Sharing Our Pathways

A newsletter of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative

Alaska Federation of Natives ◆ University of Alaska ◆ National Science Foundation ◆ Rural School and Community Trust

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Camping on the Tanana River

by Claudette Bradley

Virginia Ned (far right) and camp participants perform "He'eeteghtldzaayh" at the ANSES camp potlatch.

On July 9, 2001, 15 middle-school students arrived at the Gaalee'ya Spirit Camp on the Tanana River to attend the Fairbanks ANSES Science Camp 2001. Six students came from Nulato, two from Fort Yukon, one each from Newhalen, Anchorage, Tanacross and Lime Village and three from Beijing, China. The Chinese students—one boy and two girls, 14 to 15 years of age—traveled nearly 4000 miles with two chaperones to attend our camp. They spoke English well and enjoyed full participation in the camp.

I served as the camp coordinator with support from Dixie Dayo as the staff assistant and Dawn Durtsche of the Gaalee'ya Board as the fiscal officer for the camp. Together we organized the camp held at Howard Luke's Gaalee'ya Spirit Camp which is also his home. The camp is designed to enhance students' Athabascan cultural knowledge and provide opportunity to do science research in a culturally-relevant setting.

The camp employed four Elders: Howard Luke, Elizabeth Fleagle, Margaret Tritt and Steven Toby. Howard Luke is well known for his many talks and the advice he gives the students. He welcomes our students every year and looks forward to helping young Native people grow into intelligent and respectful individuals. Elizabeth Fleagle is originally from Alatna and Manley Hot Springs. She taught the students how to sew beads on pouches and headbands using Athabascan designs. Margaret Tritt is from Arctic Village. She brought caribou hides and quills. The students learned to clean and tan caribou skins and make quill necklaces. Steven Toby, from

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Koyukuk, enjoyed taking students for walks in the wilderness. He told them about the animals, trees and survival in the forest. He had many old-time stories to share.

This summer was the first time students had Koyukon Athabascan classes. Velma Schafer is a certified teacher from Allakaket and is a fluent speaker of Koyukon Athabascan. Virginia Ned is also a certified teacher from Allakaket. Virginia acknowledges that Velma is her Athabascan language mentor. Together they taught students to introduce themselves, sing a song and play a game using the Koyukon Athabascan language.

Elder Elizabeth Fleagle demonstrates beadwork to students at camp.

IBM of Rochester, Minnesota, has been generous to our camp. Each year they have donated six laptops and one color printer which are operated by battery and generators since the camp has no electricity. In addition, they sent Todd Kelsey, an IBM education consultant to teach in our camp and help students with science projects. George Olanna is a certified teacher from Shishmaref and an Iñupiaq Elder-in-training. George is a veteran teacher in our camp. He teaches collaboratively with Todd in the computer classes and helps students with science projects. Both Todd and George have had a significant influence on our students.

Our students have the natural environment to research, Elders to provide the cultural knowledge for the background of their project and a computer lab to create labels, narrative, charts, graphs, diagrams and photos for their projects. The certified teaching staff has extensive experience with middle school Alaska Native students. George Olanna, Todd Kelsey, Virginia Ned, Velma Schafer and myself comprised the teaching staff, who worked with the students in small groups on the many phases of their science projects.

Jin Zhiyong is the deputy division chief of the China Science & Technology Exchange Center, Beijing, China. He presented an overview of China and its 56 minority groups. The boy, Yang Guang, developed a Powerpoint presentation of his school life in Beijing. The girls had yearbook photos of their high school and organized some Chinese games for the students to play. The three Chinese students study English in their Beijing high school. Song Huanran, their English teacher, was an enthusiastic participant in the camp. She especially enjoyed helping Howard split the salmon caught in his fish net.

