation, because language stability requires dramatic social shift in the face of historical and ongoing marginalization and hierarchies of racial and therefore linguistic superiority. As Margaret Noor states in her article on language activities in the language of Anishinaabemowin, "Ultimately, saving a language that is endangered as a result of racism is in fact a battle with racism itself. Families and communities can come together or disassemble as a result of making a commitment to face and change racism" (137). As we begin to examine best practices and explore methods of replicating them in Alaska, care should be taken to consider the ways that colonialism has impacted communities and the ways that colonialism creates ongoing oppressions for Indigenous languages and their speaking communities.

While the social dynamics and stability of all languages vary dramatically, the path to language stability can be represented by the following graphic.



A living language can be analyzed in the following areas:

- Fluency is how familiar the language is to its population; how likely is a person in the language community to understand what is being said or to communicate what they would like to say?
- Normalization is how familiar the language is with the landscape; how likely is a person to encounter the language in written and spoken forms in various places, and what expectations are placed upon people to know the language?
- Reclamation is the strategic identification of places where the language should be taken; does the population know how to talk in detail about subjects (register) in all the social areas where its population speaks (domain)?
- Vernacularization is the likelihood that the language is the language choice in given situations—the day to day common language; how likely are speakers to use the language and stay in it regardless of content and social situations?



A young learner held by fluent Elder Irene Coyle participates in group introductions at the 2016 Alutiiq Language Summit.

Language planning efforts should keep these areas in mind, developing strategies to help in each area while employing relevant cultural values that create places where the language has social power and relevant use. To combat fragmentation—which is the division of a society into interest groups or political spheres—Indigenous populations must be able to put the health of the language at the forefront of its consciousness. Far too often Indigenous languages are used as political tools during election seasons instead of as the keys to spiritual and epistemological sovereignty that they truly are. In

other cases, personal feelings of dislike or jealousy create divisions, arguments, and criticisms while languages continue to suffer in isolated pockets of fragmented peoples.

Bringing a language to stability means examining the social tendencies of its population and empowering its people to create a world where the language rises above fragmentation, colonial forces, standardized education, and racist hierarchies. Doing so requires regular dialogue that is rooted in respect and being unafraid to work through difficult topics and internal and external changes that are needed in order to create genuine and long-lasting change.



Sperry Ash of Nanwalek speaks with Kaguyak/Akhiok Elder Phyllis Peterson and Woody Island/Old Harbor Elder Paul Kahutak.

The strategies employed for establishing or maintaining language vitality will vary, but can generally fall into one of the following categories:

- Language Maintenance is intended for languages that already have stable fluency levels and places where the language is spoken. Efforts undertaken are intended to prevent language shift and loss.
- Language Revitalization is intended for languages that have low fluency levels and few places where the language is spoken. The goal of planning and activities is to increase the number of speakers and the number of places where the language is used.
- Language Revival is intended for languages that no longer have fluent speakers or have so few fluent speakers that the language has to be reconstructed in order to make it a language of use and power.

The methods employed worldwide that have created the most positive changes for Indigenous languages involve the following areas of deliberate social change:

- **Language Nests.** These are efforts to create a home environment where children are raised entirely in the Indigenous language. The most notable examples are the Te Kohanga Reo among the Māori of New Zealand and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo in Hawai'i, which have resulted in the creation of birth speakers of languages that were once critically endangered and now count their speakers in tens of thousands.
- **Language Immersion Schools.** These are elementary schools in which students who already speak a national language (such as English) receive all of their K-2 schooling entirely in a new language; by grade three, English language arts are added. Additional academic topics are switched to English so that by fifth and sixth grade, students receive half of the instruction in each language. Such immersion schools have a 50-year track record of proven success across Canada and the U.S.A. in producing elementary school graduates who are highly fluent in both languages and who are superior in the performance in English, science, mathematics, and social studies when compared with English-only elementary school graduates.
- **Language Medium Schools.** These are K-12 schools that utilize the Indigenous language as a medium of education (teaching through the language as opposed to learning about the language). The most successful example of this is the Ke Kula 'O Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u (Nāwahī for short), which has a strong history of protesting standardized testing and has maintained a 100% graduation rate and 80% college placement rate for the past 20 years.
- **Adult Immersion Programs.** These are designed to create speakers out of adults who have some knowledge of the language and can commit to living in a language home for months to years at a time. The most successful example of this is the adult immersion program in the Mohawk language at Six Nations, which has created a new generation of language speakers and teachers and shifted their language program away from always translating to producing Indigenous language content.
- **Master-Apprentice Programs.** These are designed for languages with very few fluent speakers remaining, pairing them with intermediate-level speakers whose job is to spend at least ten or twenty hours a week, living completely in the language. The most successful examples have come out of California where the approach was designed by Julian Lang (Karuk) and UC Berkeley linguist, Leanne Hinton, in 1992.
- **Bilingual Education Programs.** These are education programs at various levels of education and in communities that are designed to create speakers through sequenced curriculum that teaches vocabulary and grammar through a variety of activities in and out of classrooms. This is the most common effort, and the most successful programs may produce speakers who reach an intermediate-high level of understanding and speaking after two years.
- **Community Education & Awareness Programs.** These are programs that exist at the community level as "language circles" and other gatherings that are often informal and unstructured. They are often less intimidating than highly-structured programs and can adjust their activities based on the experiences and levels of participants.



Cook Inlet Native Head Start Immersion (Yup'ik), Anchorage.



Raphael and Vivian Jimmy with Yup'ik darts, Yup'ik immersion class, Alaska Native Heritage Center, 2017



Alutiiq (Sugt'stun) language class, "Where Are Your Keys" (WAYK) method, with Evan Gardner in Kodiak



Tlingit Language Mentor Florence Sheakley and apprentices Michelle Martin and Mary Folletti. Sealaska Heritage Institute

“A common problem, with only a few elders as fluent speakers, is thinking that first priority is putting the elders into elementary classrooms for several minutes a day in each class. This cannot lead to fluency for learners quickly enough. Rather, master-apprentice language teams are the best practice when the only fluent speakers are 70+ years old; make new, fluent, L2 speakers ages 20-60 as quickly as possible! The new, fluent speakers can then effectively 1) train their own apprentices and 2) teach children and families in organized classes.” – Roy Mitchell, linguistic anthropologist

Indigenous language planners should examine these models and implement them with methodologies that are effective for their communities. Children who are fortunate to grow up with the language will learn differently from those who do not, and people who could speak as children will have different abilities and needs compared to people who have never been exposed to the language. The key is to stay dynamic and flexible, to be connected to effective language programs and to avoid locking into methods or philosophies that seem like a fix-all solution that works with any language in any situation.

The programs and activities developed should also be culturally appropriate and should generally encourage unity and equal participation. Language planners should be ready, though, to take their language into new situations and places. Sometimes programs lock themselves into doing things the way they always have, but their languages are already endangered and used in too few ways and places to be in a situation of stability.

One goal would be to say, “our language is used for everything by everyone within our territory and where our people travel.” Sometimes people are nervous to talk in their language about changing diapers, death, romance, community scandal, global politics, celebrity gossip, etc. If a language is made too sacred to use for mundane tasks, then it is destined to obscurity. When a language is what the people choose to use on a daily basis for all types of situations, and is owned by a collective, then it is much more likely to remain stable.

Successful programs inevitably encounter controversy, with community members making statements like, “they think they’re so much better than us.” This comes back to fragmentation and the plurality of ideologies in language planning. When working together, we might find that there are shared strategies that might help keep language programs on track and focused on the ultimate goal of protecting speakers while making new ones.

