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03/22/95

LEGISLATIVE TELECONFERENCE NETWORK SYSTEM

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SCHEDULED FOR:03/22/95 13:30 TO 15:30

FOR:FBX

PUBLIC HEARING

SENATE COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS

LOCATION: FAIRBANKS

SB 33

MR.

DAVID

CORNBERG

TANANA CHIEFS C TESTIFY

**SENATE COMMITTEE REFERRAL**  
**First Committee of Referral**

DATE: 1/16/95

FURTHER: HESS  
 Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: 3/16/95  
 (in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED  
 INTO OFFICE: 3/23/95

CRA Committee considered      SENATE BILL NO. 32

"An Act relating to a curriculum for Native language education; and providing for an effective date."

and recommends:

- be replaced with \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- adopt previous \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by \_\_\_\_\_ Committee
- further referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

- Senate Bill:
  - same title
  - new title
- House Bill:
  - technical change
  - new: SCR' \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
<i>Sam Hoffman</i>	✓				
		<i>Paul L. Glendon</i>	✓		
CHAIR: <i>John Torquemada</i>			✓		

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
EDUCATION	3/22/95	✓	

**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):\***

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

\*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA

BILL NO. SB 32

1995 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Affected: Education

Title: An Act relating to a curriculum for Native language education; and providing for an effective date.

BRU: K-12 Support

Component: Foundation Program

Sponsor: Senator Lincoln

Requester: (S) CIA

COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 141

**Expenditures/Revenues:**

(Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
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**FUNDING:**

(Thousands of Dollars)

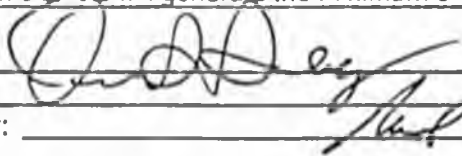
1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8	0 to 145.8
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1006 GF/MHTIA						
Other						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>	<b>0 to 145.8</b>

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year (FY95) impact: \$ -0-

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary.) The department estimates the fiscal impact to range from \$0 to \$145.8 annually. Currently five school districts do not have an approved bilingual plan of service on file with the department. School districts that elect to provide Native language education may develop bilingual plans of service. Alutians East and Pelican may apply for bilingual funding through the foundation program. The department has assumed that the two school districts will generate the minimum of one instructional unit each of bilingual funding.

Prepared by: Eddy Jeans  Phone: 465-8685  
 Division: School Finance Date: March 15, 1995  
 Approved by Commissioner: Shirley Holloway  
 Agency: Education Date: March 15, 1995

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Fiscal Note, SB 32  
March 15, 1995  
Page 2 of 2

A standard reporting format will be developed to meet the reporting requirements of SB 32. This format will specify the information that must be reported and the form in which the information must appear. To develop this format a team will meet over a two day period to review alternatives and reach consensus on the reporting model.

Cost associated with redesigning and printing materials currently used by the department for implementing the report card legislation will be borne by the department.





languages. Presently, our schools are teaching Spanish, Russian and Japanese to our children. Many who have the capability to extend their programs to include Native languages have not.

Native Language Education has received strong support from the Alaska Federation of Natives, the White House Conference on Indian Education, the Denakanaaga Elders Conference, the Tanana Chiefs conference, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, the Association of Village Council Presidents, the Interior Education Council, the Village Participation Conference, the Rural Alaska Community Action Program, and by numerous villages.

**DIVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES  
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY  
STATE OF ALASKA**

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450  
FAX (907) 465-2029  
Mail Stop 3101


130 Seward Street, Suite 409  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2105

**MEMORANDUM**

February 28, 1995

**SUBJECT:** Sectional Summary of SB 32  
(Work Order No. 9-LS0401/A)

**TO:** Senator Georgianna Lincoln

**FROM:** Michael F. Ford   
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of the above-described bill.

As a preliminary matter, note that a sectional summary of a bill should not be considered an authoritative interpretation of the bill and the bill itself is the best statement of its contents. If you would like an interpretation of the bill as it may apply to a particular set of circumstances, please advise.

**Section 1.** Short title.

**Section 2.** Findings.

**Section 3.** Requires that a school district that provides Native language education, must include a summary and evaluation of the program in the district's annual performance report.

**Section 4.** Allows a school board to establish a Native language education curriculum, if the curriculum is recommended by the local Native language education curriculum advisory board. Requires a school board in a district in which a majority of the students are Natives to establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board. Requires that a Native language program include Native languages spoken in the community in which the school is located, and that the program include certified instructors.

**Section 5.** Effective date.

MFF:klb:glc  
95-108.klb

Isaac Juneby  
Box 107  
Eagle, Alaska 99738  
February 15, 1995

Senator Georgianna Lincoln  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Lincoln:

I am writing in reference to SB 32, "Native Language Education", which you are sponsoring. I am aware of the fast deterioration of the Native languages in Alaska and therefore, I am writing to thank you so much for your inspiration, support and efforts in keeping the Native languages alive.

As an elected member of a Regional School Board of Education, I am supportive of this bill. There is no way to measure the importance of maintaining one's own language except to say that it is the basis of sense of self, and the foundation of culture and heritage.

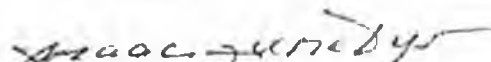
Although I am fortunate enough to speak my language (HAN) fluently, many in my own community do not have this advantage. Many of my generation were punished in school for speaking their native language, and I, in fact, was once expelled for doing the same. At that time, I was not fluent in English, but was punished nonetheless. I still question why anyone should be deprived of our inherent rights.

I am very unhappy to see that Russian, Spanish and German are part of the "accepted" curriculum in the schools, and native languages are not being emphasized. I truly believe that by denying a Native child the opportunity to learn his/her own language, it is like saying that that child is thought of as a "second-class person". It is for that reason that I have, at my own expense and time, developed and published a HAN language curricula which I am voluntarily teaching in the Eagle Community School.

In closing, I am asking all of your colleagues to support this Bill. Please share with any members of the Legislature the HAN Language book which I sent you.

If you have any questions, please call me at (907)547-2281 or 547-2307.

Sincerely,

  
ISAAC JUNEBY

cc:

Senator John Torgerson, Chairman  
Senate Committee, Community & Regional Affairs

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Senate Committee, C&RA

Senator Randy Phillips, Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee, Community & Regional Affairs

Senator Fred Zharoff  
Senate Committee, C&RA

Senator Tim Kelly, Senate Committee, Community & Regional Affairs

OCT 24 1994

October 19th, 1994

Dear Senator Lincoln,

In 1992 I began teaching the Tanacross Athabaskan Language in Tok, where I am developing the Native Language Class for the Alaska Gateway School District. I'm the first person to complete the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Native Language Education offered jointly through the University of Alaska and the Yukon Native Language Centre at Whitehorse, Y.T.

The students in Tok School aren't all Athabaskan Indian so the teaching is a challenge in itself but when the teaching materials is being developed by me at the same time the challenge seems insurmountable. But the students are all interested and eager on every subject I cover because I include legends and cultures of all type that I have information on. Since language identifies the origin of people I firmly believe that Native Languages belong in every public school. Reclaiming your language brings its merits to you in the form of self worth, self esteem and pride. I will continue to work on Native Language Curriculum to be placed in every school district because that curriculum is the only way to legitimize the subject as a required course.