Every year Howard gets an education permit from Fish and Game to use his fish wheel to catch salmon on the Tanana. This year Fish and Game banned all salmon fishing on the Tanana, though they wanted to have the fish tested for bacteria. Since Howard already had our camp operating, Fish and Game decided to send Paul Hershberger, a research biologist from the University of Washington to the camp. Paul wanted to test 60 fish, so they allowed Howard to use his fishnet to catch them. Cutting fish was a big event. The biologist took samples from the liver, heart and cir-

culatory system. Howard, Dixie and Song were kept busy splitting and hanging fish on the fish rack, which looked very full with nearly 60 fish waving at the edge of the riverbank.

Bradley Weyiounna, originally from Shishmaref, is a gold medal high-kick champion of the World Eskimo-Indian Olympics. He is very knowledgeable about the WEIO athletic events and demonstrated the games one evening along with Josh Rutman, another WEIO athlete. They demonstrated the high kick, arm wrestling, leg wrestling, arm pulls and Eskimo dancing. The students thoroughly enjoyed trying to do these events with each other.

Adeline Peter-Raboff is a Gwich'in Athabascan from Arctic Village who is going to Washington, D.C. to lobby on oil drilling in ANWR. She came to the camp one day to have dinner and talk with the students about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and the environmental issues involved in drilling for oil. Most of the students were uninformed about the issues and Adeline inspired great interest in oil drilling and ANWR.

Zelma Axford is an expert on Alaska's indigenous plants. She had the students gather plants from the surrounding area and then draw them in their journals. She gave them the Alaska Native names of the plants and their medicinal uses, which they also wrote in their journals. Then the students were given a plant encyclopedia and they looked up the Latin name for each plant and copied the names in their journal. When the journal writing was done, she sang and drummed for the students as they danced to her music. Zelma is from Stevens Village and enjoyed teaching the students traditional Athabascan dancing.

Rita O'Brien is a certified teacher and has worked in our camp for the past four years. She joined us for the weekend to work with students. She discussed mining and rocks in Alaska. She asked students to find rocks and then, using rock encyclopedias, they found the names and other features of each rock. Rita asked students to draw and write about their rocks in their journals.

The grand finale of the camp was the potlatch which people from the community were invited to attend. Our students helped the cook and Elders prepare the meal and set up the tables. At the potlatch everyone was introduced to the audience and given a small gift to signify our appreciation for their contribution to the camp. The students demonstrated the Athabascan songs and games they learned in their language class. At the end of the event everyone entered the Elder's Hall where the science project posters were on display. The students stood by their posters to explain their science projects to the visitors. The

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And the Beat Goes On . . .

by Frank Hill

Some time ago I listened to a drumming ceremony that lasted for most of a day and night. The first drummers set the beat, rhythm and volume. As they tired or completed their turn on the drums, other drummers moved into position and took up the drumsticks, carrying on the same beat, rhythm and volume as the beginning drummers, never missing a beat. Unless you saw the change in the drummers take place, you would not have known that the drumbeats and the message of the drums was being made by different drummers.

As we move into the second five years of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI), it is great to see our new partners take up the initiatives we have been developing and promoting the past six years, without missing a beat. The regional non-profits (Kawerak, AVCP, Tanana Chiefs and Central Council of Tlingit and Haida tribes) are well on their way toward becoming educational agents for positive change in their respective cultural regions. We are pleased, too, to see the initiatives continue to develop and broaden in the Alutiiq and Unangaŷ regions. It was great to be a spectator in Kodiak during the "Awakening Bear" celebration this past spring, where nearly all of the regional agencies were participating in planning and demonstrating how their activities worked together. Some activities have become self-sustaining in their own right as well, like the Old Minto Camp.

These are but a few of the examples available that demonstrate the continuing veracity of the AKRSI initiatives.

We are thankful that the new AKRSI partners have stepped in and helped keep up the drumbeat for systemic change in rural Alaska's schools.

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visitors moved from poster to poster and viewed the display table of beaded pouches and the wall display of their photos and brief autobiographies written in Koyukon Athabascan.