“School students in large towns should have their languages offered in schools, even if there was only one student taking the class. We, from this land, don't have the numbers to support the salary for a language teacher in large towns. And for a child to have to travel from one end of town to attend an evening class once or twice a week at the other end of town, it isn't right. Are we sub-standard that we can't have the same standards as those who are learning other languages?” –Freda Dan (Yup'ik, Stebbins and Anchorage), October 2017



Nikaitchuat Iḷisaḡviat, an Iñupiaq language immersion preschool in Kotzebue, 2015

Around the world—in other parts of Indigenous North America and the Pacific and beyond—there are success stories of Indigenous communities which have stabilized or revitalized their languages. The most powerful successes in creating new speakers are coming from language nests and language immersion schools, from master-apprentice teams, and from fluent speakers who make concerted efforts to speak only their own language to their children and grandchildren, thus creating a new generation of first-language speakers.

Critical to recommending best practices for language revitalization is addressing the linguistic demographic status of each language. That is to say, best practices for a language still spoken by almost every one of all ages, or by everyone age 20 and upwards, will be different from best practices for a language that now is spoken only by elders.

Linguistic Self-Determination

Finding: The importance of Alaska Native languages is inadequately recognized, as is the fact that they are threatened or endangered. Many people do not know of the opportunities that already exist to learn Alaska Native languages, nor do they know how to get new and improved Alaska Native language teaching/learning/speaking opportunities started in their local communities and via the internet.

Recommendation (Individuals, Communities, and Institutions): The ANLPAC urges schools, public offices, businesses, Native corporations, and local leaders to make use of Alaska Native languages in their daily operations.

Alaska Native individuals and tribes have the right to administer their own language and education programs.

“Self-determination, in this context, is the language community being in full control of the future of their language. It has to be a basic principal that language programs don’t wait for things to happen; they make them happen.” – X’unei Lance Twitchell

*“I wanted to bring forward a conclusion of an effort which the governor initiated. He issued this education challenge. ... one of the proposals that came out of this effort was to enter into a compacting relationship between the state and the local tribes. ...if they approve it, if they recommend it as a broader policy change, then we will be at a place where your local tribe could have a school and receive all of the funding which would otherwise be going to the same—potentially the same school with the same teachers but a very different administration.” – Rep. Justin Parish, ANLPAC gathering at AFN, October 20, 2017
(See Appendix H for the full quote)*



Hishinlai' Peter, Gwich'in language teacher at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, shared some of her teaching methods and activities while giving pointers on goal setting with Mentor-Apprentice Teams at Sealaska Heritage Institute. She challenged apprentices to move beyond their comfort zones in the language and reminded mentors to speak slowly to allow learners to hear all the sounds of the language.

Support for Alaska Native Language Immersion Schools

Finding: The Council finds that language immersion programs in schools and language nests for infants and young children are important means for stabilizing the loss and revitalizing our languages, but there are many challenges to implementing these successful programs. The Council supports the implementation of language immersion schools in general and public charter schools and tribal schools. These require that effective programs of training be made available to the potential language teachers, especially in effective immersion teaching strategies. The Council strongly supports local and tribal autonomy in setting teacher certification standards for language immersion teachers. The Council also supports language nests.

Policy Maker Recommendation: The ANLPAC strongly urges the Legislature to adopt legislation in support of language immersion schools and for training for Alaska Native language teachers in a framework that leads to teacher certification.

Statewide Institutions Recommendation: The Council urges Alaskans and their public and tribal schools to make use of new amendments to Sec. 6004, Alaska Native Educational Equity Program (ANEP) and Sec. 6133, Native American and Alaska Native Language Immersion Schools and Programs, in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to locate funding opportunities for Alaska Native language immersion programs.

Individuals and Communities Recommendation: High cultural standards are achieved when young people are exposed to a Native language. Regional corporations and Tribal Councils are urged to help find ways to fund language immersion day cares and schools.

Language immersion education is a highly effective approach to teaching children a second language. Developed first in Quebec in the early 1960s with French for English-speakers, it has since been adapted to use with other languages around the world and with the same successes. Early Total Immersion is the

gold standard of language immersion schooling. Children are taught 100% through the immersion language, kindergarten through second grade; English language arts (reading and writing) are added during third grade. In fourth and fifth grades, additional academic classes are taught in English so that by sixth grade, the students are doing half of their academic subject in English and half in the immersion language.

Alaska Native language immersion schools have been operated in Bethel (Ayaprun Elitnaurvik, Central Yup'ik, 1995 to present, K-6th charter school), Hooper Bay (Central Yup'ik); Kotzebue (Nikaitchuat Iļisaġviat, Iļņupiaq, 1998 to present, private pre-school); Utqiagvik (Iļņupiaq, 1995 – early 2000s); K-4 partial immersion program in Mekoryuk (Cup'ig, 1999 to present); and Nanwalek (Alutiiq/Sugt'stun, 1999-2002, pre-school, Nanwalek IRA Council). Bethel's Yup'ik immersion program has had great success in teaching young people to be conversationally fluent and academically competent in Yup'ik alongside with English.

The University of Alaska and the Teaching of Alaska Native Languages

Finding: The University of Alaska has worked in support of Alaska Native languages since 1960 but there remains much more work for the University to do in support of Indigenous languages.

Statewide Institutions Recommendation (SI): The Council urges the University of Alaska to offer instruction in Alaska Native languages, including the traditional language of each campus, in programs designed to lead to conversational fluency. The University should not cancel classes because of pre-determined minimum enrollment levels and should creatively partner with other Alaskan organizations to underwrite tuition costs of all Alaska Native language learners. Furthermore, the University should insure that it offers comprehensive instruction in the most effective teaching methods and curriculum design for Alaska Native language instruction.

Each campus of the University of Alaska should offer instruction in the traditional Alaska Native language or languages of its individual service area. Such programs may include additional goals but should always include the aim of allowing students to achieve conversational fluency in Alaska Native languages. In some cases, distance-delivered language instruction may be the most appropriate means to achieve this, although face-to-face language learning opportunities generally are more powerfully effective at leading to conversational fluency.

In order to have highly qualified teachers of Alaska Native languages, the University of Alaska should expand its offerings of training to all speakers who would like to teach their Alaska Native languages.

The University of Alaska's *'Shaping Alaska's Future'* (n.d., page 13) recognizes that;

Issue B: Some Alaska Native languages and cultural traditions are endangered. Many communities do not have sufficient resources to safeguard and nurture culture and the arts, so UA plays a vital role in preserving and advancing this knowledge and these traditions.

Effect: UA is a major center of culture and the arts in Alaska and is a center of excellence for Alaska Native and Indigenous research and scholarship.

“I am Uyuġuluk. [I] am from King Island. [T]hey have an (organization) that has a dictionary, the Alaska Native Language Center. It would be useful. It would be useful, where is it? Where is the dictionary? Our people would use it, to begin to speak (in Inupiaq).” – Uyuġuluk Marilyn Koezuna-Irelan

Electronic Technology in Language Revitalization

Finding: All people in Alaska, but particularly the young people, are involved in electronic technology as a key component of our lives. In Alaska and around the world, people are developing means of using new technology to teach traditional languages. On-line communities of language learners and language speakers are an important vehicle for the survival of Alaska Native languages.

Recommendation: The Council encourages the creation of electronic means to promote the learning and the everyday use of Alaska Native languages. The Council further encourages individuals to make use of electronic resources to learn their heritage languages and to participate in on-line forums where individual Alaska Native languages are the preferred languages for everyday communication.

