

# Council of Alaska Native Languages Update House Tribal Affairs Committee

Department of Education and Early Development

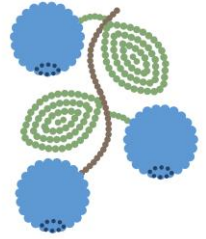
łiq'a yes, Joel Isaak, Ph.D., DEED Contractor

Monica Goyette, Ed.D., Director of Innovation and Education Excellence

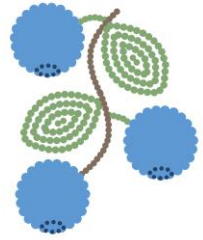
April 9, 2026



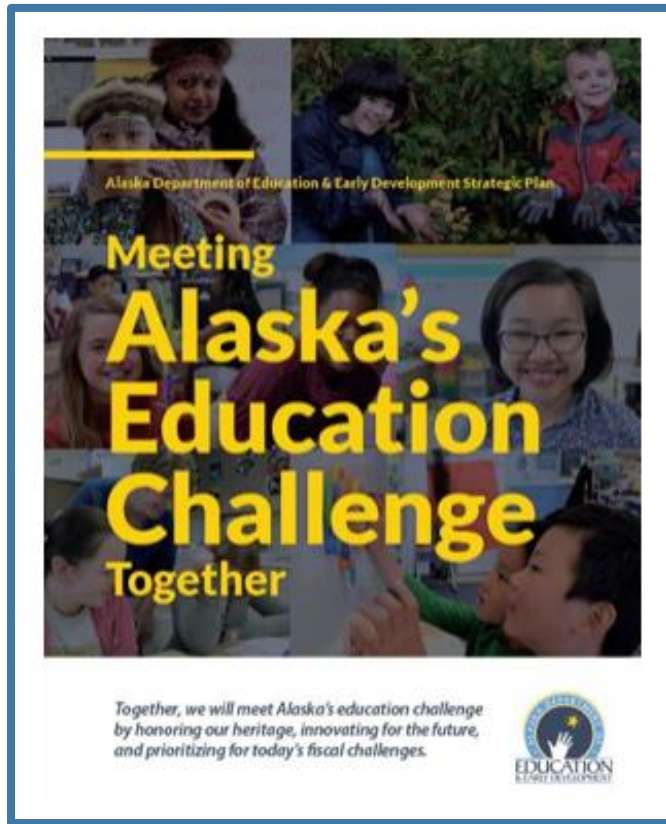
# Mission, Vision, and Purpose



Mission	Vision	Purpose
<p>An excellent education for every student every day.</p>	<p>All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them.</p> <p>- Alaska Statute 14.03.015</p>	<p>DEED exists to provide <b>information, resources, and leadership</b> to support an excellent education for every student every day.</p>



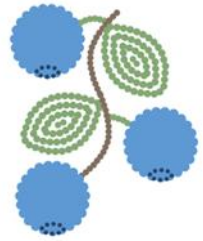
# Alaska's Education Challenge



## Five Shared Strategic Priorities:

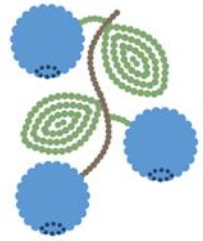
1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes

# House Bill 26



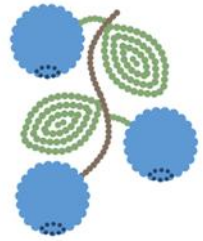
“An Act relating to the official languages of the State of Alaska; renaming the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council as the Council for Alaska Native Languages (CANL); relating to the transfer of the Council for Alaska Native Languages from the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED) to the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED); and relating to the Council for Alaska Native Languages.”

HB 26 strengthened the state’s approach to Alaska Native language preservation by renaming the council and transferring it to DEED. The bill aligned the council’s work with Alaska’s education system, supported coordination across partners, and reinforced efforts to preserve and revitalize Alaska Native languages statewide.