The following is a list of the science projects the students prepared:

- *Birch or Spruce?* by Kimberly Rychnovsky
- *Which Tastes Better?* by Britta Kellman
- *Beads* by Adele Stickman
- *Will Pitch Kill More Bacteria Than Water?* by Sommer Stickman
- *Do Frogs Croak Faster in Warm Weather?* by Katrina Madros
- *What Chickadees do for a Living* by Esther George?
- *Can Water Temperature Go Below Freezing?* by Terry Bower
- *What do Salmon Eat After Leaving the Ocean?* by Cynthia Agnes
- *How Many Different Athabascan Dialects are There in the Interior Of Alaska?* by Stephanie Moe
- *The Speed of the River* by Li Hanqiao
- *Why are There so Many Mosquitoes in and Around Camp?* by Yang Guang
- *I Want to Know Some Mysteries About Hair* by Yan Jinbo
- *How Can I Improve Lighting in a Trap Line Cabin?* by Mathew Shewfelt
- *How to Reduce Mosquitoes in Fort Yukon* by Kyle Joseph
- *Nets* by Catherine Keane

These students are expected to take their display boards to their classroom teacher this fall and then search the web and their school libraries for more background information on their project. They will have an opportunity to discuss their project with Elders, teachers and other experts in their villages or over the Internet, and then upgrade their project and enter it in the Fairbanks ANSES Science Fair 2001 in December. We look forward to seeing the students at the science fair.

Athabascan Region:

Emphasis on Native Language at Fairbanks ANSES Camp 2001

by Nakukluk Virginia Ned, Allakaket/Fairbanks

The Fairbanks Alaska Native Science and Engineering (ANSES) Camp created an ideal setting that sparked the students interest in learning the Central Koyukon Athabascan language. Velma Schafer and I had the opportunity to teach Central Koyukon language to the ANSES Camp participants this summer at the Gaalee'ya Spirit Camp. We worked with twelve students from Nulato, Newhalen, Ft. Yukon, Lime Village, Anchorage, Tanacross and three students from Beijing, China.

The students were enthusiastic about learning the language and as a result, their acquisition of the language was exceptional. The students from Ft. Yukon and Beijing spoke fluently in their indigenous languages. Other students had taken indigenous language classes at school and all had prior knowledge of their indigenous languages. Velma's expertise, high expectations and the ideal camp setting made it possible for the students to become naturally immersed in the Native language.

The students were taught Central Koyukon terms that enabled them to introduce themselves in the language stating their English name, their Koyukon name, their hometown and a short description of themselves. They were given a Central Koyukon name according to their personal characteristics, if they did not already have one. Names that were given included Hek'edeeonh (sunshine), Sotseeyh (happy all the time) and Tloo' (star). The students were also taught general terms for every day usage. They were required to create a display using a variety of media and written in the Koyukon language. We took pictures with a digital camera and the photos were printed for students to add to their poster.

They also learned a song, "This Little Heart of Mine," translated into Koyukon by Lorna Vent of Huslia. The title of the song is "He'eeteghtldzaayh." They learned a game that teaches body parts in the Koyukon language. It is a Koyukon version of the Yup'ik game, "Essuukee," introduced to me by Lolly Carpluk of Mountain Village. Velma Schafer translated the words into the Koyukon language. The title of the game in Koyukon is "Kkaakene". After the potlatch the students introduced themselves in Koyukon, sang the song "He'eeteghtldzaayh", and gave a demonstration of the game "Kkaakene" for the audience.

Learning the Native language unquestionably enhanced the science focus of the Fairbanks ANSES Camp program. The students did not just acquire a language, but they acquired a whole new perspective of themselves, their culture and traditions. Given the appropriate environment, they would do well if they were taught the language along with all of the basic requirements in order to acquire a well-rounded education.

Ka Lamaku Hawaiian Academy

by Kamaileula Halualani-Hee

Ka Lamaku Hawaiian Academy is a voluntary, culturally based educational opportunity that was founded by Kamaileula Halualani-Hee and Makaio Hee as an effort to help their school-disabled son and daughter. It opened services to other children in September of 1999. Ka Lamaku currently rents a one-bedroom apartment as our temporary school house.