The reason I'm writing this letter to you is because I need your assistance in locating the proper authorities responsible for promoting the Native Languages into the education systems. These resolutions were found by some parents who are concerned about the lack of support this class is receiving in this area. My position is funded jointly by the Tok Indian Education Committee and the Alaska Gateway School District on a part time basis. I have no benefits as a part time employee, no insurance or any of the amenities that the employees here enjoy. Since I'm a full time U of A student I am struggling to make ends meet on this part time wage for the past three years.

I hope we get some positive response from this effort in writing to you. If you should be in this area someday you're certainly welcome to observe one of the classes in session at Tok School.

Sincerely,

*Irene Solomon-Arnold*

Irene Solomon-Arnold

P.O. Box 548

TOK, AK 99780

C.C.

Reva Shirel

Rose Isaac

Will Mayo

Kathy Mayo, Noyon

Janae wasche, Bob Euan

Irene Nickolai

Jed Charles, Pres. - Ind. Ed., Tok

# Tanacross Athabaskan Language Class

TOK School, TOK, AK 99780

TIME	MONDAY	WEDS.	FRIDAY	
12:35 12:55	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	4 Students
1:00 1:20	Kinder 5 Students	Kinder	Class Prep.	
1:30 1:50	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Class Prep.	16 Students
2:15 3:00	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	12 Students
TIME	TUES.	THURS.	FRIDAY	
12:35 12:55	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade <sup>13</sup> Students	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	
1:00 1:20	Class Prep.	Class Prep.	Class Prep.	
1:25 2:10	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	16 Students
2:15 3:00	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	

66 Students per week.

1990  
TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.  
Board of Directors  
Resolution No. 90-112

BILINGUAL TEACHERS

WHEREAS, the elders, from whom we can learn our Native heritage are becoming older and passing away before we can acquire that information, and;

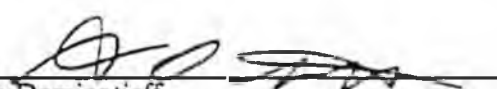
WHEREAS, youths should learn the language, culture, etc., to pass on to the next generation, otherwise we would lose our existence as Natives, and;

WHEREAS, youths desire to learn our language and culture;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Tanana Chiefs Conference Board of Directors requests the School Districts of Interior Alaska to seek funding so Native teachers can be hired to teach language and cultural activities within the schools.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. Board of Directors on March 15, 1990 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mitch Demientieff  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.

Submitted by: Youth - Tanacross



Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.  
Board of Directors  
1990 Resolution Assignment

<u>RESO #</u>	<u>RESOLUTION TITLE</u>	<u>ASSIGNED TO</u>
90-97	NORTH SLOPE HAUL ROAD	VGS/Fairbanks Subregion
90-98	TASK FORCE TO ESTABLISH TRIBAL OFFICES	VGS/Ed Rutledge
90-99	TRANSFER OF TCC VILLAGE GOVERNMENT FUNDS TO VILLAGE COUNCIL	Administration
90-100	FORESTRY PROGRAM	Forestry
90-101	RECLAMATION	VGS
90-102	RELATING TO EARTH DAY	Administration
90-103	THE NATIVE SUBSISTENCE LIFESTYLE WILL PREVAIL	VGS/Administration
90-104	NATIVE TRAPPING	Ron Silas/Pat Sweetsair - Galena
90-105	TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES	Donna Scott/Ernie Holmberg - McGrath
90-106	TCC TRIBAL EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS OFFICE (TERO)	Donna Scott
90-107	SUPPORT FOR SB 390 AND HB 171 - JOBS DAY CARE	Donna Scott
90-108	BLM FIREFIGHTING TAX WITHHOLDING	Ed Rutledge/Fairbanks Subregion
90-109	QUALITY EDUCATION	Reva Shircel
90-110	*ALASKA NATIVE CULTURE MONTH* PROCLAMATION	Administration/Education
90-111	VILLAGE EDUCATION FACILITATORS	Reva Shircel
90-112	BILINGUAL TEACHERS	Reva Shircel/Rose Isaac - Tok
90-113	SUPPORT OF THE POSITIONS OF STATE OFFICIALS RE: LOCAL CONTROL	Reva Shircel
90-114	DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELEMENTARY ATHABASCAN HISTORY TEXTBOOK	Reva Shircel
90-115	DIRECT DISTRIBUTION OF STATE & FEDERAL EDUCATION FUNDS	Ed Rutledge/Reva Shircel
90-116	SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATES FOR THE TCC COUNCIL	Reva Shircel/Fran Lambert
90-117	RURAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS	Reva Shircel/Fairbanks Subregion
90-118	ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE EDUCATION	Mike Graf/Rose Isaac - Tok
90-119	FAS SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS	Helen Haynes
90-120	COUNSELLING FOR FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME CHILDREN	Health Services/Fairbanks Subregion
90-121	FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME LEGISLATION	Health Services/Administration

TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE, INC.  
Board of Directors  
Resolution No. 90-16

**ESTABLISH NATIVE ATHABASCAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN TOK**

WHEREAS, the Athabascan Language is of most importance to the preservation of Alaska Native culture; and

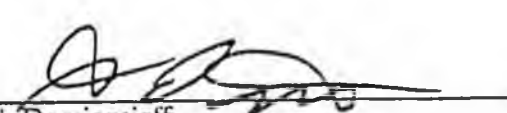
WHEREAS, fewer Alaska Natives are able to speak or understand their traditional language; and

WHEREAS, Tok Native Association lacks funds or resources to establish such program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Tanana Chiefs Conference Board of Directors directs TCC to work with the University of Alaska and/or other agencies to establish a Native Athabascan Language Program in Tok.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this resolution was duly passed by the Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc. Board of Directors on March 15, 1990 at Fairbanks, Alaska and a quorum was duly established.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mitch Demientieff  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.

Submitted by: Tok Native Association

**Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.  
Board of Directors  
1990 Resolution Assignment**

<u>RESO #</u>	<u>RESOLUTION TITLE</u>	<u>ASSIGNED TO</u>
90-1	YUKON FLATS IS INDIAN COUNTRY	Administration
90-2	PROTECT PORCUPINE CARIBOU HERD - ITS ECOSYSTEM AND THE GWICH'IN WAY OF LIFE	Wildlife & Parks/Fort Yukon Subregion
90-3	FUR COOPERATIVE FINANCING - 1990-1991	Ed Rutledge/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-4	AIRPLANE HUNTING ON THE YUKON FLATS	Ron Silas/Oscar Frank
90-5	A RESOLUTION FOR TCC TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A TRIBAL COURT SYSTEM WITHIN THE YUKON FLATS SUBREGION	Will Mayo/Ava Edwardson
90-6	TO ASSIST THE COUNCIL OF ATHABASCAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO ASSUME TRIBAL MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS IN THE YUKON FLATS	Heath/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-7	YUKON FLATS REGION ELDERLY CARE FACILITY	Don Shirce/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-8	REQUEST FOR HEALTH AIDE POSITION IN BIRCH CREEK VILLAGE	Health/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-9	VPSO POSITION - CIRCLE	Daisy Stevens/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-10	SUPPORT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HEADSTART PROGRAM FOR THE COMMUNITY OF FORT YUKON	Sarah Kuenzli/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-11	BIRCH CREEK TANK REHABILITATION	Remote Maintenance/Ed Rutledge
90-12	BEAVER STATE AIRPORT LANDS	VGS/Realty
90-13	BEAVER ELECTRICAL SYSTEM UPGRADE	OEH/Remote Maintenance
90-14	BEAVER EMERGENCY FIRE EQUIPMENT	Ed Rutledge/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-15	BEAVER HEAD START PROGRAM	Sarah Kuenzli/Susie Peter - Fort Yukon
90-16	ESTABLISH NATIVE ATHABASCAN LANGUAGE PROGRAM IN TOK	Reva Shirce/Rose Isaac - Tok
90-17	TOK ELIGIBILITY TECHNICIAN POSITION	Don Shirce/FSS-Tok
90-18	HALT RAILROAD - KILLED MOOSE TO FEED PREDATORS	Ron Silas/Gary Moore - Tok
90-19	INCREASE LIBRARY SERVICES TO TOK SUBREGIONAL VILLAGES	Rose Isaac/Gary Moore - Tok
90-20	UPPER TANANA ALCOHOL RECOVERY CAMP	Mike Graf/Rose Isaac - Tok
90-21	TOK SUBREGION TEEN CENTER	Youth Program/Tok UTAF
90-22	VSW FUNDING - DOT LAKE	OEH/Rose Isaac - Tok