# Position Transition Timeline

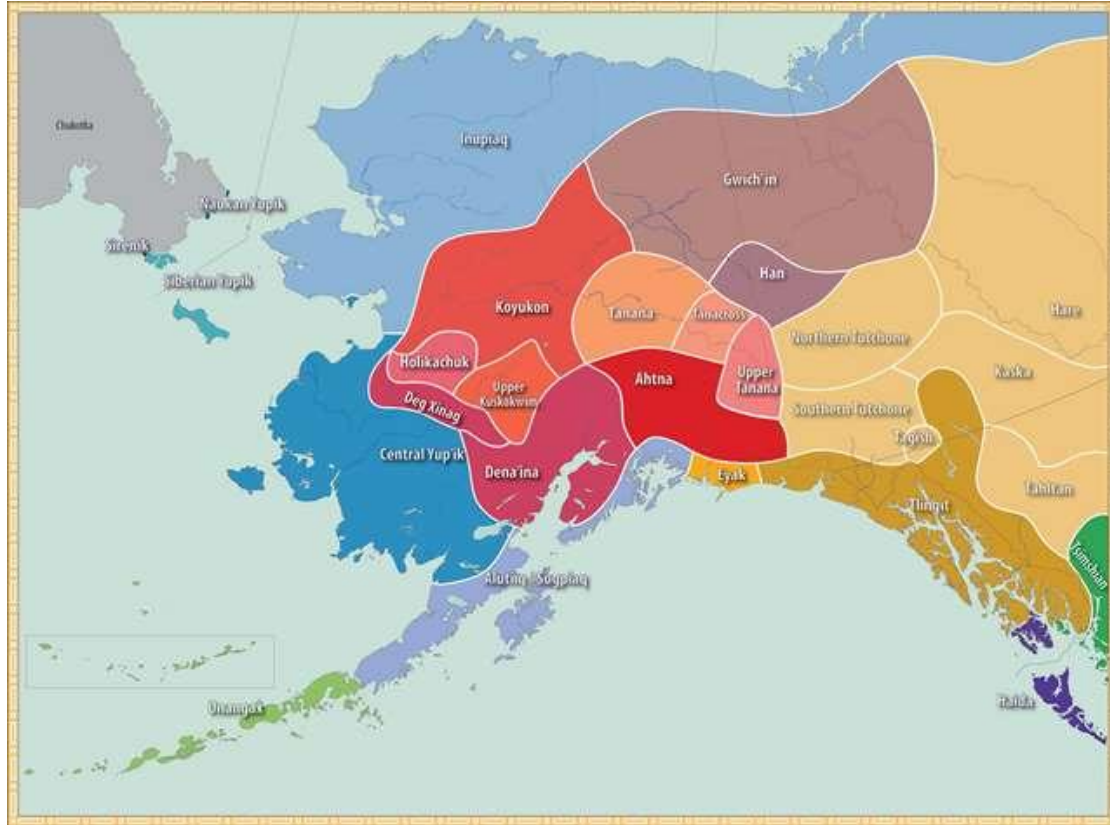
- November 29, 2024: Transferred CANL and funding for a position to DEED
- 2025:
  - Reviewed position duties and program needs based on the prior CANL reports
  - Determined need for a Program Coordinator 1 to align the CANL support within DEED
  - Completed the state position classification process to establish the new position
- December 19, 2025: Established a new Program Coordinator 1 position
- January–March 2026: Recruitment cycle completed
- Current status: Awaiting final permission to hire



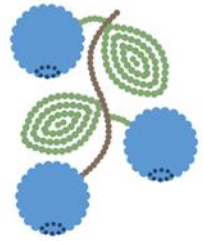
# Council of Alaska Native Members

- **Legislative Members**
  - Senator Löki Tobin
  - Representative Nellie Jimmie (Yup'ik)
- **Voting Members**
  - Yaayuk B. Alvanna-Stimpfle (Inupiaq), Chair
  - Walkie Charles (Yup'ik), Vice-Chair
  - X'unei Lance Twitchell (Tlingit/Haida/Yup'ik/Sami)
  - Kay Larson-Blair (Yup'ik/Unangan/Sugpiaq)
  - Beverly Kokrine (Athabaskan)
  - Victoria McKoy (Ts'msyen/Haida)
  - Christina Laree Newhall (Unangam Tunuu)