Ka Lamaku means "upright torch, standing beacon,"—a name chosen to signify a strong guiding light that pierces the darkness, bringing wanderers to safety. Ka Lamaku is also an ancient Hawaiian symbol of knowledge. Ka Lamaku Hawaiian Academy is an action research pilot program aimed at meeting Hawaii's educational needs of school-disabled children grades 7–12 on the island of Oahu in the Ko'olau poko and Ko'olau Loa communities.

A school-disabled child is one whose maturational and learning differences have been misunderstood and underserved and, consequently, whose personal, social and familial functioning have been so impaired as to render that child unable to perform successfully in a school environment. The students we serve are, because of a myriad of circumstances beyond their control, disadvantaged in many ways. Their academic achievements as well as other skills that create social competencies had, as a result, been seriously and negatively affected. Most of these student's were exhibiting signs of social distress such as flat affect, anti-social attitudes and behaviors, disrespect for authority, irresponsible actions, truancy, school failure and substance abuse. Some were school disabled while others had developed pre-delinquent behaviors and were known to local policemen. They had been described as "throw away kids". Ka Lamaku Hawaiian Academy does not accept such evaluations for these youth.

We believe in a new kind of "three Rs": Rescue, Restore and Re-educate. Through deep and constant use of Hawaiian cultural values, Ka Lamaku has impacted the lives of twenty youngsters of mixed Hawaiian ancestry. The program has been open to whomever applied, but those it attracted were all children of part-Hawaiian ancestry who had been struggling unsuccessfully in the state D.O.E. programs. Ka Lamaku is a community-based effort, creating pedagogy that proves effective for children with learning differences.

The staff has been involving the children, their parents, kupuna (elder) and other talented members in designing and implementing curriculum modules. Thus the students are in many ways teaching us how to teach them, showing us what works by their enthusiastic response to learning opportunities. They also show us what doesn't work and participate in discussions about how to improve those areas and teaching methods. Several volunteer teachers have come and gone. They proved to be steeped in the Western, textbook pedagogy and when they were unsuccessful and became discouraged, they tended to blame the children for failing to learn when it was they who failed to teach.

At present we are applying for federal New Century Public Charter status, however our goal is to one day be Hawaii's first sovereign school. Request for admission is made on a daily basis but, because of severe financial and space restraints, we are unable to accommodate more students at this time.

If you or your organization would like to assist Ka Lamaku Hawaiian Academy or would like more information please contact Kamaileula Halualani- Hee at (808) 293-1121 or e-mail kamaileula@aol.com. Our mailing address is PO BOX 693, Hauula, Hawaii 96717.

Now Available!

Iñuksuk: Northern Koyukon, Gwich'in and Lower Tanana 1800–1901

by Adeline Peter Raboff

The history of the Northern Koyukon, Western Gwich'in and Lower Tanana people. 196 pages, $10.00

Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages

This booklet offers suggestions for Elders, parents, children and educators to use in strengthing their heritage language with support from the Native community, schools, linguists and education agencies. 28 pages, free.

For more information on obtaining copies of these publications, call Dixie Dayo at 907-474-5086 or e-mail dixie.dayo@uaf.edu.

Teacher Leadership Development Project

The underlying purpose of the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative is to implement a set of initiatives to systematically document the indigenous knowledge systems of Alaska Native people and develop pedagogical practices and school curricula that appropriately incorporate indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into the formal education systems. Having successfully demonstrated the efficacy of this strategy in strengthening rural schools and teachers and improving student achievement, the challenge for AKRSI now is to help infuse the initiatives into the curricular and instructional practices on a sustainable basis.