- The University of Alaska Fairbanks, in partnership with its Kuskokwim Campus, is going on-line with a Bachelor of Arts degree program in Yup’ik language and culture, as the first bachelor’s degree program on-line for any Alaska Native language.
- Northwest Arctic Native Association (NANA), and then the North Slope Borough, have each partnered with Rosetta Stone and produced Level One (Kotzebue Iñupiaq) and Levels One through Three (Utqiagvik Iñupiaq) language learning materials available for independent language-learning via the computer. These can be useful tools for getting students through the “Novice High” level and ready to start becoming “Intermediate” or conversational language learners.
- A 2008-2010 project of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe created Dena’ina language self-study videos. Two central ideas were key to the project: 1) to embed study of verb conjugations into useable formats so that learners could model how to have simple conversations, and 2) to make these lessons available 24 hours a day, anywhere there was internet access. With fewer than 25 highly fluent speakers (the youngest in her 70s), Dena’ina is a highly endangered language. Dena’ina lessons are on youtube.com and at <http://www.languageinsights.net/> where additional Dena’ina language-learning resources can be found.
- X’unei Lance Twitchell has a channel on YouTube, called X’unei Lance Twitchell, on which he posts recordings of his Intermediate Tlingit classes which he distance-delivers from Juneau for the University of Alaska Southeast.
- Byron Nicholai of Toksook Bay is creating music videos that use Yup’ik language in ways that appeal to and inspire young people, combining old styles of music with new ones, such as beat-boxing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0MQ9IFiucI>
- Ishmael Angaaluk Hope led in the creation of an Iñupiaq language video game, Never Alone: Kisima Injitchuᅇa, which has become internationally popular.

- Stephanie Gilardi has created an ongoing, interactive art project online called “Adopt” Tlingit which encourages people to use Tlingit language in their everyday lives: <http://adopt-tlingit.squarespace.com/>
- Susie Lee Edwardson and the Juneau-based group, Haida Language Learners, maintain a channel on YouTube, also called Haida Language Learners, emphasizing words and phrases for beginners.
- Several Alaska Native languages have active pages on Facebook, where learners and fluent speakers not only can ask questions about their languages, but where long, involved conversations are taking place in the Native language. This is particularly true so far for Yup’ik and Tlingit.



Culture camp for Yah Ne Da Ah Tribal School; Ahtna language; Chickaloon 2008

10. NATIVE LANGUAGE COUNCIL FUNDING

Finding: As created by the Alaska State Legislature, the Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Council—and the ANLPAC Section within the Division of Community and Regional Affairs—are tasked with several important and necessary tasks. Although initially funded with a staff of two within DCRA, it would take four, full-time employees for the Alaska Native Language section to fulfill its legislative mandate. As it stands, the budget has recently (June 2015) been reduced to support only one staff position. Urgent activities that could be better supported with full funding include:

- Track of the status of Alaska Native Languages and making such data available

- Working with regions on short- and long-term language planning
- Hosting an annual conference on Alaska Native Languages

Policy Making Recommendation: The Council urges the Legislature to restore funding for the Administrative Assistant position within the ANLPAC section of the Division of Community and Regional Affairs.



Alutiiq speakers with ties to Karluk consult on artifact terms at the Alutiiq Museum. Seated L to R: Sophie Katelnikoff Shepherd, Kathryn Chichenoff, Clyda Christiansen. Standing L to R: Theresa Carlson, Helen Malutin, Barbara Hochmuth.

11. THE FUTURE OF ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGES

Alaska communities are encouraged to think of where their languages were thirty years ago, where their languages are now, and then to come to a strong consensus of where they want their languages to be thirty years from now. Through collaboration, the maintenance of cultural value systems, and incorporating best practices in healthy ways, Alaska Native languages can find a future where they not only survive, but thrive in their ancestral homeland.

Due to the complex history of Indigenous language loss in the Americas and the ways that cultural genocide manifests itself, the journey of languages to a place of health and strength often requires conscious cultural shifts at three main levels: **micro** levels refer to the decisions of families and individuals, **meso** refers to the planning and policies within communities and regions, and **macro** refers to planning and policies at the state and federal levels. As Alaskans move forward and consider the

future of our languages, the future is full of potential, but decisions must be made that acknowledge the traumas of the past, come to terms with current inequities and causes of language destruction, and must envision a future that is not bound by what may seem impossible today.

The realities are many. Racism plays an active role in pushing the life and health of Alaska Native languages to places of obscurity. However, in an atmosphere of social and cultural awareness and justice, there is a shifting of power and place. The suffering that has occurred and that still occurs is a functioning part of Alaskan history but the future has the potential of being a place of life instead of death. The ANLPAC is committed to working with partners throughout Alaska to ensure that this future of language health is fulfilled and is also committed to the idea that the health of Alaska Native languages is a representation of the health of all of Alaska. By working together and overpowering inequity, we can all become stronger in knowing that we have done what we can to give the gifts of languages to future generations.

No one today is actively punishing people, as far as I know, for speaking their language in school. Now people are losing their languages further, because they have been brainwashed for generations by English-only policy and pressure in the schools to give up their languages, unnecessarily, in the process of learning English. For their languages, they have been turned into their own worst enemies. *(Krauss 1996:15)*

Finally, I note around here that people are not doing some of the things they need to do to save their languages because they are in a state of denial about language loss. They are blinding themselves to the danger threatening their languages, because of the painful process they went through, being punished in school, for example, for speaking their language and being educated with so much English and with none of their own language that it takes extra effort to speak it now. Denial is a key word. I believe it now represents the most important barrier that impedes the stabilization, revival, and maintenance of our languages. *(Krauss 1996: 19–20)*

[W]e stand to lose more Indigenous North American languages in the next 60 years than have been lost since Anglo-American contact. *(Krauss, 2009: 9–22)*

A language movement begins by protecting existing speakers while creating new ones. Language revitalization is using the language and creating spaces where the Indigenous language is the language of power and use. *(William Wilson)*

“If times change, can we make new realities too? Can we also dare to be brave, and long once again to be free? If there is anything that we need to reclaim most of all in translating the ideas of mana motuhake, of self-determination into action, it is the belief in our right to be free. If colonization does more than anything else to damage our people, it is to make our people lose faith in ourselves.” – Moana Jackson, He Manawa Whenua 2017 Day 3. Te Kotahi Research Institute)
(See Appendix H for the full quote)

2019 will be the UNESCO Year of Indigenous Languages supports the actions of Indigenous peoples to work, along with the assistance of their national governments, to see the continued survival of Indigenous languages: <http://undocs.org/en/A/RES/71/178>



Myles Creed and Holly Nordlum, Inupiaq language class, Alaska Native Heritage Center, 2017

APPENDICES A-H

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Carrie Herman, originally from Mekoryuk, photo courtesy Adams/ANHC

Appendix A – Council Members and Staff



Senator Donald Olson - *Inupiaq*

From Golovin, lifelong Alaskan, Senator Olson was born in Nome and is a doctor, pilot, reindeer herder, businessman and Legislator. He and wife Willow have six children: Colby, Martin, Donald Jr., Maggie Rae, and David and Elise.



Annette Evans Smith (Chair) - *Koyukon Athabascan, Alutiiq and Yup'ik*

Ms. Evans Smith, of Anchorage, is the Alaska Native Heritage Center President and CEO, where she has worked in several roles since 2003. Under her leadership, the center has initiated a study to identify Alaska Native language programs and learners of Alaska Native languages with the hope of connecting Alaska Native residents in Anchorage to the language programs that exist across Alaska. Her prior work involves service with Southcentral Foundation and The Northern Forum. She holds a bachelor's degree in international relations from Stanford University and is also a trustee with the Western States Arts Federation. Evans Smith is actively learning the Yup'ik language through her grandmother and Marge Nakak.