# Alaska Native Languages



Language Family	Language
Inuit-Unangan	Inupiatun ( <i>Inupiaq</i> )
	Yupigestun / Akuzipigestun ( <i>St. Lawrence Island Yupik</i> )
	Yugtun/Cugtun ( <i>Central Alaskan Yup'ik / Cup'ik</i> )
	Cup'ig (Nunivak Island [Yupik])
	Unangam Tunuu ( <i>UnangaX Aleut</i> )
	Sugt'stun / Alutiit'stun ( <i>Sugpiaq/Alutiiq [Yupik]</i> )
Na-Dene	Dena'inaq' ( <i>Dena'ina</i> )
	Denaakk'e ( <i>Koyukon</i> )
	Holikachuk
	Deg Xinag
	Dinak'i ( <i>Upper Kuskokwim</i> )
	Benhti Kokhwt'ana Kenaga' ( <i>Lower Tanana</i> )
	Sahcheeg xut'een xneege' ( <i>Middle Tanana</i> )
	Dinjii Zhuh K'yaa ( <i>Gwich'in</i> )
	Hän
	Dihthaad Xt'een lin Aandeege' ( <i>Tanacross</i> )
	Nee'aanèegn' ( <i>Upper Tanana</i> )
	Koht'aene kenaege' ( <i>Ahtna</i> )
	dAkhunhyuuga' ( <i>Eyak</i> )
	Lingít ( <i>Tlingit</i> )
Wetał ( <i>Ts'etsa'ut</i> )	
Haida	Xaad Kil ( <i>Haida</i> )
Tshimshianic	Sm'algyax ( <i>Tsimshian</i> )



# Biennial Report on Alaska Native Languages

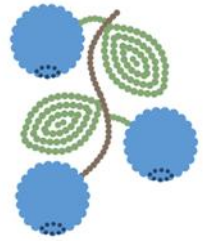
- Required under state law for the Council for Alaska Native Languages
- Council must meet at least twice per year
- Council submits a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature
- Report provides findings and recommendations to support the preservation and revitalization of Alaska Native languages

# AYARUQ: 2024 Action Plan for Alaska Native Languages

- Focus Area 1: Affirm the Right to Indigenous Education  
Ensure access to education through Alaska Native languages and expand their use as a medium of instruction across all levels of education
- Focus Area 2: Address Oppression and Intergenerational Trauma  
Acknowledge historical harms and support healing through trauma-informed practices and culturally responsive education
- Focus Area 3: Commit to Language Equity  
Elevate the status and use of Alaska Native languages through public visibility, partnerships, and systemic support
- Focus Area 4: Normalize the Use of Alaska Native Languages  
Increase the presence of Alaska Native languages in public spaces, place names, and daily life across communities

# 2026 Biennial Report on Alaska Native Languages

## Recommended Measures Needed To Protect and Promote Indigenous Languages

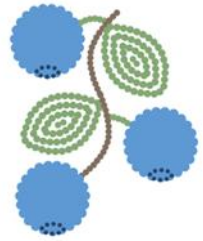


The following measures are recommended to safeguard, strengthen, and advance Indigenous languages across Alaska through coordinated policy, funding, and community action.

- Guaranteeing the right to mother-tongue education for Indigenous children
- Allocating the funding and resources needed to preserve and develop Indigenous languages, and particularly for education
- Establishing language-immersion programs for both Indigenous children and adults
- Raising the equity of Indigenous languages by promoting their use in public administration, academic institutions, and public spaces
- Using Indigenous languages so that they are kept alive and passed down through the generations by Indigenous peoples themselves

# 2026 Biennial Report on Alaska Native Languages

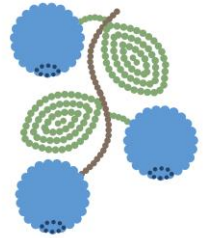
## General Recommendations



The following recommendations are offered to support the effective implementation of the guidelines for strengthening Indigenous languages.

- Help develop tracking tools for language speakers, learners, teachers, and all language development outreach
- Create a systematic approach to service delivery throughout the Department of Education and Early Development that encompasses Native language instruction, cultural perspectives, and pedagogy
- Native educator associations (including Elders) shall develop guidelines for assessing fluency and levels of proficiency in heritage languages for use in various contexts
- Federal and state funding support for Indigenous language initiatives shall be expanded, and all Native language funding should be administered through, or in partnership with, federally recognized Tribes or Native-controlled entities
- School districts shall require a cross-cultural specialist endorsement for all personnel with responsibilities that impact the cultural well-being of the students and communities they serve

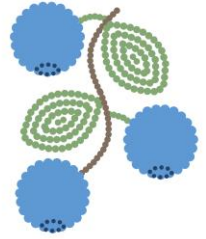
# Alaska Native Strategic Plan



The Alaska Native Language Strategic Plan is a living document designed to promote literacy in Alaska Native languages:

