



our mission

The First Alaskans Institute will help develop the capacities of Alaska Native Peoples and their communities to meet the social, economic and educational challenges of the future, while fostering positive relationships among all segments of our society.

our vision

“progress for the *next* ten thousand years”

Living and prospering on ancestral lands, using tradition and culture as the foundation for advancement together, Native Peoples build their future confident and proud.

october 2003

Dear Friends:

We are honored to present this newsletter as a status report on programs and activities of the First Alaskans Institute. This non-profit organization uses its endowment and grant funds to focus on three initiatives: improving education for Natives, developing leadership and establishing the Alaska Native Policy Center.

As we gather in Anchorage for the 2003 Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives and move toward the future, we are reminded again that one of the greatest challenges faced by the Native community is the education of our children. If we are really going to improve Alaska's school system for Natives, we will have to make educational reform a central part of our quest for SELF-DETERMINATION.

Over the years, we have become self-directing peoples, with authority and responsibility in many walks of life: health, housing, tribal governance, corporate operations. But, somehow, education was always someone else's world, outside our reach. We have powerful statewide and regional institutions that guide and create inspiration in virtually every arena – except education! That must end now. This is why we have great respect for the theme of this year's Convention – and why we invite you to attend First Alaskans Institute's Native Education Summit at the Hilton Anchorage on November 3 and 4 of this year.

Development of the next generation of Native leaders – by means of Spirit camps for children and adolescents, fellowships, internships, mentoring, job opportunities, and other activities – is our investment in the future. This program says to our young people: “We believe in you, and we will help you succeed.”

The Alaska Native Policy Center is an effort to bring our people into full participation in a political system that has often marginalized us. By enabling Alaska Natives to become informed about, to involve ourselves in, and to have impact on the issues that will determine our future as indigenous peoples, we are giving voice to the Native intellect. That, too, is self-determination.

One of the Policy Center's first projects will analyze data on the status of Natives: population, economics, education, and wellness. We will take these findings to regional gatherings of village leaders, meetings on university campuses and other venues. We will also post the findings on our website. This is our effort to take research on Natives back to Natives, for our own understanding and interpretation, and we invite your participation in the project.

Through its three initiatives, First Alaskans Institute has completed several major efforts, with more underway. Please take a few moments to read through this status report to understand how First Alaskans Institute is turning a broad mission into practical information for use by our own people and others. In raising the level of knowledge about the critical public issues facing our people, we are emphasizing remarkable Native successes of the past, as well as addressing the challenges that remain before us. Thank you for your interest.

Janie Leask, Chair, Board of Trustees
First Alaskans Institute

Byron I. Mallott, President and CEO
First Alaskans Institute



alaska Native education summit

November 3-4, 2003, Hilton Anchorage

The third Alaska Native Education Summit will be held November 3-4, 2003, at the Hilton Anchorage. This year's summit intentionally falls on the heels of the AFN Convention, the theme for which is Self-Determination in Education. Summit registration, scholarship forms and the draft agenda are available online at www.firstalaskans.org, or by calling (907) 677-1700.

Accommodations:

Hilton Anchorage
Located in the heart of downtown Anchorage at the corner of 3rd & E Street at 500 West 3rd Avenue, the Hilton Anchorage provides the Alaska Native Education Summit registrants a special single rate of \$72 per night or \$36 per person, double occupancy. These rates do not include applicable taxes, which are currently 8

First Alaskans Institute

a report to the people - october 2003 "progress for the next ten thousand years"

First Alaskans Institute's mission is to help develop the capacities of Alaska Native Peoples and their communities to meet the social, economic and educational challenges of the future, while fostering positive relationships among all segments of Alaskan society.

Day by day, First Alaskans Institute is fulfilling its mission. Through its three initiatives – leadership development, education, and public policy – the Institute has completed, and is working on, several major efforts that are highlighted below. Our role is to act as a facilitator, a convener and a catalyst of action, focusing attention on critical issues and raising them to a higher level of public consciousness and information. With a firm foundation in our traditional cultures, we are working in the present to create a better world for all of our children.

Completed Projects

- Participation in 25 infrastructure capacity-building projects throughout rural Alaska with funds provided by the Denali Commission.
- Two Alaska Native Education Summits (2001, 2002) held for parents, students, teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, policy makers and other leaders to tackle issues surrounding education for Alaska Natives.
- Commissioned a statewide study of Alaska Native opinions regarding education.
- One million dollars in scholarship monies granted to the ANCSA Education Consortium.
- A "Best practices" gathering of Native Culture/Spirit Camp Directors held June, 2003, with support from the Rasmuson Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Chugach Heritage Foundation.
- Statewide Leadership Summits (2001, 2002), held in conjunction with the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention.
- Completion of a survey titled "Native Perspectives on Alaska Issues," in collaboration with the Alaska Humanities

Forum, Alaska 20/20, and the McDowell Group.

Current Projects

- Third Alaska Native Education Summit, scheduled for November 3 and 4 in Anchorage. **See page 4 for details.**
- Support for career opportunities in Alaska's oil and gas industries, through federal grants to First Alaskans Institute.
- Support to the University of Alaska's Alaska Native Oratory Society.
- Research and dissemination of an Alaska Native Education Profile highlighting in one document K-12 education statistics. **See page 5 for more details.**
- Data analysis of the socio-economic condition of Natives (population, economics, education and wellness) followed by regional meetings and other gatherings to discuss and interpret such findings. **See page 3 for more details.**
- Alaska Native Policy Center Discussion Series on socio-economic indicators in Rural Alaska. **See page 6 for more details.**

Projects in the Works

- Educational resource guide designed for teachers and other users, to be posted on First Alaskans Institute's website in 2004.
- Redesign of the First Alaskans website.
- Establishment of a career development program for several rural communities with successful youth programs.
- Development of a childhood literacy research and pilot reading project.