The high turnover rate of teaching staff (80% of whom are recruited from out-of-state) necessitates a targeted approach to leadership development that focuses on those teachers most likely to put these resources to effective use and bring their cumulative insights to bear over time, i.e., teachers for whom the community/region/state is their home. To that end, the AKRSI has requested supplemental funds from the National Science Foundation to implement a Teacher Leadership Development Project (TLDP). The structures through which the TLDP will be implemented are those associated with regional and statewide Native educator associations. Following is a current list of the associations that have emerged in response to AKRSI initiatives over the past six years:

- Ciulistet Education Association
- Association of Interior Native Educators
- Southeast Native Educators Association
- North Slope Iñupiaq Educators Association
- Association of Native Educators of the Lower Kuskokwim
- Association of Northwest Native Educators
- Native Educators of the Alutiiq Region
- Association of Unangan/Unangas Educators
- Alaska Native Education Student Association
- Alaska Native Education Council
- Alaska First Nations Research Network
- Alaska Indigenous Literary Review Board
- Consortium for Alaska Native Higher Education
- Native Education Association of Anchorage

Implementation of the AKRSI TLDP

The main function of the AKRSI Teacher Leadership Development Project will be to strengthen and make sustainable the role of the Native Educator Associations and their members in implementing the math/science educational reform initiatives promoted by the AKRSI. This will require the development of leadership capacity in each region and the establishment of formal mechanisms to sustain the implementation of these initiatives independent of the AKRSI resources by 2005. Following are the steps that will be taken to implement this strategy:

- The Alaska Native Education Advisory Council to the Commissioner of Education, made up of representatives from each of the Native Educator Associations, will be designated as the governing body to provide direction for the implementation of the Teacher Leadership Development Project.
- The Alaska Native Education Advisory Council and the AKRSI Co-PIs will recruit and select a full-time project director to coordinate and oversee the initiatives sponsored by the Teacher Leadership Development Project.
- At least one Native educator association in each of the five major cultural regions will be assisted in obtaining 501(c)3 non-profit status, so as to be eligible to obtain and implement grants and contracts under their own authority.
- The Native educator associations from each of the five cultural regions will be invited to prepare and submit a work plan outlining the steps they would propose to take to implement the Teacher Leadership Development Project in their region, including the identification of a lead/master teacher for the region (with up to half release time from their employing district) and the activities to be implemented in conjunction with the AKRSI initiative emphasis for each year (e.g., science camps/fairs, Academy of Elders, cultural atlas, curriculum alignment, parent/community involvement, etc.) The lead/master teachers will be selected at the regional level with criteria comparable to those for the project director, but with responsibilities directed toward regional implementation of the AKRSI/TLDP math/science educational reform initiatives. The selection committee will

consist of regional Native educator association members, the TLDP project director and the AKRSI co-directors.

- Once selected, the lead/master teachers will work with the AKRSI staff to develop the wherewithal to assist teachers and schools in the implementation of the initiatives associated with the Teacher Leadership Development Project in alignment with the AKRSI regional initiatives and the *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools*.
- The Native educator associations will convene regional and statewide meetings to review the action plans for preparing culturally-responsive teachers from the 2000 Native Education Summit and the recommendations from the 2001 Forum on Culturally-Responsive Curriculum and to develop action plans for regional implementation of those recommendations. The regional action plans will take into account the *Guidelines for Preparing Culturally-Responsive Teachers* and the *Guidelines for Nurturing Culturally-Healthy Youth.*
- The Native educator associations will work with local districts and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to sponsor a cross-cultural orientation program, including an immersion camp component, for all teachers new to the district/region.
- The Native educator associations will work with local school districts to provide career ladder incentives that encourage all teachers and teacher aides to pursue training for a cross-cultural specialist endorsement, Type A license with math/science emphasis and/or graduate studies oriented toward implementing culturally responsive, standards-based science and math instruction.
- The Native educator associations will encourage their members to participate in the Native Administrators for Rural Alaska program in pursuit of a Type B principals credential with a distributed leadership orientation.
- The Native educator associations, in collaboration with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, will host an annual statewide conference to showcase the instructional and curricular strategies and initiatives that demonstrate the greatest promise toward implementing culturally-responsive, standards-based science and math instruction.