April Gale Laktonen Counciller, Ph.D. – *Alutiiq (Sun'aaq Tribe of Kodiak, Native Village of Larsen Bay)*

Dr. Counciller, of Kodiak, is the Executive Director of the Alutiiq Heritage Foundation (Alutiiq Museum) in Kodiak, and is a former professor of Alaska Native studies at Kodiak College (UAA), initiating the Alutiiq Studies program and Alutiiq Language Occupational Endorsement Certificate (OEC). She is an advanced student and teacher of the Alutiiq language and an organizer of the Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit Regional Language Advisory Committee and Alutiiq Language club. Counciller holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology and American civilization from Brown University, a master's degree in rural development from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and a Ph.D. in language planning and Indigenous knowledge systems from UAF. Counciller lives with her husband and two daughters in Kodiak.



X'unei Lance Twitchell (Vice-Chair) - *Tlingit, Haida, Yup'ik, Sami*

Mr. Twitchell carries the Tlingit names X'unei, Du Aaní Kawdinook, and the Haida name K'eijáakw. He lives in Juneau with his wife and bilingual children and is from the Tlingit, Haida, and Yup'ik native nations of Alaska and the Sami of Norway. He speaks and studies the Tlingit language and advocates for Indigenous language revitalization. Twitchell is a Northwest Coast Artist and instructor of formline design. He is an Assistant Professor of Alaska Native Languages at the University of Alaska Southeast, a doctoral candidate student at Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, and is a published poet, filmmaker, and musician.



Bernadette Yaayuk Alvanna-Stimpfle - Inupiaq

Ms. Alvanna-Stimpfle, of Nome is a fluent, first-language speaker of Inupiaq and is the director of the Kawerak, Inc. Eskimo Heritage Program. She has taught with Nome Public Schools for twenty-five years as a Bilingual-Bicultural Inupiaq language and culture teacher, a classroom teacher and worked with English as Second Language students and English Language Learners. She has taught Inupiaq at the Northwest Campus of the University of Alaska in Nome. She has also worked as a teacher mentor for the Alaska Statewide Mentoring Project. From 1998-2008, Alvanna-Stimpfle was involved with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative where Native educators from all over the state to develop standards for culturally responsive school standards and ways to teach students from the Indigenous perspective. She is a member of the King Island Drummers and Dancers and a former member of the King Island Native Community Tribal Council. She is a member of the King Island Native Community Elders committee. Alvanna-Stimpfle holds a master's degree in Education in Language and Literacy and a bachelor's degree in Inupiaq Eskimo language from UAF.



Walkie Charles, Ph.D. - Yup'ik

Dr. Charles, of Fairbanks, a fluent, first-language speaker of Yup'ik, is an assistant professor of Yup'ik Eskimo at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). The Yup'ik language is one of two Alaska Native languages with bachelor' degree programs; the other being Inupiaq. He grew up in Emmonak speaking Norton Sound Kotlik and lower Yukon Yup'ik dialects. He has earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, a master's degree at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and a Ph.D. in applied linguistics at UAF. His research interests are second language acquisition, dynamic assessment, and socio-cultural theory. A key interest of his is maintaining his language through teaching it at all educational levels. Charles also heads the Yup'ik Program at UAF. Dr. Charles was the Inaugural Chair of ANLPAC from 2012 to 2013.

Council Staff



D. Roy Mitchell IV, Research Analyst

Mr. Mitchell is a linguistic anthropologist with B.A. and M.A. degrees in anthropology and a B.A. in Iñupiaq Eskimo language from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, and is all-but-dissertation on the Ph.D. in anthropology from U.C. Berkeley. He has been a student of Alaska Native languages since 1976. At previous points in his life he had basic conversational proficiency in Iñupiaq and Yup'ik but is rusty now; he's also studied St Lawrence Island Yupik, Sugt'stun, Tlingit, Eyak, Dena'ina, Koyukon, and Haida. In 1982 he began team-teaching Iñupiaq with fluent elders at Northwest Community College in Nome, using a method that uses no English translation at all; he and some of these others then took this methods training on the road to Alaskan school districts and the Alaska Bilingual Conference in 1985. In the early 1990s, he helped start the Yup'ik immersion school in Bethel and in the early 2000s helped Sealaska Heritage Institute expand its Native languages programs.

Appendix B: Alaskan laws related to Alaska Native languages

1972 - AS 14.40.117. Establishment of Alaska Native Language Center

The University of Alaska shall establish an Alaska Native Language Center, the purposes of which are to

- (1) study languages native to Alaska;
- (2) develop literacy materials;
- (3) assist in the translation of important documents;
- (4) provide for the development and dissemination of Alaska Native literature; and
- (5) train Alaska Native language speakers to work as teachers and aides in bilingual classrooms

1995 - AS 14.30.420. Native language education

(a) A school board shall establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board for each school in the district in which a majority of the students are Alaska Natives and any school district with Alaska Native students may establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board for each school with Alaska Native students in their district. If the local Native language curriculum advisory board recommends the establishment of a Native language education curriculum for a school, the school board may initiate and conduct a Native language education curriculum within grades K through 12 at that school. The program, if established, must include Native languages traditionally spoken in the community in which the school is located. Each school board conducting a program of Native language education shall implement the program as a part of regular classroom studies and shall use

(1) instructors who are certified under AS 14.20.020 or 14.20.025; and

(2) to the maximum extent possible

(A) instructors and instructional materials available through the University of Alaska;
and

(B) audio-visual, computer, and satellite technology.

(b) In this section,

(1) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990;

(2) "Native" means a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaskan Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood.

2012 - AS 44.33.520. Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council

The legislature finds that the preservation of Alaska Native languages is a critical component in the sustenance of cultural identity. The legislature further finds that Alaska Native languages are the foundation of cultures and are vital in maintaining traditional knowledge and understanding.

(a) The Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council is established in the department for the purpose of recommending the establishment or reorganization of programs to support the preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Alaska Native languages.

(b) The council established under this section shall

- (1) advise both the governor and legislature on programs, policies, and projects to provide for the cost-effective preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Alaska Native languages in the state;
- (2) meet at least twice a year to carry out the purposes of the council; members may participate in meetings telephonically; and
- (3) prepare reports of its findings and recommendations for the governor's and the legislature's consideration on or before January 1 of each even-numbered year.

(c) The governor shall appoint to the council established in this section five voting members who are professional language experts and who represent diverse regions of the state. In addition, one member of the senate appointed by the president of the senate and one member of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives shall serve on the council as nonvoting members. In appointing the nonvoting members of the council, the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint a member of the bush caucus, if a bush caucus exists. In this subsection, "bush caucus" means a group of legislators that represents rural areas of the state.

(d) The members appointed by the governor shall serve at the pleasure of the governor.

(e) Members of council shall serve without compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses as provided under AS 39.20.180.

(f) The department shall provide staff as needed to support the council; the staff must demonstrate competency in an Alaska Native language.

2015 - AS 44.12.310. Official Languages

(a) The English, Inupiaq, Siberian Yupik, Central Alaskan Yup'ik, Alutiiq, Unangax, Dena'ina, Deg Xinag, Holikachuk, Koyukon, Upper Kuskokwim, Gwich'in, Tanana, Upper Tanana, Tanacross, Han, Ahtna, Eyak, Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian languages are the official languages of the State of Alaska.

(b) [Effective January 21, 2015]. The designation of languages other than English as official languages of the state under (a) of this section does not require or place a duty or responsibility on the state or a municipal government to print a document or record or conduct a meeting, assembly, or other government activity in any language other than English.