Please read through the newsletter for more detail on the above projects. If you have any questions, we can be reached at (907) 677-1700 or by email at info@firstalaskans.org.

Alaska Native Education Summit continued from page 1

percent (an additional \$5.76). To receive this reduced room rate, contact the Hilton at 1-907-272-7411 or toll-free at 1-800-245-2527. Be sure to mention the Native Education Summit when making your reservation.

The first 350 registrants will receive an Education Summit tote bag. On Sunday, November 2, early bird registrants at the Hilton will be eligible for a special door prize drawing on Monday morning.

Airlines:

Discounted fares of 15 percent off full fare and 10 percent off excursion fares are available. Please mention Code CMA0581, the code for the Alaska Native Education Summit. Contact Alaska Airlines at the below number for reservations and to obtain the reduced fare.

Alaska Airlines: 1-800-445-4435

at a glance: numbers tell the story

626,932	Total population of Alaska
107,682	Alaska Natives
53	Total number of school districts
	Number of schools by region:
12	Ahtna
14	Aleut
10	Arctic Slope
19	Bering Straits
28	Bristol Bay
55	Calista
9	Chugach
175	CIRI
82	Doyon
14	Koniag
13	NANA
69	Sealaska
1	Mt. Edgecumbe High School
1	Alyeska Central School
502	Total number of K-12 schools
205	Number of schools that made Adequate Yearly Progress
283	Number of schools that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress
8,325	Total number of teachers
385	Total number of Native teachers
344	Total number of principals
13	Total number of Native principals
52	Total number of superintendents
3	Total number of Native superintendents



“our choices - our future” project status report

Background

In 1989, the Alaska Federation of Natives published its *Report on the Status of Alaska Natives: A Call for Action*. That report, prepared by the University of Alaska’s Institute of Social and Economic Research, revealed compelling statistics on the condition of Native people (population, economics/employment, health/wellness and public education).

The Alaska Federation of Natives recently commissioned ISER to update these socio-economic indicators of Native well-being, focusing on the same four categories of data. The AFN has also contracted with First Alaskans Institute/Alaska Native Policy Center for analysis and dissemination of the data to the Native community and the public.

Goals

First Alaskans Institute and the Policy Center have undertaken this project (August 2003 to June 2004) in order to provide critical information to Native people, organizations and communities. We believe the data will show instances of great success (e.g., lower infant mortality rates, less infectious disease, higher literacy and graduation rates), as well as the serious challenges we still face (e.g., unemployment and poverty, substance abuse and behavioral disorder, the need for educational improvements). We all see victories and challenges on a small scale every day in our communities; but we seldom get the chance to see such regional and statewide data, including historical trends and projections. The Alaska Native Policy Center will bring this information to you and ask for your interpretation of the data and trends. Are the data accurate? Do they adequately illustrate what is happening in our communities? Does it make sense? Above all, what steps can we, as Native people, take to address our greatest needs?

Project Outline

Researchers at the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) will gather data from the 2000 Census; from federal, state and local governments; and from previous studies (e.g., Alaska Natives Commission, Governor’s Commission on Rural Governance and Empowerment, and First Alaskans’ Native Education Summits). ISER will make its findings available to the Policy Center.

The Alaska Native Policy Center’s first task is to analyze such statistics, narratives and graphics and put them into a user-friendly format. Our analysis will be done by staff and an eight-member Project Team composed of experienced

Native leaders from around the state. The Team’s roles are to advise the overall project; to work with staff on presenting the research findings; and to create a meeting process that stimulates thinking and discussion.

The Policy Center’s second task is to take the re-formatted data to our own people. We are establishing a schedule that will bring this information to: 1) regional meetings of village leaders, 2) university campuses, 3) the Policy Center’s website, and 4) other forums.

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Between October and December, 2003, the Policy Center staff and Project Team will receive this information from ISER and will begin the analytical process. In addition, the Policy Center will convene a Discussion Series in the Anchorage area on the four topic areas: Economics, Population Trends, Education, and Health/Wellness. (Additional information on the Discussion Series can be found on page 6.) Project updates will be posted to the Policy Center’s website at www.firstalaskans.org.

The Policy Center will work with non-profit

regions in order to convene a series of one-day meetings of village leaders to consider the findings. Due to time and budget limitations, Policy Center staff plans to visit those regions with the largest numbers of villages – and will include a representative spread of all the ethnic/linguistic groups that compose the statewide Native community.

In addition to regional meetings with village leaders, the Policy Center is organizing discussions of these socio-economic indicators on university campuses including the University of Alaska, Sheldon Jackson College, and Alaska Pacific University. For example, the Policy Center will work with the College of Rural Alaska to bring the data and discussions to the campuses in Bethel, Dillingham, Nome, Kotzebue and Fairbanks. We will also post the findings on the Policy Center website, soliciting comments and recommendations from people with Internet access. The substantive results of all these activities will be made available to the Native Community and to the public.

Work Products

At the close of this project on June 30, 2004, the Alaska Native Policy Center will submit to the Alaska Federation of Natives a report of the Policy Center analysis. The Policy Center will also produce a detailed report documenting the process for understanding the data and how we went about each phase of the work. An independent evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project to determine if project goals and objectives were achieved. In closing, this project will provide the kinds of quantitative data the Native community can use to make decisions and to address our needs.