These initiatives are intended to begin with the 2001–02 school year, with the process for selection of the project director and lead/master teachers to occur by the end of September. Funding for the TLDP will be administered through the Alaska Federation of Natives with support for the activities of the lead/master teachers provided through memoranda of agreement with the employing school districts. The project director and the lead/master teachers will be included as core staff and will participate in all planning activities associated with the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative. Upon completion of the three-year cycle of initiatives associated with the Teacher Leadership Development Project, all teachers in the AKRSI partner schools will have received support to incorporate the math/science curricular and instructional strategies in their educational practice, with on-going support provided through an established statewide network of Native educator associations.

2001–01 Native Education Events

Here are some Alaska Native education events for the 2001-2002 school year that you should mark on your calendar.

The Alaska Federation of Natives Elders and Youth Conference and Convention will take place in Anchorage the week of October 21, 2001, including the Alaska Native Education Council meeting on October 21–23 at the Westcoast International.

The National Indian Education Association annual meeting will be held in Billings, Montana on October 27–31, 2001. Details can be obtained from the NIEA web site at http://www.niea.org.

The annual Native Educators' Conference and Bilingual-Multicultural Education/Equity Conference is scheduled for the week of February 3, 2002 in Anchorage. Details for participation in these conferences will be posted on the ANKN web site in October.

The First Alaskans Foundation is sponsoring a statewide Alaska Native Education Summit in Anchorage on November 30–December 1, 2001. Further information will be available on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site as it becomes available.

The sixth tri-annual World Indigenous People's Conference on Education is scheduled for August 4–10, 2002 to be hosted by the First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium of Calgary, Alberta. Details about WIPCE 2002 can be obtained by sending an email to wipce@fnahec.org or by going to their web site at http://www.fnahec.org/wipce2002. The deadline for submission of proposals for presentations has been extended to October 31, 2001. Let's make sure there is a strong Alaskan presence at WIPCE 2002!

Integrating Elders in Northern School Programs

by Cathy McGregor

"Our Elders were the keepers of knowledge. Without them, each generation would have learned everything there was to know by discovering it themselves."

—From Inuuqatigiit Curriculum, Department of Education, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, 1996, p. 46

In 1994, as director (superintendent) of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education in Iqaluit, Northwest Territories, Canada, I was asked the question every educational leader dreams of hearing: "If you could have money for one thing in your schools, what would it be?" I didn't know if the question was hypothetical or real. Should I take it seriously? If it was real, I thought I knew the answer right away, but I paused to turn over all the possibilities in my mind. What would have the most effect on students? It seemed like schools could never get enough computers. Should we hire extra special needs assistants? We always needed more resources to support Inuktitut book publication. What about northern books for school libraries? Did schools need new gym equipment? High schools probably wanted more science equipment. I quickly reviewed these and other possibilities, but I knew my initial thought was the right one. I said what the chairman of the board talked about in every public speech and meeting he attended: "Money to hire more Elders."

It turned out that the question was very real. Thanks to the efforts of a territorial administrator and a federal official who wanted to make a difference and had program funds to support their ideas, this conversation began a five-year partnership with the Canadian federal government to support the hiring of Elders in Baffin schools. For the first several years the funding came directly from the federal government. When the federal and territorial governments, in partnership with the Inuit land claim organization, Nunavut Tunngavik, established the Nunavut Human Resource Development Strategy, funding came through their auspices (Working Group on Human Resources and Training, 1996) . The Baffin Divisional Board supported the project as well, so that for the five-year period of the federal funding, $200,000 was made available to schools each year.

Elders as Cultural Inclusion or Cultural Integration?