Appendix C: 2016 Recommendations and Updates

Information Scarcity

Finding: There is a lack of accurate research data on 1) the status of Alaska Native languages, 2) the availability of programs to learn Alaska Native languages, and 3) the effectiveness of such programs to teach Alaska Native languages. This knowledge gap exists for individuals, families, and language communities: an effort is needed to consolidate information on language-learning opportunities and to make this information widely available to all Alaska Natives.

Recommendation: Alaska Native communities—villages, regions, language communities—are urged to assess your own community’s state of its language, to share this information with ANLPAC, and to begin using these data to form plans for the future of your language.

Update: The office of the Alaska Native Language Preservation & Advisory Council in DCRA has created a survey and database, and has been compiling updates on Alaska Native language learning programs around the State. More work is still needed on this database and more participation is needed from school districts and Alaska Native tribal and non-profit organizations.

Regional Disparities

Finding: There are huge differences among regions and among Alaska Native language communities in terms of language learning opportunities and efforts at language policy and planning for Alaska Native language survival. Communities and organizations within regions, and activities among regions and language communities, need to be coordinated.

Recommendation: Alaska Native communities—villages, regions, language communities—are urged to assess which language-learning opportunities exist locally, to coordinate with other villages and regions who share your language, to share this information with ANLPAC, and to consider language policy and planning steps to increase the opportunities for everyone to learn to speak Alaska Native languages.

Update: This remains as critical as before.

Education

Finding: Schools have historically played a major role in undermining and threatening the survival of Alaska Native languages. Even though school-based programs alone cannot reverse the decline in Alaska Native languages, highly effective programs in schools can increase the number of fluent language speakers. Sadly, most Alaskan schools and school districts do very little or nothing to support Alaska Native languages. Alaska Native language programs in schools often rely on fluent (or less-than-fluent) speakers who have received very little training in effecting methods of teaching second language.

Recommendation: The ANLPAC strongly urges the Legislature to adopt HB 157 in support of language immersion schools and for training for Alaska Native language teachers in a framework that leads to teacher certification.

Update: The bill did not make it through the legislature; Alaska Native language immersion education is still urgently needed.

Recommendation: The Legislature should amend AS 14.30.420 to clearly apply to *all schools* in which a majority of students are Alaska Natives—calling for a Native language curriculum advisory board to be established and, furthermore, directing that school districts *shall* create Native language programs if so directed by their Native language curriculum advisory boards.

Update: AS 14.30.420 still needs to be clarified and strengthened; as it is, many schools with a majority of Alaska Native students offer no Alaska Native language instruction.

Recommendation: Offering accessible Alaska Native language instruction through the University of Alaska - including the traditional language of each campus - in programs designed to lead to conversational fluency. To support student access, UA and the State of Alaska should work together to broaden a scholarship program such as the UA Scholars Award, or the Alaska Performance Scholarship to apply to students' AK Native language study. Additional options include non-credit continuing education courses for those seeking traditional language education, and partnering with tribal organizations for community-based brokered/sponsored courses. Furthermore, the University should insure that "best practice" teaching methods and curriculum design are utilized system-wide for Alaska Native language instruction that leads to conversational ability and fluency in the language.

Update: Alaska Native language classes still are subject to cancellation when they do not meet minimum enrollment goals.

Recommendation: The Council urges Alaskans to make use of new amendments to Sec. 6004, Alaska Native Educational Equity Program (ANEP) and the Sec. 6133, Native American and Alaska Native Language Immersion Schools and Programs in the recently signed-into-law Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), to provide funding for Alaska Native language immersion programs.

Update: We know of no, new programs in Alaska created under the ESSA.

Recommendation: The ANLPAC urges schools, public offices, businesses, Native corporations, and local leaders to make use of Alaska Native languages in their daily operations.

Update: While this is hard to quantify, we look forward to hearing examples of increased use of Alaska Native languages in all arenas of Alaska Native life.

Reconciliation

Finding: The continued effects of forced language-loss in previous generations are still being felt by 21st century Alaska Natives and end up providing great discouragement to language learners nowadays. Efforts to heal and transcend these previous wrongs are a fundamental part of any successful program to revitalize Alaska Native languages. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Congress have formally apologized for these destructive U.S. policies.

Recommendation: In order to localize this apology, Alaskan lawmakers are encouraged to declare an official apology, on behalf of the State of Alaska, for the earlier role that Alaska had in suppressing and forbidding Alaska Native languages in village schools and in boarding schools across the state.

Update: No action.

Recommendation: The Legislature should declare April 21st of each year as Alaska Native Languages Day, to celebrate and recognize Alaska Native languages.

Update: No action.

Recommendation: The Legislature should declare that the second Monday of every October annually be *Indigenous peoples Day* in Alaska.

Update: In 2017, the Alaska Legislature with HB 78 declared the second Monday of every October annually to be *Indigenous peoples Day* in Alaska.

Recommendation: The Council calls on all state, borough, city, and other regional groups to consider using traditional, Alaska Native place names when the local community desires and, to the degree possible, to recognize these names formally with the state and federal governments and to use these names in maps, signage, publications, and school curricula.

Update: There has been an increase in the use of Alaska Native place names, such as Chanshtnu Creek (Chester Creek) in Anchorage; more recognition of Alaska Native place names is still needed.

Recommendation: The Council urges the artist community to express Alaska Native Languages as both critical to our daily lives and to use artistic expression to create healing moments that promote our languages and cultures.

Update: We do not have a count or indication of how many Alaska Native artists are producing artwork which promotes Indigenous languages and cultures; Alaska Native artists still deserve our support in this important work.

Technology

Finding: Electronic technology and internet communication have created new opportunities and new methods for individuals to learn Alaska Native languages and to use them to communicate with others over long distances. These efforts need to be supported and expanded.

Update: Alaska Native language workers have produced a number of smart phone apps, including online Alaska Native dictionaries and a key board which allows typing in any of Alaska's 20, officially recognized Native languages.

Recommendation: The Council encourages the creation of electronic means to promote the learning and the everyday use of Alaska Native languages and supports human teaching, rather than learning from tech alone.

Update: This recommendation still has not been followed through.

Native Language Council Funding

Finding: In order to achieve its legislatively-mandated goals, the Alaska Native Language section within DCRA should have its budget increased.

Update: The Alaska Native Language section within DCRA still has not had its budget increased to provide for the urgent needs of promoting the survival of Alaska Native languages.

Appendix D: References

Recommended books on reversing language shift for Indigenous language communities

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Krauss, Michael, Gary Holton, Jim Kerr, and Colin T. West. 2011. *Indigenous peoples and Languages of Alaska* (map). Fairbanks and Anchorage: Alaska Native Language Center and UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research.