For more information on this project, please contact the Alaska Native Policy Center at (907) 677-1700 or info@firstalaskans.org.

policy center partners in survey of Native perspectives

The First Alaskans Institute/Alaska Native Policy Center partnered with the Alaska Humanities Forum to sponsor a survey of Native perspectives on Alaska Issues. The random phone survey was conducted by the McDowell Group as part of Alaska 20/20, a project of the Alaska Humanities Forum.

The survey was conducted to elicit information about Native perspectives on topics such as mobility, quality of life,

statewide and community issues, education, gender issues, the economy, leadership, environment and subsistence.

The final version of this survey is complete and is also available on the First Alaskans Institute website at www.firstalaskans.org. For more information contact the Alaska Native Policy Center at (907) 677-1700 or the Alaska Humanities Forum at (907) 272-5316.

First Alaskans Institute

third education summit planned

Native educators, school board members, parents and students are among the hundreds of Alaskans expected to gather in Anchorage, November 3 and 4, for the third Alaska Native Education Summit, hosted by First Alaskans Institute.

This year's summit is designed differently. The planning committee has structured the agenda to allow for full group planning sessions followed by facilitated regional break-outs. The intent is to discuss strategies that the participants can take home and implement.

The topics to be presented and discussed include:

- What do we want Alaska Native children/students to learn/know about us?
- Presentation of data from the Alaska Native Policy Center on the state of education in our schools;
- Best practices from in-state schools demonstrating Adequate Yearly Progress;
- No Child Left Behind Act implications for what we want our kids to be learning and how they are taught;
- Best practices from abroad that have provided an opportunity for indigenous people to own and drive their local systems;
- Discussion about a state level organization that drives a Native education agenda;
- Development of greater numbers of quality Native teachers and administrators;
- Native leaders' roles in education;
- Response from education officials to the above.

Special guest speakers include Regis Pecos, the Assistant to the Speaker of the House in New Mexico; and Timi Maipi, Board Chair, and John

Neremia, Principal of the Rakaumanga Native School in New Zealand.
<http://www.rakaumanga.school.nz/about.htm>

Registration is \$100 for both days; registration forms are available online at www.firstalaskans.org or by calling (907) 677-1700. The summit is open to all interested persons.



Please contact First Alaskans Institute if you would like a copy of the 2002 Native Education Summit CD.



Group discussions are a useful tool for creating energy and ownership.

101 ways Native parents can be involved in their children's education

The following is an excerpt of quotes from parents who participated in the Cook Inlet Tribal Council's First Family Gathering for Education in May 2003. A complete listing is available by contacting CITC Family Services at (907) 265-5911.

1. "Encourage my child to stay in school."
2. "Get them up and out the door, make sure they eat a good breakfast."
3. "We need to provide the environment they can feel safe in. Let them know that it is ok to question what is going on around them."
4. "We will do what it takes to support them."
5. "Make sure they get their homework done and get enough rest so they can be focused in school."
6. "Encourage each child to do their best in every subject in school."
7. "For my kid I want to walk with my kid's good times, and help them to stand up when they stumble."
8. "Talk to them about school and help them at home."
9. "Be involved, ask questions, be supportive, and listen to them."
10. "Help them with homework encouragement, teach them what you know, driving skills."

measuring adequate yearly progress of alaska schools

Holding schools accountable for the performance of all students is a cornerstone of the No Child Left Behind Act. Under the new law, this accountability is based on whether or not schools, districts and states are making adequate yearly progress (AYP) towards the goal of bringing 100 percent of their students to academic proficiency by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Preliminary results released by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development indicate that 205 of 488 schools (42 percent) met all the AYP targets of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, while 283 schools did not meet AYP targets. The data for the remaining 14 schools is not yet complete.

To show adequate yearly progress, all student subgroups must show improvement in reading/language arts and in mathematics. Student subgroups include economically

disadvantaged students, limited English proficiency students, students with disabilities, and students in major racial and ethnic groups. Performance on reading and math assessments are the main indicators of whether AYP is being met, but graduation rates must be met. In addition, graduation rates must be met. If there is not a 12th grade, then attendance rates must be at acceptable levels.

There are 31 ways to measure whether a school is making Adequate Yearly Progress as indicated in the adjacent table.

For more information on how your school performed in meeting the requirements of adequate yearly progress, visit the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development website:
<http://www.eed.state.ak.us/news/2003AYPSchoolsbyDistrict.pdf>.

31 Reasons A School May Not Make Adequate Yearly Progress

Number	The Reason
#1 thru #3	The school must have 95 percent of its total student body participate in the testing and meet the proficiency levels in both language arts and math.
#4 thru #30	Each of the following nine ethnic and socio-economic groups must meet the following criteria: 95 percent participation in the testing; 64.03 percent must be proficient in language arts; 54.86 percent proficient in math. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African American • Alaska Native • American Indian • Asian • Caucasian • Hispanic • Economically Disadvantaged • Students with Disabilities • LEP Students
#31	If a school goes through the 12th grade, the school must meet the graduation rate of 55.58 percent; or If a school does not go to the 12th grade, the annual average attendance rate must be at least 85 percent.