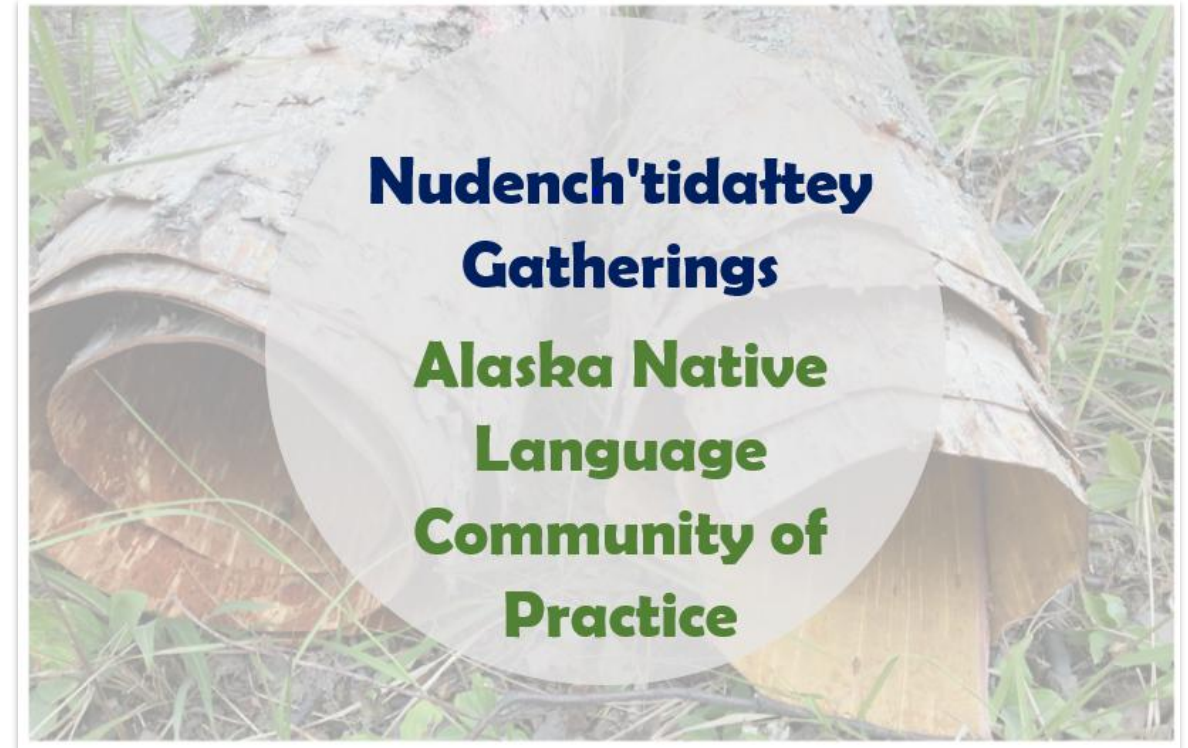
- Provides support to districts, teachers, families, and departmental staff to collaborate toward a common goal of developing literacy in Alaska Native languages
- Identifies priority areas to strengthen instruction, materials, educator capacity, and program development
- Supports alignment with the Alaska Reads Act, Alaska Native Language Arts standards, and statewide literacy efforts
- Reflects input from districts, tribes, educators, and community partners to ensure locally relevant and culturally grounded approaches

# Community of Practice



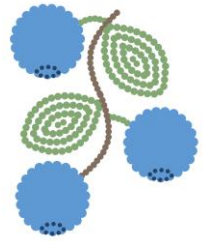
## **Nudench'tidaŋtey** – *We Are Growing Stronger Again*

- Supporting
- Share Resources
- Discuss Language Topics
- Co-design
- Share Collaborative Space



To learn more about the community of practice email: [cheryl.dewitt@alaska.gov](mailto:cheryl.dewitt@alaska.gov)

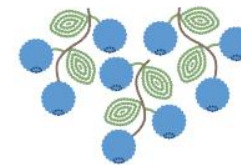
# Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook



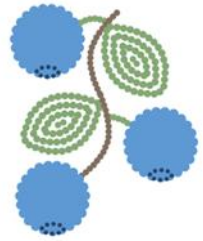
- Demonstrates the Alaska Reading Playbook
- Provides examples of teaching the five pillars of the science of reading in Alaska Native languages
- Supports educators in teaching literacy in Alaska Native languages and across cultures

## Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook

An Introduction

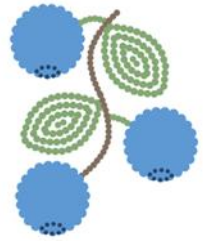


# Alaska Native Language Arts K–3 Literacy Standards (ANLARS)



- Statewide standards for reading in Alaska Native languages for Kindergarten through Grade 3
- Adopted by the State Board of Education through regulation in 2025 (4 AAC 04.140)
- Establish that reading in Alaska Native languages is a valid pathway to demonstrate third grade reading proficiency
- Aligned to the Alaska Reads Act and the science of reading, incorporating the five pillars adapted to Alaska Native language structures
- Provide a consistent framework for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional learning across Alaska Native language programs
- Support culturally responsive education and the preservation and revitalization of Alaska Native languages

# Literacy Screeners for Alaska Indigenous Languages (LSAIL)



- Statewide initiative to develop Kindergarten through Grade 5 early literacy screeners in Alaska Native languages, aligned to the Alaska Reads Act
- Screeners developed:  
Yup'ik (Yup'ik/Cup'ik) | Iñupiaq | Tlingit
- Current implementation:  
Four school districts and 30+ schools participating statewide
- 2026 Expansion:  
Gwich'in and Dena'ina are two additional Alaska Native languages beginning the LSAIL process
- Long-term goal to expand to up to 10 Alaska Native languages statewide

# Alaska Native Tribal Education Consortium (ANTEC)

## DEED Contractor

- Developing a draft statewide Alaska Native language literacy readiness framework aligned to the Alaska Reads Act
- Providing guidance for districts on implementing Alaska Native language instruction across immersion, dual language, and culturally grounded models
- Supporting alignment between Alaska Native Language Arts standards, literacy instruction, and assessment development
- Developing a community-grounded school improvement framework rooted in Alaska Native languages, cultures, and local priorities



## **Naqenaga Ts'it Nich'tidulał**

*We Are Bringing Our Languages Back Together*

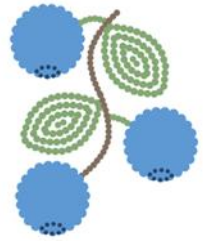
# **Alaska Native Language Summit**

April 30, 2026 | 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Dena'ina Civic Convention Center | Anchorage, AK

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-alaska-science-of-reading-symposium-tickets-1963639258883?aff=oddtcreator>

Register for the Science of Reading Symposium, the preconference is the first option.



# Alaska Native Language Resources

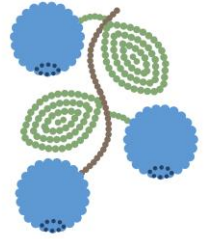
- Council for Alaska Native Languages Website: <https://education.alaska.gov/canl>
- AYARUQ: 2024 Action Plan for Alaska Native Languages  
<https://education.alaska.gov/anlpac/AYARUQ%20Final%20Draft%202024.pdf>
- 2026 Biennial Report to the Governor  
<https://education.alaska.gov/anlpac/2026%20Biennial%20Report%20to%20the%20Governor%20Council%20of%20Alaska%20Native%20Languages.pdf>
- Alaska Native Language Literacy Guidebook Introduction  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/197EmH\\_ZN1oAbmod-w6b9-gygvf2LmY3k/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/197EmH_ZN1oAbmod-w6b9-gygvf2LmY3k/view)
- Alaska Native Language Literacy Guide (ANL Literacy Guide 3)  
[https://education.alaska.gov/akreads/2025-11-23\\_Guidance\\_ANLLiteracy%20Guide.pdf](https://education.alaska.gov/akreads/2025-11-23_Guidance_ANLLiteracy%20Guide.pdf)
- Alaska Native Language Arts K–3 Literacy Standards (ANLARS), Final Report  
<https://sealaskaheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ANLARS-Report-Final-1.pdf>

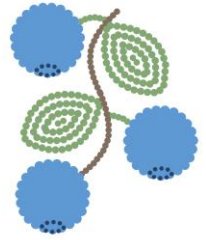
# Contact Information

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# Stay Connected

## Find us online:

- Our website: [education.alaska.gov](http://education.alaska.gov)
- Facebook and Twitter: @AlaskaDEED

## Give us a ring:

- Main line: (907) 465-2800
- Teacher Certification: (907) 465-2831