# Technology may silence world's voices

University of Alaska linguist among those who seek to preserve diversity

By DANIEL Q. HANEY  
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — The world's 6,000 languages are dying off quickly, and up to half of them will probably become extinct during the next century, experts predicted Saturday.

"I call this a catastrophe — the rate of loss of mankind's linguistic diversity," said Michael Krauss of the University of Alaska.

While once languages were suppressed by government policy, the forces conspiring against native tongues now seem to be

largely electronic. Satellite television, cellular telephones and the Internet all let people speak to each other instantly all over the world, and all drive the need for languages that many understand.

In most cases, that language is English. Even defenders of dying languages concede this is not necessarily a bad thing, since a common language clearly allows people to communicate easily. For instance, scientists the world over often speak to each other in English, whether their

labs are in France or Taiwan.

However, linguists attending a conference Saturday of the American Association for the Advancement of Science urged the preservation of small languages as second, or even third, languages, rather than allowing them to be swallowed up by English, Arabic, Spanish and other major languages.

"We should care about this," Krauss said. "The world will be less interesting, less beautiful."

Krauss said that in pre-

historic times, humans probably spoke between 10,000 and 15,000 languages. This is now down to about 6,000 and dropping fast.

Krauss, who documents Native Alaska languages, estimated that between 20 percent and 50 percent of the world's languages are no longer being learned by children.

"They are beyond endangerment," he said. "They are the living dead," and

Please see Page B-2.  
**LANGUAGES**

## LANGUAGES: Many may become extinct

Continued from Page B-1

will all disappear in the next century.

The average language is spoken by between 5,000 and 10,000 people. However, Krauss said that only those with more than 1 million speakers have a good future.

He estimated that about 600 of the world's languages are assured of still being around in the year 2100.

Many of the small languages on the verge of dying out are in tropical parts of the world, especially Africa and Indonesia, he said.

But the United States also is losing languages fast, especially in California, which has been called the world's third most lin-

guistically diverse region, after New Guinea and the Caucasus.

Leanne Hinton of the University of California at Berkeley said North America has between 200 and 250 native languages, and about 50 of them are in California.

All the California Indian languages are in trouble. None is being learned widely by children or used in daily commerce. Twenty have died this century.

The latest extinction occurred last month with the death of the lone speaker of Northern Pomo, a woman in her 80s.

Hinton said Native American languages were suppressed until the 1960s. Indian children sent to boarding schools were punished for speaking their

parents' language.

Now, she said, a movement exists among California Indians to learn the elders' tongue before it's too late. Some tribes have set up summer language camps for youngsters.

"Despite the desires of the language activists, the outlook is somewhat grim," Hinton said. "There is no chance any of these will be first languages."

Krauss said many new languages will be born. Latin, for instance, took 2,000 years to evolve into a dozen or so different European languages.

"Everybody, including Bedouins on camels, will have wristwatch telephones," he said. "It is unlikely that Arabic will rediversify the way Latin did."

Anch Daily news 2/19/95

## Opir

## Commentary

## Why is bilingual education important to me

*Editor's note: Serena Demientieff, a student at Akula Elimaurvik in Kasigluk, recently took third place in the Nabe National Bilingual Essay Contest for sixth- through eighth-grade students. Serena was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.*

By Serena Demientieff

Bilingual education is important to me so I can be able to speak in English and Yup'ik. Every child should be taught at least some things about what our ancestors did. Elders of the Yup'ik world worry about losing the Yup'ik language. As for myself I am very proud of myself because I am a bilingual person.

At our school, in Akula, we have a Yup'ik Studies Program. The Yup'ik studies program is a program where we can learn or at least remember how to make the things which our ancestors did back then. More and more schools are asking for the curriculum which we are using at our school.

How important do you think it is to keep our language alive? I think it is really important because once we lose it we can not find it ever again. For example, the Eyak language is dying because no one has ever been taught how to read and write in the Eyak way. There is only one elder who knows how to speak and read in the language. If no one has been taught, and that elder dies, the Eyak language is



Serena Demientieff

gone forever. Would you want that to happen? To keep our language alive we have to teach our future children how to speak in the Yup'ik language and also have to teach them the things we were taught.

It is also important to have the English language, too. If we know the English language we can have jobs in the future and be able to speak to non-Natives. We also have to know the English language to be able to read things at the store and also in the newspapers and count the money you have to spend.

In the future, I plan to teach my children to be bilingual. First I plan to teach them Yup'ik and English; Yup'ik so they can pass the language on to their children, and English so they can be able to communicate with non-Natives and also to understand English.

## Sobriety fo needs to be

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## Work togeth alcohol and

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RUSSIAN FOR J  
 culture, the Cyrillic  
 DRIVER'S EDU

# The spoken word

## Alaska's dying languages

We've said it before, but the message bears repeating: Alaska's native languages will continue to die unless they are passed down from generation to generation. When a language is relegated to older speakers and scholars, then it's almost surely headed from the endangered to the extinct list. Such is the sorry state of most native languages spoken in Alaska.

In the long run, well-intentioned Native parents who favor English even if they are fluent in their mother tongue are harming rather than helping their children and culture. The common fear among Native parents and families, apparently, is that Native children will not master English in school if they are taught or speak their native language at home. That is a false fear, say experts.

"Linguistic studies have shown the children from homes where English is a second language actually learn English better once they've mastered the native language," according to a Feb. 12 Daily News story. If more parents — and educators who work in Alaska — realized the import of this truth, then true progress can be made in keeping indigenous languages alive.

Meanwhile, millions are spent on bilingual education and conferences are held to save dying languages. But until those fluent in native language teach youngsters their languages, conferences and class won't get the job done.

ANE  
Daily News  
2/21/94

## Sitka program

### Tlingit taught in schools

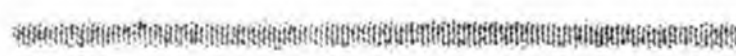
The past school week was a busy one for the Sitka Native Education Program. It was Elizabeth Peratrovich Week at local schools and some students capped it off with a special meal. On Friday, local Sitka kids who are enrolled in SNEP cooked up Native food for elders and treated them extra special.

The SNEP recently won a national award — the Showcase Award for 1992-93 at the 25th Annual National Indian Education Association Convention — for the excellent Tlingit educational programs it runs.

Teachers instruct students in the Tlingit language. Tutors coach students in problem areas. The culture is explored and kids get hands-on lessons in everything from Tlingit art to dance.

Thanks to this 20-year-old program, both Native and non-Native students enrolled in it are teaching Tlingit words and stories to their parents, says a Feb. 15 Dispatch: Alaska story. Considering the tongue-twisting nature of the Tlingit language, that is no small accomplishment.

