

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE PRESERVATION & ADVISORY COUNCIL: 2020 BIENNIAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE



*Deg Xinag elder, Edna Deacon, teaching children at Holy Cross*

- #1 Make Alaska Native Language Survival an Official Goal of The State of Alaska.** The Council calls on the Executive branch and the Legislative branch to clearly indicate that it is the policy of the State of Alaska to promote the survival and efflorescence of Alaska Native languages wherever possible.
- #2 Promote Language Normalization.** 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.
- #3 Promote More Alaska Native Language Immersion Programs.** The Council calls on the Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to 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.
- #4 Fund an Annual, State-Wide Meeting for Alaska Native Language Teachers.** The Council calls upon the Legislature to provide \$35,000 funding annually to hold an annual conference for Alaska Native language teachers, coordinators, and administrators, and other language advocates in Anchorage.
- #5 Establish an Alaska Native Language Schools Consortium.** The Council calls on the Governor, the Department of Education and Early Development, and the Legislature to authorize the creation of an Alaska Native School Board that would represent and promote Alaska Native tribal and charter schools across Alaska and would work with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to establish provisions for a College of Alaska Native Languages that produces certification of teachers of Alaska Native languages.

- #6 Clarify and Strengthen Alaska Statute 14.30.420.** 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.
- #7 Utilize Alaska Native Place Names.** 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.
- #8 Restore Funding for Administrative Assistant Position and for Council Travel.** The Council asks the Governor to restore funding for the 2012-2015 position of Administrative Assistant to the ANLPAC section within the Division of Community and Regional Affairs and to restore funding for each Council member to travel twice during the year to attend the Alaska Federation of Natives meeting and one other language revitalization meeting.
- #9 Survey the Numbers of Alaska Native Language Speakers.** The Council calls on the Legislature to provide funding for the Alaska Native Language Center to conduct a comprehensive survey on numbers of speakers of each Alaska Native language including numbers of highly proficient first-language speakers, dormant first-language speakers, and highly-proficient and intermediate level second-language speakers.
- #10 Declare Alaska Native Languages Day.** The Council calls on the Legislature to declare an annual State holiday, Alaska Native Languages Day, on April 21<sup>st</sup>, to celebrate and recognize Alaska Native Languages. April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014, is that day that HB 216 was passed, recognizing that *all* Alaska Native languages are official languages in Alaska, along with English.
- #11 Increase Instruction in Local Alaska Native Languages by the University of Alaska.** The Council supports the University of Alaska in its efforts to offer Alaska Native language classes and calls on the University Board of Regents to 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 Council also urges the Legislature to provide appropriations to the University to support them in meeting these unmet needs.
- #12 Inspire Decolonization and Healing Inter-Generational Trauma.** The Council urges the Legislature 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 encourage partnering with communities and Indigenous organizations to hold healing ceremonies. These instances of inter-generational trauma need to be documented, publicly recognized, and survivors need to be provided with options for healing. Inter-generational trauma associated with language loss can be a factor in adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). These historical forces contributed to the original decline in numbers of speakers through direct force in schools, in the economic system, and through institutional racism.
- #13 Offer an Apology for Historical Language Suppression.** The Council calls on the 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 and the policies that specifically forbade the use of Alaska Native languages in all schools from 1885 until the 1970s. The Council recognizes that these past abuses of Alaska Native peoples have not come at the hands of people currently in positions of authority in our State and also recognizes that the current Alaskan leadership nonetheless can positively contribute to Alaska Native self-healing and language revival through this powerful, symbolic act.