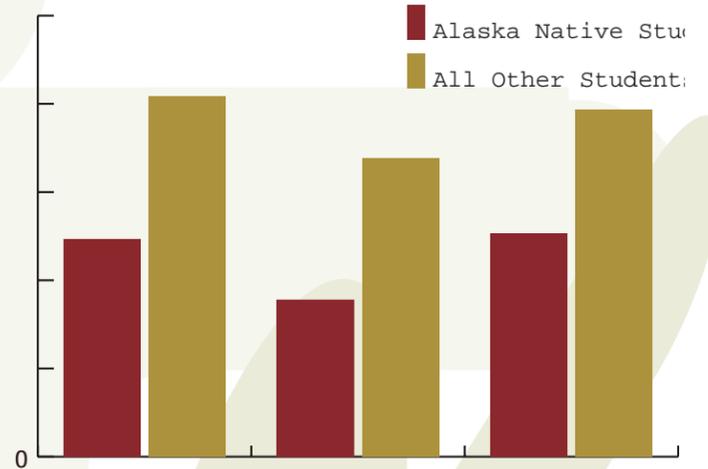


alaska Native education profile

On behalf of First Alaskans Institute's Education Initiative, the Alaska Native Policy Center has commissioned a report from the McDowell Group to compile education data on Alaska Natives. The final report will provide a quantitative baseline for defining the current education status of the Alaska Native population. The study highlights the Adequate Yearly Progress report, benchmark exams, high school qualifying exams and other information relevant to determining the status of education for Alaska Natives. This is the first time that such data will be compiled in a single document broken out by regional corporation boundaries. This report will be presented at the Alaska Native Education Summit, November 3, at the Hilton Anchorage. It will also be available on our website, www.firstalaskans.org. The following is a preview of the data that will be included in the Alaska Native Education Profile.

In the three grades tested, of the students who passed the tests, Alaska Native students are performing at 20 percentage points or more behind all other students in reading, writing, and math. The following three graphs should be read as "The percent of students proficient in reading, writing and math."

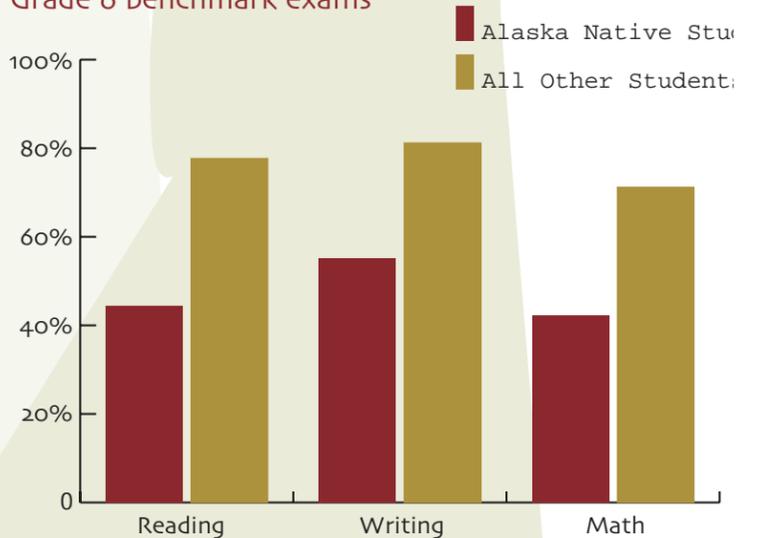
Grade 3 benchmark exams



Alaska Public School Districts Benchmark Exam Results

		Grade 3		
		Reading	Writing	Math
Statewide	Alaska Native Students	49.4%	35.5%	50.7%
Statewide	All Other Students	81.8%	67.7%	78.7%

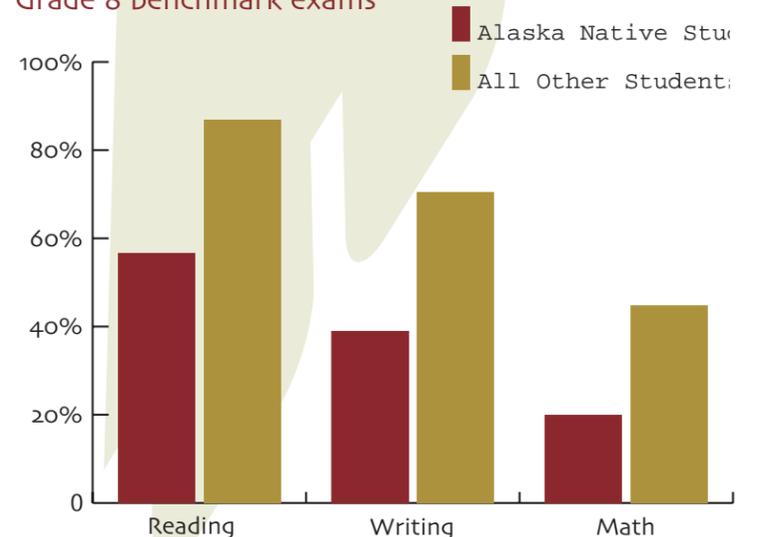
Grade 6 benchmark exams



Alaska Public School Districts Benchmark Exam Results

		Grade 6		
		Reading	Writing	Math
Statewide	Alaska Native Students	44.4%	55.1%	42.2%
Statewide	All Other Students	77.7%	81.2%	71.2%

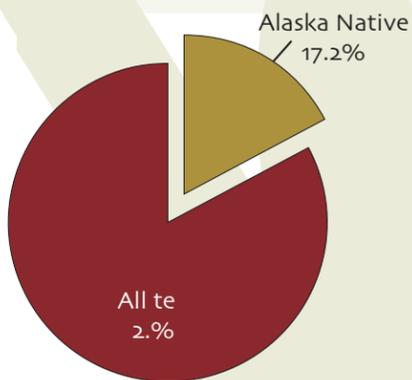
Grade 8 benchmark exams



Alaska Public School Districts Benchmark Exam Results

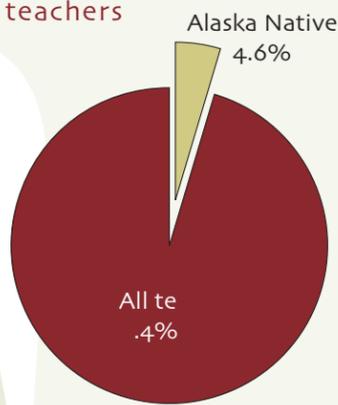
		Grade 8		
		Reading	Writing	Math
Statewide	Alaska Native Students	56.7%	38.9%	19.9%
Statewide	All Other Students	86.8%	70.5%	44.9%