There are plenty of bilingual programs all over Alaska. Some are well run and some are not. The Sitka Native Education Program, run by the Alaska Native Brotherhood, is one of the more successful. And if local parents who aren't fluent in Tlingit organize adult classes of their own, it would complement the SNEP program. Then kids who learn Tlingit in school and parents who learn in an adult program can converse and grow more fluent together.



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# PRESERVING THE HAWAIIAN TONGUE

Just a decade ago, only about 1,000 people, mostly historians and the elderly still spoke Hawaiian fluently. Today that number has more than doubled in the wake of a cultural revival that has touched young and old alike. Much of the credit for that revival must go to a program in the public schools in which students are taught exclusively in the Hawaiian language.

By ANGELA S. MILLER

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**H**ONOLULU - The students gather outside their classroom door and chant an ancient Hawaiian poem: "Ku mai nei au i ka haiau loa a 'i."

They respectfully tell their teacher of their desire for learning and ask for permission to enter the place of instruction.

The teacher chants back, "Au mai e na Lehua a." or "Come forth my young Lehua blossoms." and the eager students file into the classroom.

This scene repeats itself each school day morning at seven public schools across Hawaii where hundreds of elementary schoolchildren are taught exclusively through the Hawaiian language.

The program began 10 years ago when a group of native Hawaiian parents saw their language disappearing as older speakers died, and they looked to the next generation to revive it.

The parents started their own preschool in Hilo, on Hawaii Island, where their children would be taught exclusively in Hawaiian. They called it Punana Leo, or nest of language.

"We're not just teaching them Hawaiian; we're teaching them through Hawaiian," says Kauanoe Kamana, a Hawaiian studies professor at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, and one of the original parents involved.

"People who think English is the key to all success are very narrow-minded," she says. "You need to know English, but it is not the essence of all knowledge.

"We've been educated using the English language for the past 100 years and it has not improved our academic performance as a people."

Page C-1

JNU Empire

5/7/94

# Language...

Continued from Page C-1

Children of Hawaiian ancestry routinely score the lowest on standard tests among all other ethnic groups in the Islands.

At first, volunteer teachers and parents instructed the classes using donated materials.

They later won the support and financial backing of the state Department of Education, which gradually established Hawaiian language immersion programs through the eighth grade in seven public schools around the state.

About 1,000 students are registered for the immersion classes for the fall and the Department of Education recently approved extending the program through high school.

"It's a miracle that our children now are speaking the Hawaiian language," says Lilikala Kame'elehiwa, whose 11-year-old daughter Punihei has attended a Hawaiian immersion school in Honolulu since preschool.

Hearing Punihei speak the language she thought would one day be lost "makes my heart sing," Kame'elehiwa says.

At the program's inception, some lawmakers and educators questioned the value of an education through Hawaiian where English is taught an hour each day as a second language.

They feared the students would lag behind their counterparts in writing and articulating in English.

But Hawaii School Superintendent Herman Aizawa says the students in the all-Hawaiian classes are performing as well or better than students in the same grade level taught in English.

The Department of Education evaluates a test class of Hawaiian language immersion students each year in basic core areas such as reading, comprehension and mathematics, says administrator Anita Bruce.

The evaluations show that the students have kept pace with their English-schooled counterparts, Bruce says.

Results of recent Stanford Achievement Tests taken by sixth-

graders who have participated in Hawaiian language immersion since preschool point to a reversal in the trend of lower-than-average test scores for native Hawaiians.

According to results of SAT tests administered last year to sixth-graders at Keaukaha Elementary School, 100 percent of the Hawaiian-educated students scored average or above on the math portion while only 66 percent of the students in all-English classes scored as well.

For the reading portion of the test, 66 percent of Hawaiian-educated students scored average or above, compared to 52 percent of the English-educated students.

Aizawa says the success of the program can be attributed to the strong commitment and involvement of the parents.

"If the students get the support of the parents at home - it does not matter what school they go to - they will be successful," he says.

The Hawaiian language is worked into the curriculum of other public school students through kupunas, or Hawaiian community elders who spend a few hours a week in the classroom sharing their language and culture with students.

The revival of the Hawaiian language has not been confined to the state's elementary schools.

Enrollment in Hawaiian language and culture classes at the University of Hawaii's main campus in Honolulu has risen to nearly 1,700 students from just 700 five years ago, with hundreds of others on a waiting list, says Emily Hawkins, Department chair for Hawaiian language.

The Hawaiian language immersion program in the elementary schools is partly responsible for the large increase, Hawkins says, because graduates in Hawaiian language and studies are finding jobs teaching Hawaiian in the schools.

But the largest interest in learning the language can be seen in the general community.

"A lot of people are coming to Hawaiian studies as a way to keep up with their culture," Hawkins says.

Just a decade ago, only about 1,000 people, mostly historians and elders, spoke Hawaiian fluently.

Today that number has more than doubled in the wake of a cultural revival that has touched young and old alike.

"It's my language, the language of my ancestors, my culture; if nobody continues it we'll lose it forever," says Hiapo Perreira, a 19-year-old major in Hawaiian studies at the University of Hawaii. He is one-fourth Hawaiian on his mother's side.

When Perreira's mother was in school, students were punished for speaking Hawaiian in the classroom.

About 20 percent of Hawaii's population can claim some Hawaiian ancestry. In 1979, Hawaiian was declared the state's official language, along with English.

A state law established in 1896, three years after white business leaders overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy, forbid speaking Hawaiian in the schools. It was not officially overturned until 1986.

Hawkins says the students may have some or no Hawaiian blood but they all "think of themselves as tied to this place: to its beaches, its mountains, whatever."

The state's Office of Hawaiian Affairs produced a television commercial showing people of all ages speaking Hawaiian, with English subtitles, encouraging viewers to learn the language.

The commercial generated more than 300 requests for information about how to sign up for classes, says OHA culture specialist Pikake Pelekai.

When a Honolulu public radio station began broadcasting a daily newscast in Hawaiian, even listeners who did not understand the language tuned in because they liked the way spoken Hawaiian sounded, says the station's news director, Scott Kim.

Hawaiian comes from the same Polynesian ancestral language as the native languages of Tahiti and New Zealand, says Hawaiian language professor Pila Wilson.

"It's a very melodious language that uses only seven consonants and five vowels in making all of its words," Wilson says.

# AARCIRTUUN

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wall'u taanganek avulegnek,  
qingan anglicurlagececugngaat.