Paulston, Christina Bratt. 1994. *Linguistic Minorities in Multilingual Settings*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Appendix E: Alaska Native Language Programs

Ahtna Country:

- Ahtna Heritage Foundation: Language Documentation Program. Glennallen, AHF Office.
- C'ek'aedi Hwnax "Legacy House" (Ahtna Cultural Center), Ethnographic & Linguistic Archive. Copper Center, Alaska. 1500 recordings in Ahtna and English.
- Kenai Peninsula College: Ahtna Language distance learning classes

Anchorage Area:

- Cook Inlet Native Headstart, Yup'ik immersion program
- Iñupiaaraagvik Isagviñmi, Anchorage Inupiaq Language Circle
- Iñupiaq Phrase of the Day
- Ahtna language lessons weekly, at Ahtna, Inc. in Anchorage
- Alaska Native Charter School
- Alaska Native Heritage Center: Urban Eskimo Revitalization Project: Teacher training and instruction in Central Yup'ik and Iñupiaq languages

Arctic Slope Region:

- Arctic language website assessment & teaching & learning policy
- Rosetta Stone, North Slope Iñupiaq, levels 1-3
- ICC-Alaska Education Steering Committee includes starting Iñupiaq / Yup'ik immersion

Bering Straits Region:

- Brevig Mission School, BSSD, Inupiaq language
- Aniguiin School, Elim, BSSD, Inupiaq and Yup'ik languages
- Koyuk-Malimiut School, Koyuk, BSSD, Inupiaq and Yup'ik languages
- Nome, Kawerak – Eskimo Heritage Program language project: Inupiaq, Central Yup'ik, and St. Lawrence Island Yupik languages
- Nome, Inupiaq language pre-school scheduled for fall, 2018; Kawerak and Nome Public Schools
- Nome, Norton Sound Education Working Group (Language & Culture)
- Nome, Strategic Planning Committee for Bering Straits languages
- Nome Elementary School, Nome Public Schools, Inupiaq language

- Shishmaref School, BSSD, Inupiaq language
- Shishmaref School, upcoming Inupiaq language nest, fall 2018, Kawerak
- Anthony A. Andrews School, Saint Michael, BSSD, Yup'ik language
- Tukurngailnguq School, Stebbins, BSSD, Yup'ik language
- James C. Isabell School, Teller, BSSD, Inupiaq language
- Unalakleet: BSSD Bilingual Bicultural Dept. Program

Central Yup'ik / Yugtun Country:

- Akiachak, Yupiit School District, Yup'ik language
- Aleknagik School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Atmautluak, Joann A. Alexie Memorial School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Bethel, Ayaprun Immersion Charter School, LKSD (1995 to present), Yup'ik language
- Chevak School, Kashunamiut School District, Cup'ik language
- Ekwok, William "Sonny" Nelson School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Hooper Bay School, LYSD, K-3 Yup'ik Early Total Immersion program
- Igiugig Yup'ik language program, ANA Language Preservation grant
- Kasigluk, Akiuk Memorial School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Kasigluk-Akula, Akula Elitnaurvik, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Koliganek School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Kongiganak, Ayagina'ar Elitnaurvik, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Kwigillingok School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Manokotak, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Mekoryak, Nuniwarmiut School, LKSD, Cup'ig language
- Napaskiak, ZJ Williams Memorial School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- New Stuyahok Chief Ivan Blunka School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Newtok, Newtok Ayaprun School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Nightmute, Negtemiut Elitnaurviat, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Nunapitchuk, Anna Tobeluk Memorial School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Oscarville, Qugcuun Memorial School, LKSD, Yup'ik language
- Quinhagak, Kuinerrarmiut Elitnaurviat, LKSD, Yup'ik language

- St. Mary's School, St. Mary's, Yup'ik language
- Togiak School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language
- Twin Hills School, SWRSD, Yup'ik language

Chugachmiut Country:

- Chugachmiut Language Program: Master-Apprentice Teams, Sugt'stun language
- Port Graham School, KPBSD, Sugt'stun language
- Nanwalek Preschool, IRA Council, Sugt'stun language
- Nanwalek Elementary/High School, KPBSD, Sugt'stun language

Dena'ina - Language Videos:

- www.youtube.com/watch?v=moVZ94hNsK8
- UAA Dena'ina language classes

Fairbanks:

- Doyon Heritage Foundation: Nine Dene languages plus Iñupiaq
- UAF: ANLC; ANLP; ANLA
- B.A. in Yup'ik language
- B.A. in Iñupiaq language

Gwich'in Country:

- Arctic Village: 3, half-hour classes day, 1-5, middle school, high school
- Ft. Yukon: Grades 1-5

Hän Country:

- Eagle, Eagle Community School, AGSD, Hän language

Holikachuk Country:

- Elizabeth Keating, from Holikachuk/Grayling, Athabaskan on FB word exchange; wants to record and have teleconference capabilities. 10-20 people speak [some of the language? Dr. Beth Leonard knows of two elders who are fluent speakers of Holikachuk]

Koyukon / Denaakk'e Country:

- Allakaket School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Hughes, Johnny Oldman School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Kaltag School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Koyukuk School, Ella B. Verneti School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Manley School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Minto School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Nulato, Andrew K. Demoski School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language
- Rampart School, YKSD, Denaakk'e language

Koniag Country:

- Alutiiq Museum: Language Program
- Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council
- Kodiak Alutiiq Dancers
- Alutiiqlanguage.org website
- Alutiiqeducation.org website (materials)
- Kodiak College Alutiiq Language Occupational Endorsement Certificate
- Alutiiq Language oral history archive
- Alutiiq Language Club
- Alutiiq Language & Learners Facebook page
- Kodiak High School, Alutiiq language class
- Port Lions School: Outreach through WVOPL
- Native Village of Afognak: Language Materials & Curriculum
- Old Harbor: Preschool language lessons

Northwest Arctic Native Association (NANA) region:

- Nikaitchuat Iḷisaḡviat Iñupiaq Immersion School, N.V.K.
- NWABSD Bilingual Bicultural Dept. Program
- Village Elementary Schools, Iñupiaq language programs
- Aqqaluk Trust –language project – Iñupiaq Rosetta Stone CD, Level One
- Kotzebue, UAF, Iñupiaq language classes
- Rosetta Stone, Kotzebue Sound Iñupiaq, level 1

Southeastern Alaska:

- UAS Language Program and Classes
- Tlingitlanguage.com
- Angoon, Angoon School, Chatham School District, Tlingit language
- Hoonah, Hoonah City School District, Tlingit language
- Hydaburg School, Hydaburg School District, Haida language
- Juneau Tlingit Language Learners
- Juneau – Tlingit classes, free: SHI on Wednesdays, GHI on Saturdays; Juneau Library private circles on Mondays.
- Juneau, Harborview Elementary, Tlingit Culture and Literacy
- Juneau, Dzantik'i Héeni Middle School, Tlingit language
- Juneau, Mendenhall River Community School, Tlingit language
- Juneau, Floyd Drydan Middle School, Tlingit language
- Juneau, Juneau-Douglas High School, Tlingit language
- Juneau, Yaakoosge Daakahidi High School, Tlingit language
- Juneau, Thunder Mountain High School, Tlingit language
- Juneau – upcoming Tlingit language immersion school
- Juneau dance groups: Wooch.een; Juneau Haida Dancers
- Juneau – Xaad Kil (Haida) language learners group
- Juneau – Sm'algyax Learners Group
- Juneau – UAS: Tlingit, Haida language classes; degrees or concentration areas.