Alaska Population



Total Alaska Population = 626,932
Alaska Native population = 107,682

Percentage of Alaska Native teachers



2002-2003 School Year
Total Number of Teachers = 8,325
Total Number of Alaska Native Teachers = 385

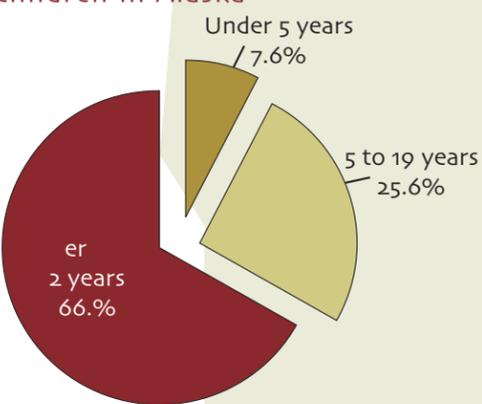
Alaska Native Population

- The Alaska Native (Alaska Natives only) population currently represents 17% of the total population
- When those under the age of 5 are added to the 5-19 age group, 44% of us are under the age of 19, as compared to 33% of the total population

Alaska Native Teachers and Administrators

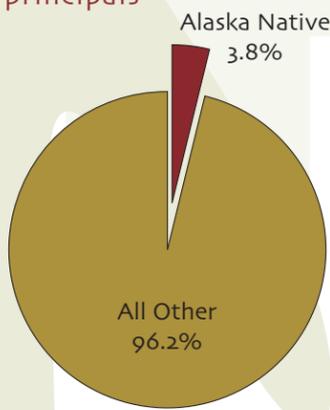
- Alaska Native population is 17% of the total population
- Native student population is 23% of the total student population
- Alaska Natives represent 4.6% of all teachers, with similar percentages in the administrative fields

Age composition of school-age children in Alaska



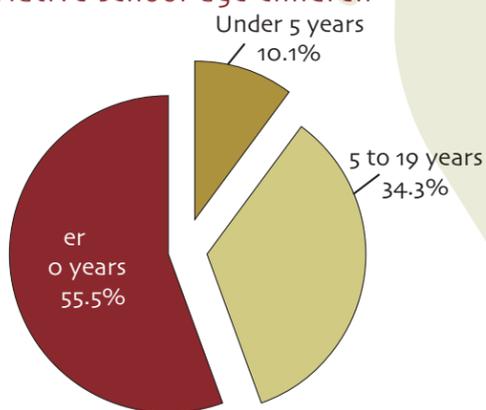
School-Age Children in Alaska
Under 5 years = 47,591
5 to 19 Years = 160,526
(U.S. Census)

Percentage of Alaska Native principals



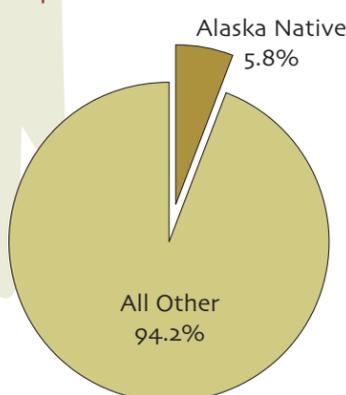
2002-2003 School Year
Total Number of Principals = 344
Total Number of Alaska Native Principals = 13

Age composition of Alaska Native school-age children



Alaska Native School-Age Children
Under 5 years = 10,918
5 to 19 Years = 36,965
(U.S. Census)

Percentage of Alaska Native superintendents



2002-2003 School Year
Total Number of Superintendents = 52
Total Number of Alaska Native Superintendents = 3

First Alaskans Institute

alaska Native policy center update

As a project of First Alaskans Institute, the Alaska Native Policy Center is being established to enable Alaska Natives to be informed about, be involved in, and have impact on the social, economic and policy issues that affect us as indigenous peoples. The Alaska Native Policy Center works with Native and non-Native organizations to conduct research and to provide information to Alaska Natives and their communities. The Policy Center currently focuses on education and leadership issues and the socio-economic status of Alaska Native peoples. Following are highlights of completed, current and planned projects.

Completed Projects

Survey of Native Perspectives on Alaska Issues

The Policy Center partnered with the Alaska Humanities Forum/Alaska 20/20 Project to conduct a "Survey of Native Perspectives on Alaska Issues." Policy Center staff has presented this survey to several organizations including the Alaska Native Policy Center Discussion Series and the Department of Interior University's Annual Seminar on ANCSA. **See page 3 for more details.**

AFN Forum - Call for Papers

Policy Center staff served on the steering committee for the AFN National Forum, assisting with the Call for Papers and development of a bibliography/resources listing. A complete list of resources can be found on the First Alaskans Institute's website at www.firstalaskans.org.

Current Projects

"Our Choices - Our Future"

The Policy Center is currently engaged in a project titled, "Our Choices - Our Future." **See page 3 for more details.**

Alaska Native Education Profile

The Alaska Native Policy Center has

commissioned a study with the McDowell Group to develop an Alaska Native Education Profile. **See page 5 for an introduction to the profile.**

Outreach and Information Dissemination

We do this in many ways: participating in forums as presenters, holding the Policy Center Discussion Series, posting information on our website, newsletters, personal communications, and other convening activities.