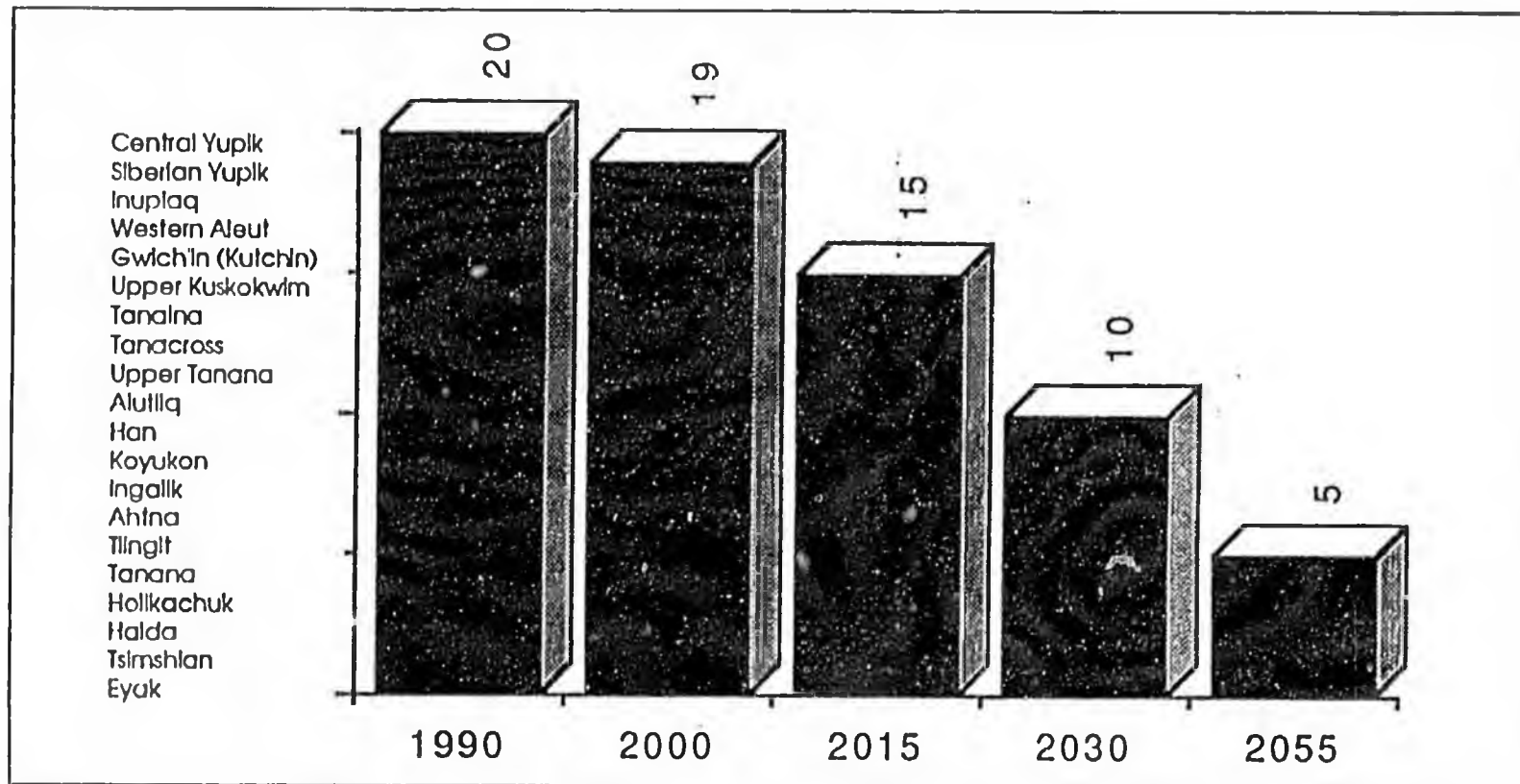
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## WARNING

Drinking alcoholic beverages, or anything mixed with alcohol  
can make your unborn baby grow (poorly, badly, or the wrong way).  
Drinks that make unborn babies grow the wrong way include:  
beer, wine, wine coolers, and other alcoholic beverages.

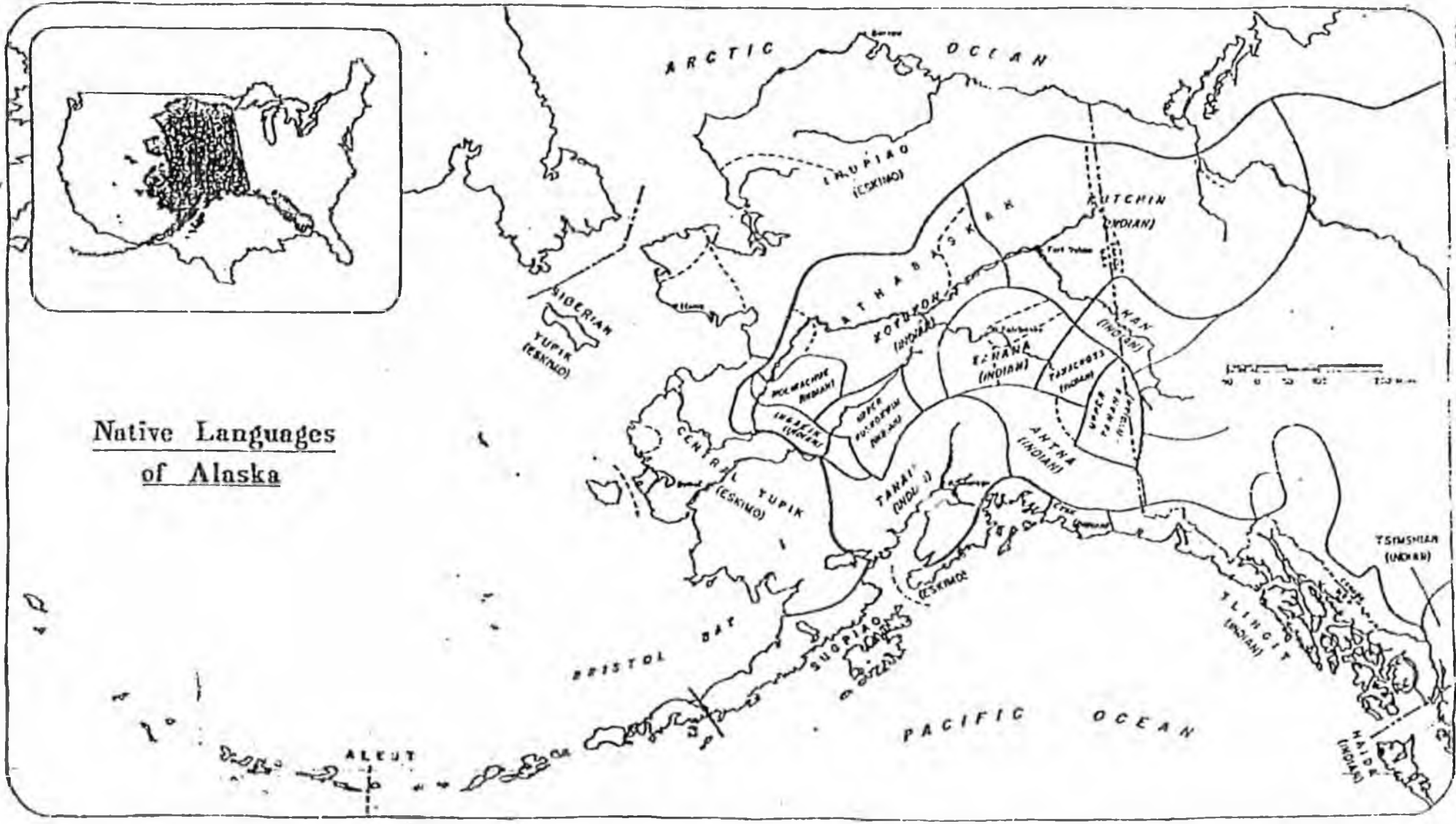
Compliments of Representative Lyman Hoffman  
Translation by Oscar Alexie, Yu'pik Language Center  
University of Alaska - Kuskokwim Campus

## Languages in Peril



Not allowing for miracles, Eyak will probably not survive this century; Alaska Tsimshian, Alaska Halda, Hollkachuk, and Tanana will probably be extinct by 2015; and Tlingit, Ahtna, Ingallk, Koyukon and Han will probably be extinct by 2030. Furthermore, Alutliq, Upper Tanana, Tanacross, Tanaina and Upper Kuskokwim have an extremely doubtful future . . . not allowing for miracles or other radical changes, they will probably be extinct within a lifetime, by about 2055. By that year, then, probably only five of the twenty Alaska languages will still be spoken . . . Western Aleut . . . Kutchin . . . Inupiaq . . . Central Alaska Yupik and Siberian Yupik . . .

