



Yukon Koyukuk School District
Administrative & Support Offices
4762 Old Airport Way
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Kerry Boyd
Superintendent
kboyd@yksd.com

Telephone: (907) 374-9400
Fax: (907) 374-9440

January 23, 2012

Dear Alaska State Senators,

On behalf of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District, I am writing in support of Senate Bill 130 (YKSD). YKSD serves nine Interior Alaskan villages plus Raven Correspondence School. Three Native languages are spoken in our region: Denaakk'a (Lower Tanana Athabascan); Denaakk'e (Koyukon Athabascan) and Inupiaq.

SB 130 will establish the Alaska Native Language and Advisory Council. The council will assess the state of Alaska Native Languages and will re-evaluate the programs within the state to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature.

In Yukon Koyukuk School District there are less than 100 fluent speakers, with the majority of them over the age of seventy. The YKSD Board of Education requires thirty minutes of Native language instruction for students in grades kindergarten to fourth grade. In some schools, all students receive Native language instruction. Classes are taught on site and over two-way video-conference. The students are learning to speak, read and write and learn about their culture through the language. The instruction increases their self-esteem and enjoyment of school.

It is vital that the State of Alaska creates this needed establishment and I respectfully request your support in the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Kerry Boyd,
Superintendent

The mission of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District, in active partnership with its families and communities, is to provide our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to become contributing members of their families, communities and society.