Planned Projects

Literacy Project

As a first step in a Family Reading and Literacy Program, the Policy Center and the Education Initiative are developing a literacy research project. The purpose of this project is to gain a baseline of literacy programs in Alaska and coordinate a "reading to children" pilot program. Collaborators include the Alaska Humanities Forum, Rasmuson Foundation, University of Alaska, and education professionals. The expected short-term outcome is to have a baseline of information to create effective literacy programs for Alaska Native children. The long-term objective is to develop successful readers in order that our kids may excel in school.

First Alaskans Institute is turning a broad mission into practical information for use by our own people and others. Through the Alaska Native Policy Center, First Alaskans Institute is raising the level of knowledge about the issues facing our people. We are emphasizing the remarkable Native successes of the past, and working to bring together the people needed to resolve the challenges that remain before us.

alaska Native policy center discussion series

On August 7, 2003, the Alaska Native Policy Center held the first Policy Center Discussion Series at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage, Alaska. The purpose of the Discussion Series is to convene various segments of the Alaska Native community to participate in discussions with researchers, policy makers, professionals and citizens to better understand the public policy issues before us.

The first discussion focused on two reports; "A Survey of Native Perspectives on Alaska Issues," and "The Alaska Native and American Indian Population Living in Alaska: Demographic Characteristics and Patterns of Change." Twenty-two people participated in this discussion including the Nobel Laureate in Economics (2002), Dr. Vernon Smith. A proceedings report with links to the presentations will be available on the Policy Center website at www.firstalaskans.org.

Over the next two months, the Policy Center Discussion Series will offer a four-part presentation on the status of Alaska Natives. Researchers from the Institute of Social and Economic Research will present their preliminary findings of data specific to Alaska Natives in the economy, population, education and health/wellness.

Each discussion is limited to 25 participants. To register, contact Sarah Sherry, Program Officer, Alaska Native Policy Center, at info@firstalaskans.org (907-677-1700).

Following is a brief description of the Discussions still open. Please register by calling 677-1700.

October 30, 2003

"Education"

BP Energy Center, Anchorage, Alaska

3:00 - 4:30pm

Facilitated by Sarah Scanlan, Director of Education, First Alaskans Institute

Important statistical indicators that measure student and school success over time will be presented. We will also discuss the implications of the data.

Presenters:

Paul Ongtooguk is a veteran Native teacher and educational researcher at ISER who is helping to develop Alaska Native studies curricula for Alaska's K-12 schools. He also teaches methods for secondary history and social studies teachers, and history of Alaska Native education. He has taught at Ilisagvik College in Barrow.

alaska Native resource directory available

Two information resources on Alaska Native education will be available at the First Alaskans Institute website in early 2004. The first resource is a one-stop statewide directory for all persons interested in Native education. This resource contains nearly 1000 contacts for education organizations, resources, programs and activities currently underway in Alaska to support Alaska Native education. Also included are websites and e-mail contacts.

The second resource is a two page directory for families and students in the Anchorage School District. The directory is also useful for you, if you are moving to the Anchorage School District. This directory contains important contact numbers for 'at your fingertip'

information on the following topics:

- enrolling children,
- transportation,
- lunch programs,
- culture programs,
- tutoring services,
- alternative schools, and
- other useful information.

This guide has been e-mailed to every principal in the state for the purpose of distributing to families who may be moving to Anchorage.

All education related organizations are encouraged to update your respective organization's contact information by emailing First Alaskans Institute at info@firstalaskans.org, or by calling (907)677-1700.



Discussion Series (cont.)

Alexandra R.Hill is a Data Analyst and Research Associate at ISER, she has been involved with a recent evaluation of the Rural Educator Preparation partnership grant.

November 20, 2003

“Health and Wellness”

NANA Conference Room, Anchorage, Alaska

3:00 - 4:30pm

Facilitated by Sarah Sherry, Program Officer, Alaska Native Policy Center

This discussion will review advances in Native health over the past 30 years and highlight the health issues Alaska Natives still face on our journey to wellness.

Presenter:

Brian Saylor is Director of the Division of Health Sciences at UAA and a Senior Research Associate for UAA's Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies. Dr. Saylor's research activities include publications such as the “Guidelines for Developing Substance Abuse Programs for Native Americans: Lessons Learned from the Chemical Misuse Treatment and Recovery Program, Southwest Alaska.”

Completed:

October 9, 2003

“The Economy”

NANA Conference Room, Anchorage, Alaska

Facilitated by Greta L. Goto, Director, Alaska Native Policy Center

Dr. Scott Goldsmith, economist and Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research, presented findings on the economy of rural Alaska and the current economic status of our Alaska Native people. A proceedings report will be available on our website at www.firstalaskans.org.

October 16, 2003

“Alaska Native Demographic Characteristics”

NANA Conference Room, Anchorage, Alaska

Facilitated by Greta L. Goto, Director, Alaska Native Policy Center

Victor Fisher and Lance Howe of ISER presented trends and characteristics of today's dynamic Alaska Native population. A proceedings report will be available on our website at www.firstalaskans.org.

2003 spirit camp gathering participants compare practices, share ideas



Chugach region Elder Fiona Sawden is greeted by Becky Napoleon of Hooper Bay.

For many generations, Alaska Natives have handed down their cultures and traditional ways of knowing. However, in recent years, these traditions have often been overshadowed by economic and educational assimilation, to the detriment of Native communities throughout Alaska. At the heart of this matter lie Spirit Camps – learning activities that have become a movement for Alaska Natives all across the state.