Dr. Michael Krauss  
Alaska Native Languages: Past, Present and Future  
Alaska Native Language Center Research Papers - 1980  
University of Alaska Fairbanks



Native Languages  
of Alaska

4 P

## KUSPUK SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 49  
Aniak, Alaska 99557  
(907) 675-4250

Bobbette D. Bush  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS  
SUPERINTENDENT/BUSINESS OFFICE  
FAX (907) 675-4336  
GENERAL FAX (907) 676-4306

March 16, 1995

The Honorable John Torgerson  
Chair of Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Torgerson:

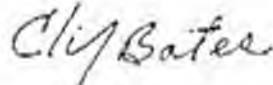
This letter is in support of the Native Language Education Act as introduced by Senator Georgianna Lincoln. I have been an educator in rural Alaska since 1977. The ten points expressed in Section two, Findings, provide a succinct explanation of why this legislation is important. By establishing a local Native language advisory board, this bill ensures a defined vehicle for parents and community members to express their desires regarding Native language instruction in their schools.

There are resources available throughout the State to assist districts in developing their own Native language curriculum. As Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Kuspuk School District, working with our Yup'ik language instructors, I recently completed the initial stage in creating a *Yup'ik for Nonspeakers* curriculum designed for our students. We have acquired instructional resources and developed a plan for staff development and for assessing our students.

Senate Bill No. 32 is not restrictive. It recognizes the great variety of situations we have in Alaska. There are various models for language instruction and this bill would allow the local board to determine to what extent and in which manner the Native language instruction would occur.

The efforts in our district regarding Native language instruction are designed to assist in carrying out our recently adopted mission statement. In part this reads: "The mission of the Kuspuk School District is to cooperate with parents and guardians to graduate students who are confident and capable individuals whether living in the traditional culture or the global society. Our graduates will have pride in themselves and positive self esteem". I would hope that this is a goal of other school districts like ours. This bill would help achieve this goal. Thank-you and I appreciate your consideration and support of Senate Bill No. 32.

Sincerely,



Clif Bates  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

# Denakkanaaga, Inc.

409 Fourth Avenue

Fairbanks, Alaska 99701-4711

(907) 456-5827

FAX (907) 452-6641

March 17, 1995

Senator Georgianna Lincoln  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 510  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Georgianna:

The Denakkanaaga elders support Senate Bill No. 32, The Native Language Education Act. We believe local school boards in districts where the majority of students are Alaskan Natives should establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board to advise on Native language training.

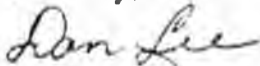
Since 1983, our elders have consistently supported Native language education in one form or another. Our language is a part of our cultural heritage and identity. Many of our elders pass on their particular Native language to the young children at home or in the schools. It is important that our children learn their ancestral Alaskan language as well as English, so that they can continue to survive and thrive in both worlds, the traditional and the dominant.

We are including a copy of Denakkanaaga Resolution 93-2, Continuation of the Fight, enacted at the annual elders conference, held in Fort Yukon in 1993. The resolution illustrates the elders' determination to preserve our language, culture, and traditional ways. Passage of SB 32 will assist the elders toward their goals. Alaska, which is proud of its past, its present, and its future, should also be proud to include the Native languages in local school curricula.

We urge the Alaska Legislature to pass Senate Bill No. 32.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Don Lee

Executive Director



# Denakkanaaga

1302 21st Avenue  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701  
(907) 456-5827

## Resolution 93-2

### Continuation of the Fight

Whereas the Native people of Alaska have the pride, determination, and spirit to survive; and

Whereas there may be issues and concerns voiced which do not seem to be listened to or answered; and

Whereas, at times, we may think that it is time to give up, to quit struggling against difficulties and defeats;


Therefore, be it resolved that the elders of Denakkanaaga will continue to fight for support and funding for the causes we believe in like our customary and traditional lifestyle, our war against alcohol and drug abuse, the preservation of our Native culture, languages, traditions and values, and the needs of our people; and

Be it further resolved that the Denakkanaaga elders will encourage all the people of the Doyon/Tanana Chiefs Conference region to keep on fighting for what they believe in, to follow their dreams no matter what obstacles or defeats they face; and to use their Native spirit to survive.

.....

### CERTIFICATION

I certify that this resolution was passed on June 10, 1993 by the Denakkanaaga Board of Directors and the elder voting delegates at the Twelfth Annual Denakkanaaga Elders Conference in Fort Yukon, Alaska.

  
Effie Kokrine, Secretary/Treasurer

Submitted by:  
Resolutions Committee  
Twelfth Annual Elders Conference

Recipient of the 1992 Louise B. Garrard Award  
for service to rural older Americans,  
National Association of State Units on Aging

ADN 3/21/95

## Inupiaq language

### *Getting beyond Dick, Jane & Spot*

What language do you think in?

For most of us in Alaska, we think — and write and speak — in English.

Even where Native peoples dominate, English is usually the dominant language.

There are only a couple of regions in Alaska where the Native language is still spoken among the older and younger generations — and the North Slope is one of them.

Yet, older Inupiaq speakers are all too aware that too few young Inupiat are fluent in their mother tongue.

The North Slope Borough, based in Barrow, is trying to stave off the cultural disaster of a dead language.

This academic year the seven elementary schools in the far-flung borough introduced a reading series aimed at 6- to 8-year-old Inupiaq schoolchildren. The six books, complete with Inupiat cultural and social lessons, were developed by the borough and produced and printed in Alaska.

The series is part of a borough Inupiaq-language immersion program that utilizes only Inupiaq until the third grade. One of the stories originated in northern Alaska; the remaining five came from a Canadian Inuit.

The oil-rich borough is fortunately able to commission privately published school books. In other parts of the world, preservation of native languages has gotten a boost from microcomputers, customized software and desktop publishing.

A literacy center in Oaxaca, Mexico, for instance, produces native authors who write in their own languages. In Ireland, where Gaelic was repressed for centuries, the native language has blossomed.

Perhaps 20 years from now a handful of the young Inupiat reading this new six-book series will have become literary giants who write, think and speak Inupiaq.

Isaac Juneby  
Box 107  
Eagle, Alaska 99738  
February 13, 1995

Representative Alan Austerman, Chairman  
House Committee, Community and Regional Affairs  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Austerman:

I am writing to comment on HB 160 and HB 167, sponsored by Representative Nicholia. I am asking you as Chairman of the CRA to support the passage of these important bills; I am proponent of Native Education and Culture programs in our schools.

Because, I have seen for many years that Native Languages do disappear and die, my wife and I have been involved for years that this does not happen to the Han Language. Both my wife and I have been involved with the Han Literacy Workshops put on by the Yukon College of Whitehorse and Council of Yukon Indians.

Let me explain why I think these two bills are important. First and foremost, I was one of the unfortunates that couldn't speak my Native Language in School. It was a horrible experience to be scared and punished for not being able to speak my Native Language in school. I have been deprived of my identity and heritage.

This to me was a violation of the United States Code of Human Rights. Nobody should be punished for who and what they are. These 2 bills are what's needed for many of our children in the villages. The Cultural awareness, language, identity and self-esteem are knowledge that all Native Children should know in order to survive today's world.

I have difficult time with many of the rural schools teaching Russian, French, Spanish and German and ignoring the Native Languages. I believe if there were some respect for our people's culture, we wouldn't be having misunderstanding about one's heritage as we do now.