- Tlingitlanguage.org
- Juneau – Goldbelt Tlingit language projects
- Juneau – Sealaska Heritage Institute language projects, especially for Tlingit
- Kake, Kake City School, Tlingit language
- Sitka, Baronoff Elementary School, Tlingit language program
- Sitka, Blatchley Middle School, Tlingit language program
- Sitka, Sitka High School, Tlingit language program
- Ketchikan: Haida and Tsimshian languages
- Haida Language Learners Facebook page with over 2,000 likes.
- Metlakatla: Gavin Hudson, Councilman, Metlakatla Indian Community; Chairman, Haayk Foundation
- Wrangell Public School, Tlingit language
- Yakutat, master-apprentice program, Tlingit language
- Yakutat School, Tlingit language
- Yakutat, language nest starting in January, 2018, Tlingit language

Tanana Benhti Kokhut'ana Kenaga' Country:

- Minto, Minto School, YKSD, Lower Tanana language class

Upper Kuskokwim / Dinak'i Country:

- Upper Kuskokwim Language Revitalization Website
<http://ukpreservation.com/>

Upper Tanana / Nee'aanèegn' Country:

- Northway, Walter Northway School, Upper Tanana Athabascan language



Unangax Country:

- St. George, Summer Unangam Tunuu workshop, WAYK [Where Are Your Keys]
- St. Paul School, Pribilof School District, Unangax Aleut language
- Unalaska City School, Unangax Aleut language



Out-of-State:

- Maggie Jennell, Gig Harbor, Washington: Emaan Unglua, a Sugt'stun (Alutiiq) program. www.nativebridge.org



General / Cross-Regional:

- Alaska Native Languages on Facebook
- Alaska Humanities Forum:
 - akstudies.akhf.org/repository/1377/preview
 - akhf.org/content/alaska-humanities-forum-joins-statewide-efforts-revitalize-alaska-native-languages

Appendix F: Language Needs Assessments (LNA)

For use by Alaska Native Communities

Adapted from *British Columbia Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages*, 2010

Assessing the status of a language within a community is an important step in language revitalization planning and goal-setting. By completing LNAs, communities assess the status of their language by identifying resources, resource people, support and projects in their communities and by identifying gaps in these areas. Based on these gaps, communities can decide on their priorities and set goals accordingly. In addition, LNAs help build a strong case for grant proposals. This also helps how much we as a people ought to think seriously about our roles in order to maintain our heritage languages.

1) Language Information

Language Family:	Language Dialect:
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2) Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges to implement language and cultural projects:
Opportunities for implementing language and cultural projects:

3) Community Population

Date of your community's most recent population poll:	
Month:	Year:
Population living in your village or region:	Population outside of your region:
Total population:	Information source:
Additional population information:	

4) Community language fluency* information: Number of Speakers

* "Fluent" is defined as the ability to converse in the language on almost any topic that the speaker knows about. L1 = people who learned the language by age three; L2 = people who learned the language after that.

* "Conversational" is defined as the ability to keep a conversation going in the language for at least five minutes although the speaker may soon reach limits of what they can talk about.

	# of L1 fluent speakers	# of L2 fluent speakers	# of not-yet-fluent conversational speakers	# who are learning the language
Total #				
Age 0-4				
5-15				
15-19				
20-24				
25-44				
45-54				
55-64				
65-74				
75-84				
85+				

5) How many certified language teachers are in the community? _____

6) Do you have a tribally-operated school? ___Yes ___No / If "yes," complete the following:

	School 1	School 2	School 3
Total #			
Ages 0-4			
5-14			
15-19			
20-24			
25-44			
45-54			
55-64			
65-74			
75-84			
85+			
Hours per week spent on languages			

7) Immersion Class: Do you have immersion classes with more than 20 hours per week taught?

___Yes ___No / If “yes,” complete the following:

Immersion Program	
Name:	
Location:	
Total # of participants:	
Age Range:	Number of Students in age group:
Students aged 0-4	
5-14	
15-19	
20-24	
25-44	
45-54	
55-64	
65-74	
75-84	
85 and over	
Average hours per day	
Average days per week	
Average weeks per year	

8) Do you have a Head Start Program? ___Yes ___No / If “yes,” complete the following:

Head Start Program
Name:
Location:
Total numbers of participants:
Number of hours per week spent on language instruction:
How is the program connected to the other languages programming in the community?

9) Curriculum and Resource Assessment: Resources

	Yes	No
Language recordings/oral history archived (multimedia)		
Finalized writing system		
Curriculum materials developed		

10) Curriculum and Resources Assessment: Multi-media

	Yes	No
Access to a cultural language center		
Access to the internet		
Access to Alaska Native Language Archive		

11) Community-developed Language and Cultural Resources

Resource Title	Target Group (children, youth, adults, etc.)	How is the resource used (i.e., in school, Head Start, adult language classes, etc.)?

Appendix G: UNESCO Scale of Language Endangerment

Degree of endangerment	Intergenerational Language Transmission
safe	language is spoken by all generations; intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted
 vulnerable	most children speak the language, but it may be restricted to certain domains (e.g., home)
 definitely endangered	children no longer learn the language as mother tongue in the home
 severely endangered	language is spoken by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
 critically endangered	the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently
 extinct	there are no speakers left

ALTERNATIVE SCALE: From UNESCO Atlas of Languages in Danger

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/endangered-languages/atlas-of-languages-in-danger/>

Appendix H: Quotes

From Page 10

“[W]e required them to speak nothing but English except by permission; but they often would get into the washroom or in the wood shed, and having set a watch, they would indulge in a good Indian talk. A few cases of this kind, and we applied a heroic remedy to stop it. We obtained a bottle of myrrh and capsicum: myrrh is bitter as gall and capsicum hot like fire. We prepared a little sponge; saturated it with this solution, and everyone that talked Indian had his mouth washed to take away the taint of the Indian language! One application usually was sufficient; but one or two cases had to receive a second application. From that time on, progress in their studies was almost doubly rapid, for they dared not talk their own language.” – Charles Replegle, 1904, *Among the Indians of Alaska*. London: Headley Brothers

From Pg15

“I commend you all on the work that you do. But there is a danger sometimes that we can turn something as potentially personally destructive as colonization into an abstraction, into a historical artifact which diminishes or invisibilizes the violence, the destructive harm that it does. Because colonization is not some abstract theory. It is a belief assumed by most of the states in Europe that they had the right to dispossess Indigenous peoples who had done them no harm and posed no threat, and that presumption in itself is an act of violence. The racism which underpinned and continues to underpin colonization is an act of violence, and I think as we gather the knowledge so that we can perceive the Mana that we have it is important not to diminish the reality of that violence, because if we do then we diminish the suffering of our people who endured through its terrible hurt and agony ever since 1840. And we owe those people—we owe our mokopuna—together our strength and together our knowledge so we do not diminish the pain which they have endured.” — Moana Jackson He Manawa Whenua 2017 Day 3. Te Kotahi Research Institute. YouTube. Retrieved from youtu.be/zV2P0RbBQsM

From Pg15

“Uvaŋa atiga Siqupsiraq. Nuurviŋmiuguruŋa. I’m Pauline Harvey from the village of Noorvik. I’m from the current education project with ICC-Alaska. It’s a three-year deal; we ran a grant ... year three is this year. One of the items, one of the things that we did get to do this year is we, on top of having decolonization think tanks in each region of our ICC-Alaska... we had decolonization think tanks in Utqiaġvik, Kotzebue, Bering Straits, and also in Bethel regions, where each region brings together all the people that are in charge of making the education, language revitalization projects, in each region, came together came up with a plan to figure out how to make education successful for our Native students and what occurred on that is that we then had a language summit a year ago... in which we brought all the same people back together. This included all our school board members, the regional superintendents for the school districts, all of our on-the-ground people that taught our languages in schools, brought them all together, and we came up with more of a local plan for the entire region, ICC-Alaska as a whole. We then

met with the AASB and were able to then give them a full report of all the work that we've done so far with our revitalization project as well as with our efforts that we've made in decolonization thinking because half the battle is the fact that most of us are colonized. And so all of us have worked through a process where we reclaim our thinking and reclaim our language and reclaim every piece of who we are as Indigenous peoples.... We're having collaboration or having conversations pretty much, at least every few months, and we just had a meeting with him last week. And so we're working at ways where we can actually make systematic change, not just 'let's change something in this one classroom'. We want to make systematic change.” – Siqupsiraq Pauline Harvey, AFN meeting of ANLPAC, October 20, 2017