In June, First Alaskans Institute gathered together 50 individuals who share a common passion for Alaska Native cultural preservation. The group was made up of representative spirit camp directors and staff, educators, philanthropists, program directors and Elders. The intent of the gathering was to allow, for the first time, statewide networking, a sharing of information and traditional teaching methods. By providing a place to gather, our intent was to open doors often shut by distance, time limitations and inadequate funding.

Thanks to support from the Rasmuson Foundation (Anchorage, Alaska) and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Battle Creek, Michigan), and the organizational efforts of the Chugach Heritage

Foundation, this gathering took place at Nuchek Island (Nuuciq), a major historical village site of the Chugach Region.

The diversity among spirit camps is immense. While some are starting out with limited funds and volunteers, others have built permanent camps with running water and power systems.

Most are funded by local and regional resources, but “outside” grants are becoming more common as camps grow in size and quality. Participants voiced a need to network to discuss issues of best practices, pitfalls, program management, fundraising, risk management and infrastructure development.

With participants serving as discussion leaders, many in attendance found the topics very helpful in expanding their horizons for new or improved programs. What we now know is that spirit and culture camps are examples of many different types of

camps focused on healthy families and communities.

First Alaskans will continue to work with camp administrators and Native leadership to determine additional means to disseminate information.

“By providing a place to gather, our intent was to open doors often shut by distance, time limitations and inadequate funding.”



First Alaskans Institute Board Chair Janie Leask and Jerry O'Brien of Nuchek Spirit Camp discuss the island's history.

First Alaskans Institute

number of schools by region

Ahtna	
Copper River Schools	8
Denali Borough Schools	4
Aleut	
Aleutian Region Schools	3
Aleutians East Borough Schools	7
Pribilof Schools	2
Unalaska City Schools	2
Arctic Slope	
North Slope Borough Schools	10
Bering Straits	
Bering Strait Schools	15
Nome City Schools	4
Bristol Bay	
Bristol Bay Borough Schools	3
Dillingham City Schools	2
Lake & Peninsula Borough Schools	14
Southwest Region Schools	9
Calista	
Kashunamiut Schools	1
Kuspuk School District	11
Lower Kuskokwim Schools	28
Lower Yukon Schools	11
Saint Mary's Schools	1
Yupit Schools	3
Chugach	
Chugach Schools	4
Cordova City Schools	2
Valdez City Schools	3
Cook Inlet	
Anchorage Schools	97
Kenai Peninsula Borough Schools	43
Mat-Su Borough Schools	35
Doyon	
Alaska Gateway Schools	8
Delta/Greely Schools	5
Fairbanks North Star Borough Schools	31
Galena City Schools	4
Iditarod Area Schools	9
Nenana City Schools	2
Tanana Schools	2
Yukon Flats Schools	10
Yukon/Koyukuk Schools	11
Koniag	
Kodiak Island Borough Schools	14
NANA	
Northwest Arctic Borough Schools	13
Sealaska	
Annette Island Schools	3
Chatham Schools	4
Craig City Schools	5
Haines Borough Schools	4
Hoonah City Schools	2
Hydaburg City Schools	2
Juneau Borough Schools	12
Kake City Schools	2
Ketchikan Gateway Borough Schools	10
Klawock City Schools	1
Pelican City Schools	1
Petersburg City Schools	3
Sitka Borough Schools	6
Skagway City Schools	1
Southeast Island Schools	9
Wrangell Public Schools	3
Yakutat Schools	1
Alyeska Central School	1
Mt. Edgecumbe High School	1

Statewide Number of Schools 502

AEC partnership supports Native students

One of First Alaskans Institute's primary goals is to ensure Alaska Natives are equipped with the tools to provide leadership and expertise and thereby have a place in setting the direction of our state. Leadership development and education are critical components in the preparation of our people to assume these roles.

The 13 Alaska Native Regional Corporations have established non-profit foundations or funds to promote higher education opportunities for their shareholders and/or descendents. These foundations created the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Education Consortium (AEC) in order to promote communications and networking for the benefit of students; to define and represent the educational needs of Alaska Natives in educational, political, and governmental entities and citizen organizations; and to work together in increasing financial support for their organizations. First Alaskans Institute has been a partner with the AEC since its inception in 1999 because we share similar goals.

According to the AEC's annual report, 2,466 students were awarded scholarships from the 13 regional foundations during the 2002-2003 school year. The scholarships totaled over \$4 million. First Alaskans Institute, in an agreement with the AEC, awarded a total of \$1 million to be disbursed to the 13 regional foundations over the past two years. The disbursement was made according to a formula based on original enrollments. First Alaskans Institute's total contribution allowed some regions to double the number and substantially increase the amounts awarded to their students. The regional foundations' average awards between 1998 and 2002 ranged from a low of \$381 to a high of \$3,153.

Following are some highlights of the disbursement of scholarship funds:

- 25% of the monies awarded to freshmen,
- 18% to sophomores,
- 14% to juniors,
- 10% to seniors,
- 7% to graduate students, and
- 17% to vocational/technical students.
- 66% of the scholarship recipients were women,
- and 34% of recipients were men.

Of the students awarded scholarships in 2002-2003:

- 10% indicated education as their major,
- 5% were in engineering,
- 9% in science,
- 13% in health care,
- 20% in business, and
- 7% in behavioral science.

The overall average GPA for the recipients, at 3.11, is a reflection of the commitment of students to succeed.

While census data reflects improvements in education among Alaska Natives and the ongoing efforts of our partnership, there is much more to do. There was an unmet need of nearly \$9 million for applicants in 2002-2003 school year, but we are confident that by working together, we will change the face of higher education as it exists today among our people. As reflected in the following recipients' comments, we know we are well on our way to meeting our goals:

"Thank you so much for the support I received. My husband and I are able to attend college at the same time. We are both in the honors program and have been very successful in our academic pursuits. We couldn't do it without you!"