I know what can happen to any language if the interests are not there to enhance it's survival. We need to emphasize the importance of their existence. I am appealing to you and your Committee to make sure that some of our languages are not history, and having children read and

study in the schools, and saying that "There was once a Tribe of Athabascan Indians". I know that you will do everything in your Committee to make sure that this does not happen. I am asking for your support to see that these bills are passed in your Committee.

If you have any questions, call me at (907) 547-2281.

Sincerely,

*Isaac Juneby*  
Isaac Juneby

C/C

Representative Irene Nicholia  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Ivan Ivan  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Pete Kott  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Al Vezey  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Kim Elton  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Representative Jerry Mackie  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Senator Georgianna Lincoln  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capital  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Reyan Hubbard  
1315 mission Rd  
Kodiak Alaska 99615  
March 1, 1995

Senator John Torgerson, Chairman  
Community and Regional Affairs Committee  
Senator  
State Capital room 121  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RECEIVED  
MAR 07 1995  
Am't.....

Dear Chairman Torgerson,

I am a concerned Alaska Native from Kodiak. I am writing to you about HB167 Ak Native Language and Culture Programs.

I approve of this bill. I think it should be passed. I don't think the schools are doing enough to teach the Native heritage. The problem is not only the schools it's the native students. Most of the students that are native don't care. I think this bill would really help if it were passed. The students would have to learn about Alaska natives without having a choice. In addition the schools should find some exiting and interesting ways to teach the students about native heritage and make learning about Alaska Natives fun.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Reyan Hubbard



# Alaska Federation of Natives, Inc.

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Senator Georgianna Lincoln  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Senator Lincoln:

The Alaska Federation of Natives supports SB32, the Native Language Education Act. I have attached a number 1994 Annual AFN Convention resolutions reiterating AFN's support for the inclusion of Native language in the curricula of Alaska school districts.

The loss of Native language skills and use continues to be a major concern of the Alaska Native community. In some areas, there is grave concern about the extinction of the language.

Native parents, community members, educators and students have been primary advocates for including Native language, history and culture in the curricula. This is reflected in past testimony and in the numerous reports and recommendations such as the Alaska Natives Commission report and almost annually by our membership. Education is a very high priority for Alaska Native people.

We support your efforts to provide for Native languages in the curriculum.

Sincerely,

Julie E. Kitka  
President

ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-52

TITLE: FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

WHEREAS: all schools in Alaskan communities are facing serious financial cutbacks, and

WHEREAS: teachers, activities, and supplies are being cut more and more each year because of cuts in the State education budget, and because the foundation formula has remained static, and

WHEREAS: Alaska needs to find other sources of revenue for education needs,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that the State legislature be requested to enact legislation, providing for revenue through a state sales tax or a state school tax to support public education.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-50

TITLE: NATIVE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

WHEREAS: the educational opportunities for Natives is not nearly as great as for non-Natives, and

WHEREAS: most Native villages have limited teaching staff that are not always able to provide educational opportunities found in most schools, and

WHEREAS: there is a need to learn our Native ways, and

WHEREAS: the regular school teachers usually do not know the students' Native language and culture, and

WHEREAS: we need to protect and preserve our old ways, so our traditions will be with us today and tomorrow, rather than in our past and forgotten, and

WHEREAS: students of Alaska have been urging the Alaska school system to fit this into their curriculum, but little has been done to fulfill their needs, and

WHEREAS: most schools are in need of larger, more adequate staffs that can provide us with our Native heritage,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that classes such as a Native Studies be stressed to be offered in the school system,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the schools be provided with an appropriate staff, so students can learn about their ancestors and keep our traditions alive.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-47

TITLE: PROACTIVE HIRE FOR ALASKA ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY  
TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS IN RURAL AND URBAN ALASKA

WHEREAS: many certified Native teachers have applied for  
teaching positions in rural and urban Alaska and are  
not hired,

WHEREAS: it is visible that many teachers are hired by  
acquaintances from their friends school or regions,

WHEREAS: more Native teachers are needed within the system to  
create positive role models to encourage students to  
see "success" and succeed,

WHEREAS: teachers should reflect the population in the  
community,

WHEREAS: having qualified Native teachers in the reflected  
population would be more comfortable and a better  
learning a background as the teacher,

WHEREAS: there is a lack of communication with the school,  
school board members, and local community where bridges  
are needed to be built to have a better learning  
community,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994  
Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives  
that we urge and encourage a bigger effort to recruit  
and hire more qualified Native teachers in the schools  
in the Alaskan urban and rural school districts, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the delegates urge and encourage the  
schools to continue pursuit of increased Native  
teachers in Alaskan urban and rural school districts.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-38

TITLE: ALASKA NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CLASS

WHEREAS: the knowledge of Alaska Native cultures must be preserved because it has been continuously declining among the Native people,

WHEREAS: most urban and rural schools that have offered bilingual classes as electives have not been effective due to a variety of reasons among students and teaching use methods,

WHEREAS: hands on, project-based techniques tend to be a more effective way of learning,

WHEREAS: this would give Native students a sense of belonging, cultural identity and the ability to pass on their language and history to future generations,

WHEREAS: this project-based class would also enhance the communication between Elders and the youth,

WHEREAS: students would have understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of their Native language and culture,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that we encourage schools to include this ANLCC, which includes language, hunting, dancing, writing, Native stories, and other appropriate subjects in their curriculum,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that school districts be requested to initiate changes that allow village schools to teach all forms of cultural activities.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-37

TITLE: PRESERVING NATIVE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE OF ELDERS

WHEREAS: not every rural village practices the same culture and language; and

WHEREAS: most existing languages only cover the language, which is just one part of the culture; and

WHEREAS: to preserve the full body of a culture, we must include the traditional songs, dances and stories, the heart of any culture, along with teaching the language; and

WHEREAS: these classes have not been open for the public; and

WHEREAS: to preserve a culture, the people must ensure that the teachings of the elders are preserved for future references, thus enabling a culture to live on; and

WHEREAS: traditionally, Alaskan cultures were oral, but new times call for new ways, such as writing them down, videotaping and incorporating them into computers; and

WHEREAS: the most effective way for the people to learn today is a combination of the old ways and the new ways, thus a combination of elders, adults and youth;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that AFN is requested to find the funding to provide for the supplies needed for the preservation of our traditional songs, dances and stories; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each Native corporation either appoint or seek volunteers for this program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the ones appointed to participate in this project shall be in combined teams of elders, adults and youth; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this program be included in the schools as a class and as an after school program for the benefit of the public; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Department of Education and School Districts should take an active role in further enhancing the Native culture and language, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the young Alaska Natives establish a culture week every other month; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that computers and software be provided for the bilingual program across the state of Alaska; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the State of Alaska, Department of Education, Public Schools, corporations, tribal governments, parents, community efforts, non-profit organizations, federal program, future teachers of Alaska, support and incorporate mandatory Native language and cultural programs in school statewide.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-13

TITLE: KEEPING EDUCATION AS A #1 PRIORITY

WHEREAS: State funding to school districts is always being considered an area to cut; and

WHEREAS: federal funding to specialized education programs is continuing to decrease; and

WHEREAS: these cuts can radically change education programs that affect our Alaska Native children and youth; and

WHEREAS: without adequate and relevant education, our young people may not have the full opportunities to become successful and productive citizens,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that the Alaska Native Education Council/Alaska Federation of Natives Joint Education Committee advocate for stabilized, adequate consistent statewide funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that education remain a funding priority.