When Elders first started coming into schools in northern Canada in the 1970s, their work with students was often considered an add-on to the regular program. Lessons frequently took place on Friday afternoon when the teacher and students were tired of the weekly routine. Activities often involved a whole class of students in their regular classroom. Teachers did little preparation of the students or the Elders for their time together. Teachers sometimes viewed the lessons by Elders as "spares" for themselves and left the room. Viewed from the advantage of today, these "cultural inclusion" programs appear as token gestures by the school system to the teaching of traditional knowledge and skills. It is difficult to imagine that either the students or the Elders got much satisfaction from these encounters.

Today, the work of Elders is seen as integral to the success of school programs. In most communities in the Baffin region, schools have a dual mandate from the Local Education Authority, as well as the territorial

Additional references and notes can be found on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site at http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/SOP/sopv6i4.html.

government, to teach both traditional Inuit knowledge and skills and contemporary Western knowledge and skills. A survey of all Baffin communities in 1986 and direction-setting work with individual communities from 1993–96 confirmed this dual agenda. Thus the work that Elders do is part of the regular school program today. In the late 80s and early 90s, the Baffin Piniaqtavut Program of Studies provided topics for teachers to use to connect the work of Elders with the rest of the school program. The Inuuqatigiit curriculum from K–12, mandated by the government in 1996, outlines traditional Inuit knowledge and skills students should learn within various school divisions (K–3, 4–6, 7–9, 10–12). This provides the basis for integrating culture and the work of Elders into the regular curriculum. It is within this context that the work of Elders with students should be viewed.

Ways to Fund Elders

For many years, the Baffin Board had requested that the government fund positions for Elders in schools similar to the way in which they funded positions for teachers and language specialists (para-professionals). At that time, this had not happened (nor has it yet). There were a number of ways in which schools obtained funds to hire Elders to teach traditional knowledge:

- Each school received funds as part of their base budget to support cultural programming. A per pupil allocation determined the specific amount each school received. (This of course, gave an advantage to larger schools in terms of flexibility in using the funds.) Schools could use these funds to hire Elders and to purchase the materials (skins, gas, ammunition, etc.) required to carry out traditional activities.
- If the Local Education Authority (the elected school council) who had authority to determine the budget chose to do so, they could also allocate funds from other parts of the school budget for this purpose.
- The board had a regional Spring Camp Fund to which schools could submit a proposal to access additional funds for resource people such as Elders, as well as equipment and materials to hold this important annual event.
- The board had a regional Orientation Fund to which schools could submit proposals to access additional funds to involve community members and Elders in annual orientation activities for new staff.
- Schools could raise third party funds from foundations and other organizations. Often guidelines for grants for other purposes allowed schools to include funding for Elders as part of the budget for such projects.
- Schools could access funds from regional Inuit organizations through the local settlement/village council, who controlled the funding for specific programs from other departments of the federal government. For example, the federal Healthy Children initiative allowed activities which involved Elders.
- Schools could partner with community groups such as the Hunters and Trappers Organization to get in-kind support for land-based activities.
- Schools could use full time staff positions intended for language specialists or teachers.

While these options provided funding for Elder involvement in schools, the additional funding enabled schools to increase the numbers of Elders present, extend the length of time they were involved with students and/or add new activities.

Ways to Involve Elders

The Baffin Board made funds available to schools through a grant system. The total money available was divided into school allocations, which each school could apply to access. Individual school allocations were determined by setting a base amount for all schools and then adding a per-pupil amount to achieve the total allocation available. Schools had to submit a brief proposal outlining how the Elders would be involved with students. The Local Education Authority chairperson, the principal and the staff member coordinating the project had to sign the proposal. For the first several years, the grants focused just on Elder involvement with students.

In 1996, with the implementation of the government-mandated Inuuqatigiit curriculum, which outlined the traditional knowledge, skills and attitudes from an Inuit perspective that students should learn in school, the focus of the grants shifted somewhat to involving Elders in implementing the new curriculum (see appendix). In fact, this shift did not really change the nature of Elder involvement—they still taught traditional knowledge and skills. It did provide school staff with a guide of topics, an outline of what students should learn and a description of key experiences they might ask Elders to organize. In other words, it provided an organizational framework for traditional knowledge instruction.