From Pg32

“I wanted to bring forward a conclusion of an effort which the governor initiated. He issued this education challenge. And while you were speaking, I was reminded that ... one of the proposals that came out of this effort was to enter into a compacting relationship between the state and the local tribes. And that proposal is being advanced to the Board of Education. And they'll review it. And if they approve it, if they recommend it as a broader policy change, then we will be at a place where your local tribe could have a school and receive all of the funding which would otherwise be going to the same— potentially the same school with the same teachers but a very different administration. An administration which has historically failed Native Alaskans and Native languages.” – Rep. Justin Parish, ANLPAC gathering at AFN, October 20, 2017

From Pg35

“Uaᅇa Uyuᅇuluk. Naluᅇmiutun, Marilyn Koezuna-Irelan. Ugiuvaᅇmiuruᅇa. Aakaᅇa Paniᅇrak. Aanaᅇa Taaᅇluk. Yaayuum uvvaa samma mumikiᅇuᅇait qaniqtaatka. Naguᅇiᅇuqa Yaayuk? Inupiuraaqᅇunᅇa kizzian ilittuᅇa Inupiuraaqᅇnamik, Ugiuvaᅇmiutun Inupiuraaqᅇktuat samma ilaiyaatkut, Inupiuraaqᅇnamik kizzian iliiᅇqtut Inupiuraaqᅇpta Ugiuvaᅇmiutun. Suli uvvaa dictionary-q samma piqqaatut Alaska Native Language Center-mi. Atuᅇiᅇqtut qanuᅇuuq samma. Qanuᅇuuq atuᅇiᅇqtut, nani itpa? Nani itpa samma dictionary? Qaniqtuaksrat samma ilaiyaatkut atuᅇluu.

I am Uyuᅇuluk. In English, it is Marilyn Koezuna-Irelan. I am from King Island. My mom is Paniᅇrak. My grandma is Taaᅇluk. Yaayuk will translate what I say. Will it be okay, Yaayuk? By speaking only in Inupiaq, I learned how to speak Inupiaq, in King Island Inupiaq (by listening in Inupiaq). Our community members want to speak in Inupiaq, only to speak in Inupiaq. They will learn when we speak in King Island Inupiaq. They have an (organization) that has a dictionary, the Alaska Native Language Center. It would be useful. It would be useful, where is it? Where is the dictionary? Our people would use it, to begin to speak (in Inupiaq).” – Uyuᅇuluk Marilyn Koezuna-Irelan

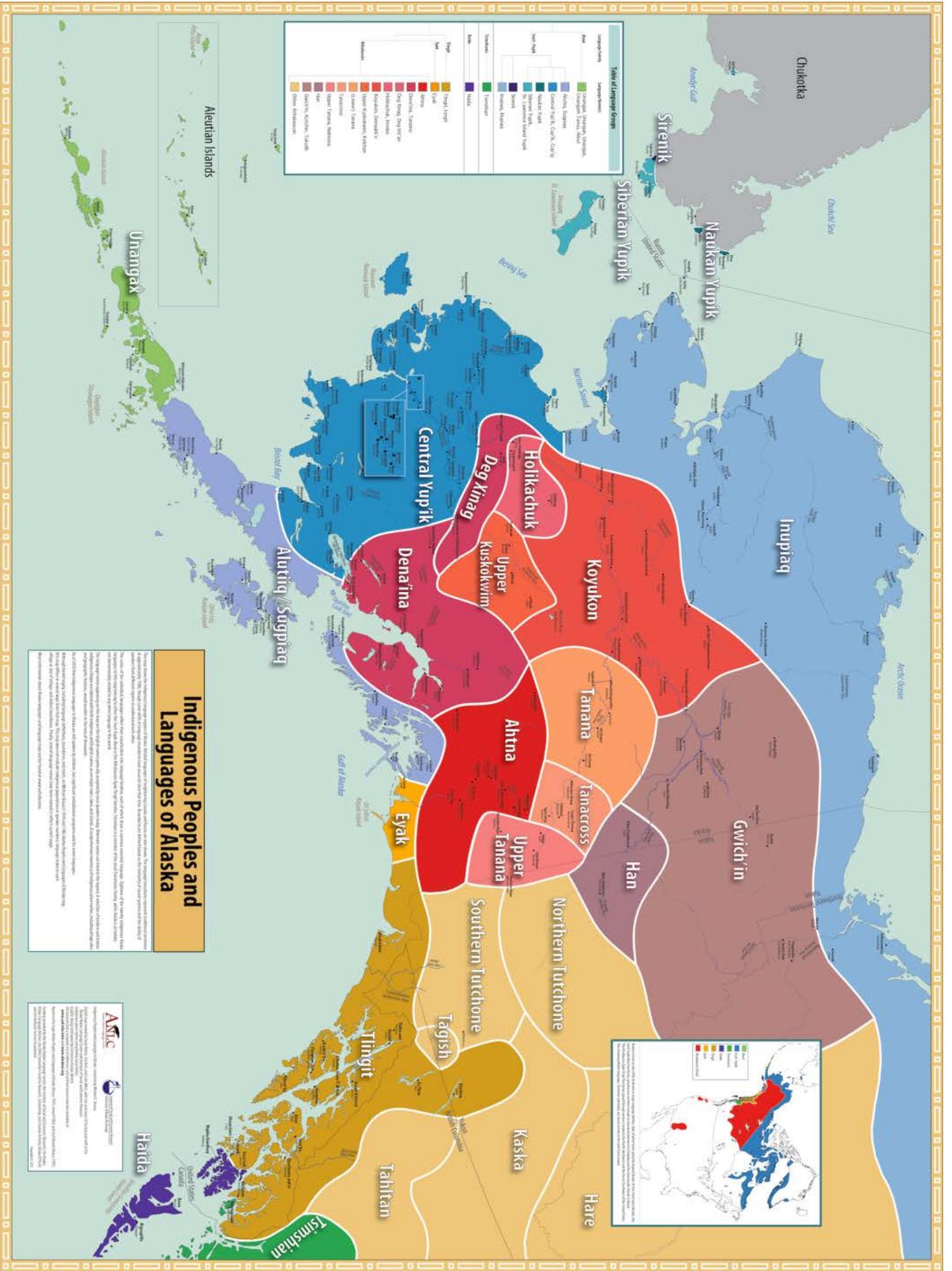
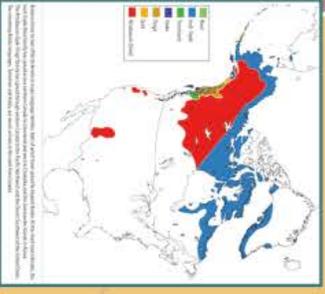


Table of Language Groups

Language Family	Language Group
Eskimo-Aleut	Chukchi, Inupiaq, Gwich'in
	Central Yupik
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
Athabaskan	Dena'ina
	Ahtna
	Tanana
	Tanacross
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
Yupik	Siberian Yupik
	Naukan Yupik
	Sirenik
	Central Yupik
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
	Upper Kuskokwim
	Upper Tanana
Aleutian	Unangax
	Aleutian Islands
	Unangax
	Aleutian Islands
	Unangax
	Aleutian Islands
	Unangax
	Aleutian Islands
	Unangax
	Aleutian Islands

Indigenous Peoples and Languages of Alaska

This map shows the distribution of indigenous languages in Alaska. The map is color-coded by language family and includes labels for major groups like Inupiaq, Yupik, Athabaskan, and Eskimo-Aleut. It also features a legend for language families, a title 'Indigenous Peoples and Languages of Alaska', and logos for ASiC and the University of Alaska.



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