"I am very excited to be returning to UAA as a full-time nursing student. I will graduate in May 2006 with my Bachelor

of Science in nursing degree. As a lifelong Alaskan, I plan to remain in Alaska and have a strong desire to raise my son in rural Alaska."

"I am writing to thank you for your support. I am a student who has returned to school after dropping out of high school 10 years ago, and, having a family of four to support, the only way that I am able to afford to attend college is with the help of various grants, loans, and scholarships. I have just completed my second year in the Bachelor of Computer Science program at UAA with a 4.0 cumulative GPA, a feat that would not have been possible without this financial support."

"I am a first year medical school student with the WWAMI Biomedical Program through the University of Washington School of Medicine. I am writing to thank you for the scholarship made possible by the donation to my region. I plan to return to Alaska to practice medicine, possibly for a period of time in rural Alaska. I am very appreciative of the investment you have made in students who are dedicated to their education and to giving back to their state. Thank you very much."



first alaskans institute partners

To fulfill our mission, First Alaskans Institute relies on the support, dedication, hard work and ideas of hundreds, if not thousands of people. While it is impossible to name everyone who has helped in some way, we wish to acknowledge and we sincerely thank the following organizations and their employees.

- Alaska 20/20
- Alaska Association of School Boards
- Alaska Association of School Superintendents
- Alaska Business Education Compact
- Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Alaska Federation of Natives
- Alaska Humanities Forum
- Alaska Native Coalition on Employment and Training
- Alaska Native Educator Associations
- Alaska Native Heritage Center
- Alaska Native Professional Association
- Alaska Native Tribal Organizations
- Alaska Pacific University
- Alaska Process Industry Careers Consortium
- Alaska School Districts
- Alaska Vocational Technical Center
- Alaska Works Partnership, Inc.
- Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
- Amerada Hess Pipeline Corporation
- ANCSA Corporations
- ANCSA Education Consortium
- AT&T Alascom
- BP Exploration (Alaska), Inc.
- Coalition of Alaska Native Higher Education
- Commonwealth North
- ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc.
- Denali Commission
- Education Staff Development Network
- Exxon Mobile Pipeline Company
- First Nations Development Institute
- Ford Foundation
- Institute for Social and Economic Research
- Institute of the North
- Leadership Experiences International
- McDowell Group
- National Education Association
- Rasmuson Foundation
- Regional Non-profit Organizations
- Reinventing Schools Coalition
- Rural Systemic Initiative
- State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
- U.S. Department of Interior
- U.S. Department of Labor

- University of Alaska
- Unocal Pipeline Company
- VECO Alaska
- Vocational Technical Education Providers
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- Williams Energy Services

first alaskans institute 2002 contributions

In 2002, First Alaskans Institute provided funding to organizations statewide that helped promote our mission and vision. Many are highlighted in this report, below are some examples:

Educational Funding:

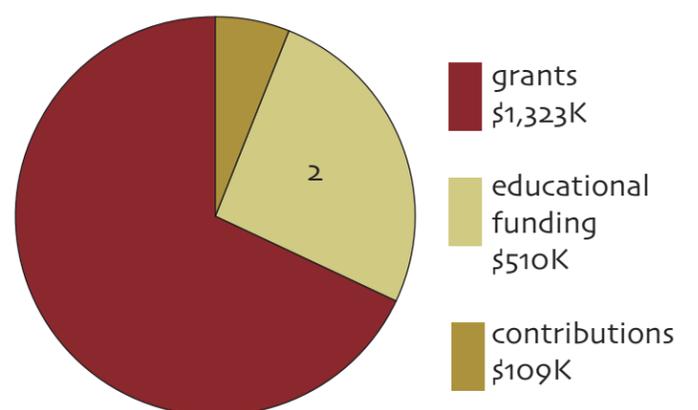
- ANCSA Education Foundations
- 2002 Native Education Summit

Grants:

- Oil and Gas Job Training and Placement
- Infrastructure Capacity Building

Contributions:

- Alaska Federation of Natives Convention
- Alaska Native University Programs
- Alaska Native Organizations
- Native Youth Development Programs
- Regional Education Summits
- Multicultural Programs





first alaskans institute trustees

First Alaskans Institute President and CEO Byron I. Mallott is pictured here with First Alaskans' Board of Trustees: (standing, left to right) Byron I. Mallott, Roy M. Huhndorf, Rep. Albert Kookesh and Sam Kito; (seated, left to right) Board Chair Janie Leask, Willie Hensley and Julie Kitka. Oliver Leavitt (inset).



leadership: alaska oil and gas industry job training and placement

Over a three-year period, the First Alaskans Institute's Alaska Oil and Gas Industry Job Training and Placement Project created over 850 training, education and employment opportunities for Alaska Natives statewide. This was accomplished by fostering partnerships among Alaska's oil and gas industry companies, state educators and Alaska Native organizations in order to develop and enhance joint programs and create career pathways for Alaska Natives interested in the process industries.

First Alaskans Institute is also working with industry partners to provide management-level internships for policy-related experiences. This will allow for Alaska Natives representing a broad range of disciplines to gain an understanding of those skills needed for decision making, strategic planning and overall management in this sector. The goal is to increase exposure to high performing Alaska Native candidates while continuing to expand Native hire throughout the system.

coming soon

First Alaskans Institute's new and improved website:

www.firstalaskans.org

Informational site for Alaska Native issues pertaining to policy, education and leadership development

Look for us online.



606 E Street, Suite 200
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
Phone: 907.677.1700 Fax: 907.677.1780
E-mail: info@firstalaskans.org
www.firstalaskans.org

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