SUBMITTED BY: Alaska Native Education Council

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION 94-36

TITLE: USE OF ELDERS WITHIN SCHOOLS

WHEREAS: through the introduction of the western culture important traditional Native values have been lost, and

WHEREAS: students are not utilizing their Elders' knowledge of traditional lifestyles, and

WHEREAS: urgency is requested because with the passing of each Elder we lose irreplaceable traditional values,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the delegates to the 1994 Annual Convention of the Alaska Federation of Natives that Elders should be introduced in schools as teachers to help preserve the knowledge and understanding of Alaska Native culture and tradition.

SUBMITTED BY: Joint Elders/Youth Conference

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: DO PASS

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED



ALASKA FEDERATION OF NATIVES

1994 ANNUAL CONVENTION

SPECIAL RESOLUTION #4

TITLE: REGAINING CONTROL OF, AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR, OUR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

WHEREAS the findings of the Alaska Native Commission reveal that Alaska's system of public education is failing, in both urban and rural communities, to prepare Native children for success in traditional pursuits, modern careers or any combination thereof; and

WHEREAS, despite public investment in school construction, curriculum development and instructional personnel, Native children continue to rank at or near the bottom of almost every measure of academic achievement; and

WHEREAS the basic fact underlying this systemic failure is that most village schools are really non-Native institutions, belonging to non-Native governments, staffed primarily by non-Native people, trying to teach non-Native knowledge and values to children whose families and communities are alienated from the process of public education; and

WHEREAS we share in the responsibility to resolve these situations, having yielded, to the supposed expertise of outsiders, the critical task of teaching each new generation of our own people; and

WHEREAS little improvement in Native academic performance can be expected until two things happen: we stop abdicating responsibility for the education of our children, and Alaska's public school systems embark on a new approach of cultural flexibility and cooperative administration in our communities; and

WHEREAS, after so many years of depending on missionaries, teachers and bureaucrats, our reassertion of parental and community roles in education will be difficult and will elicit entrenched resistance at every turn; and

WHEREAS, given the compelling statistical data and the evidence of our own experience, we have no choice but to end this self-defeating dependency, to insist that our schools belong to us, and to take back control of our children's lives;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Convention urges all public health institutions to implement the recommendations of the Alaska Natives Commission - with special attention to those that advocate a fundamental shift of the delivery system from its present emphasis on reactive secondary and tertiary care to a new priority of primary care, prevention, health education, personal responsibility and community implementation.

SUBMITTED BY: Alaska Federation of Natives Board of Directors

CONVENTION ACTION: PASSED





## Sealaska Heritage Foundation

One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 201 • Juneau, Alaska 99801-1249 • (907) 463-4844  
Fax (907) 544-1807

March 22, 19~~95~~<sup>9</sup>

### Testimony in Support of SB 32, Native Language Education Act

Senator Torgerson  
Chairman, Community and Regional Affairs Committee  
Alaska State Senate  
Via FAX 465-2652 (Sen. Georgianna Lincoln)

Dear Senator Torgerson:

I am writing in support of SB 32, the Native Language Education Act. The proposed legislation mandates that each school district form a Native Language Advisory Board, and that the board examine district policy, program, and curriculum for Alaska Native languages, recommending revision as necessary.

Teachers, administrators, policy makers, and the public are still debating the value and validity of Alaska Native intellectual culture, and its place in the school curriculum. The debate has been going on for over 100 years, and shows no sign of resolution.

Once more the public is invited to offer testimony regarding Native language policy and the schools, the place of Alaska Native language and literature in the language arts curriculum. Such debate is usually heated.

The review process established by SB 32 will address a critical issue in education and will do it with a minimum of negative conflict. It would not mandate any changes, but would have school districts examine an aspect of the curriculum that has long been of concern to the Alaska Native community.

In my twenty-five years of involvement with language arts instruction in Alaska, I have found discrimination to be alive and well in the school curriculum, in teacher and administrator attitude, and in public opinion. In southeast Alaska, with which I am most familiar, Alaska Native language and literature are typically excluded from the school curriculum; when included, they are often trivialized or marginalized. Such exclusion or trivialization are forms of discrimination to the extent that the curriculum fails to represent an important culture and heritage of the community.

A Tlingit student in Juneau, for example, can take four years of French, but Tlingit is not offered, even on a "language exploration" basis. We should also note that French instruction is not funded by the French community of Juneau. In contrast, a recent experiment to offer a two-week course in Tlingit was funded by private sources, including donations from Native corporations and organizations, and was undertaken at the initiative of one teacher. In two recent district surveys, Tlingit ranked among the top preferences for language instruction, but it has been almost twenty-five years since the district offered the language.

A few years ago, when students invited us to come to their school in one of the predominantly Tlingit villages of Southeast Alaska, and talk with them about our recently published bilingual collection of Tlingit oral literature, one of the administrators vetoed it, telling us, "I don't see where Tlingit literature fits into the curriculum."

Some districts still classify Tlingit students in special education, and place them in speech therapy for regional dialect, a practice the same administrators would not suggest to President Clinton or Governor Knowles. Some school districts generate major funding in the name of Native students; but how much of it goes into language arts instruction for Native students, and how much of that instruction includes Alaska Native language and literature?

What is the message being sent to Native students and the general public by a learning environment in which the value and validity of Alaska Native intellectual culture continue to be questioned or denied at the highest levels? Policy makers and the general public shed tears over high Native drop out and

low self esteem, yet continue to question or deny Native content in the language arts curriculum. This is more than hypocrisy; it is discrimination; and if it isn't already against school law, it should be.

I support SB 32 because it will provide for evaluation of ongoing school policy regarding the position of Alaska Native language and literature in the curriculum.

If the bill does not already provide for it, I suggest that it include a requirement that the data collected on which languages are taught, and at what levels, and for how long, be forwarded to the Alaska Department of Education, and that the DOE be required to compile a profile of Native language teaching in Alaska schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard L. Dauenhauer". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Richard L. Dauenhauer, Ph.D.

Program Director

Language and Cultural Studies

SENATE BILL 32  
(LINCOLN)

NATIVE LANGUAGE EDUCATION  
IN: 1/16/95      OUT:  
FURTHER REFERRALS: HES AND FINANCE  
REQUEST FOR HEARING: 3/6/95  
HEARING DATE: 3/22/95

REMARKS: COMPANION BILL INTRODUCED IN HOUSE THIS SESSION  
(HOUSE BILL 160 - NICHOLIA)  
HEARING SCHEDULED 3/23/95 IN HOUSE COMMUNITY AND  
REGIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

THIS BILL WAS ALSO INTRODUCED BY THE SPONSOR DURING THE 18TH  
LEGISLATION AND IS IDENTICAL TO THE CS RECOMMENDED BY  
THE SENATE CRA COMMITTEE WITH 3DP/2NR  
THE BILL WAS INTRODUCED IN 1993  
PASSED OUT OF SENATE CRA IN 1994  
HAD FURTHER REFERRALS TO SENATE HES AND FINANCE  
DIED IN SENATE HES  
COMPANION BILL INTRODUCED IN HOUSE IN 1993 (NICHOLIA)  
HAD 4 COMMITTEE REFERRALS - NEVER HEARD IN COMMITTEE

BILL WAS INTRODUCED BY SPONSOR IN 1991-92  
PASSED HOUSE 27-4-9E  
DIED IN SENATE RULES  
COMPANION BILL IN SENATE (HOFFMAN) SAME SESSION  
DIED IN SENATE HES