Using a combination of funds available, schools hired Elders in a number of different ways, to do a variety of things:

- As full time cultural instructors—regular staff members along with teachers and language specialists—usually with scheduled times each week for work with different classes or groups of students. The

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topics and skills they taught varied depending on the age and interests of the students and the interests of the Elder.

- As part-time instructors who came in several days or afternoons a week during the year to do a variety of activities with different groups of students, depending on the class and Elder's interests. As with full time instructors, these activities could include storytelling, teaching string and other Inuit games, skin preparation, sewing, cooking, tool construction, specific skills instruction, carving, drum dancing, researching specific topics, helping with community histories, telling their life stories, etc.
- As part-time instructors who taught a "unit" or specific topic or activity every day to the same students for several weeks at a time.
- As part-time instructors who were involved in specific activities such as Spring Camp or, for example, once-a-week on-the-land programs with at-risk students for the duration of the program.
- As part-time research sources to narrate information on a specific topic to be developed into a teaching unit or a learning resource.
- As part-time program developers to assist teachers and language specialists with creating materials which teach aspects of traditional knowledge. For example: iglu building, small tool construction, sewing with caribou skins, how to make *igunaaq* (fermented seal or whale meat), how to read the weather, etc.
- As full or part-time Inuktitut language instructors in addition to, or instead of, language specialists.
- As part-time counselors, mainly for students, but also sometimes for staff members. Some staffs have found it particularly helpful to have Elders in the school after difficult or tragic community events.
- As an Elders' council for the principal (in addition to the Local Education Authority) to assist with solving particularly thorny problems, community liaison, planning cultural programs and hosting special events and activities.

Ensuring Success with Elders

There are many reasons to involve Elders in schools:

- To meet goals set by Local Education Authorities (and the government) which identify traditional knowledge and skills as a major component of school programs.
- To maintain, strengthen and enhance Inuit language and culture.
- To create links between the past and the present.
- To build links between the school and the community.
- To encourage links between students and their parents and grandparents.
- To build positive relationships between Elders and younger generations.
- To help students learn to respect Elders, the lives they have lived and the knowledge and skills they have to share.
- To acknowledge and provide opportunities for Elders to share the wisdom, skills and experiences they have accumulated with younger generations.
- To reflect, promote and teach Inuit values and beliefs.
- To foster student and staff pride in their Inuit identity and enhance self-esteem and personal identity.
- To promote respect for animals and other elements of the natural environment which are intimately linked with Inuit culture.
- To ensure younger generations are knowledgeable about and can practice traditional/contemporary survival skills.

To achieve these goals, both Elders and students need to enjoy their experiences together. To enable this to happen, careful thought needs to be given to how and where the Elders work with students. We have found the following suggestions to be helpful in ensuring positive experiences:

- It is an unfortunate aspect of modern life that Elders may be requested in some districts to have criminal record checks completed prior to working in the school. If so, the school needs to expedite the process in any way possible.
- It is usually helpful if there is one staff member in the school who coordinates the Elder resource program. Ideally it should be someone from the community who speaks the language and knows community members well. Ideally this should be a responsibility that is part of the staff member's normal workload, not added to a full time teaching job. Having such a person minimizes potential communication and cross-cultural misunderstandings.
- It is important to clarify ahead of time what the Elder would like to do with the students and what materials and equipment will be needed. Will the Elder provide these (at the school's expense if there is any cost) or will the school provide them?
- Elders may require transportation to and from the school. The school should arrange this and cover any costs involved.
- Elders should be made aware of how much the school pays them (by the hour or the day or whatever is normal practice). There should be a standard fee for Elders' work. They should know how and when they will receive their money. If possible, it is preferable to pay them the same day. This is not always possible, but it usually is much appreciated if it can be arranged. (It is also