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CAEPR Update Spring 2014

Recent Publications:

*Quality Teacher Evaluation in Alaska: Voices from the Field*

By Martin Laster

This brief focuses on the results of research regarding teacher evaluation policy and practice among a pilot group of Alaska Superintendents, and is intended to guide policy makers on creating and supporting policies which enable school leaders to effectively evaluate and support classroom teachers.

*Why Aren't They Teaching? A Study of Why Some University of Alaska Teacher Education Graduates Aren't in Classrooms*

By Donna Gail Shaw

This brief reports on research aimed at understanding why graduates of UA initial teacher preparation programs did or did not teach in Alaska public schools after completing their programs.

*Alaska Teacher Turnover, Supply & Demand: 2013 Highlights*

By Alexandra Hill and Diane Hirshberg

The figures in this document show a few findings from the forthcoming report, 2013 Alaska Educator Supply, Demand, and Turnover. They focus mostly on teacher turnover and mobility in recent years.

*Alaska's University for Alaska's Schools*

Update to the report the UA Regents prepare for the Alaska Legislature on the efforts of the university system to attract, train, and retain qualified public school teachers

Forthcoming Publications

*Rural and Indigenous Teacher Preparation Programs in Alaska: An Overview*

Audrey Leary, Bernice Tetpon, Diane Hirshberg & Alexandra Hill

This brief by documents past programs in Alaska aimed at preparing rural and indigenous teachers for Alaska's schools, focusing on key lessons learned

*2014 Alaska Teacher Turnover, Supply & Demand*

By Alexandra Hill and Diane Hirshberg

This document provides a comprehensive update of data on supply, demand and turnover of teachers in Alaska's public schools, including analysis of differences between teachers prepared in-state and outside, and also a look at principal turnover.

### Selected Current Projects:

#### *Statewide Survey of Teacher Working Conditions and Factors Related to Teacher Retention*

We are surveying teachers in rural and urban Alaska about their views on working conditions and other factors related to teacher retention and the teaching profession. The results will assist efforts to improve teacher recruitment and retention and also inform the development of better policies statewide. We completed a first round of rural teacher surveys in Spring 2013, with over 270 teachers responding. In Fall 2013, we fielded the survey in the 5 big districts (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Mat-Su and Kenai) with over 900 teachers responding. At present, we are fielding the survey again in ten rural districts that are part of an NSF-funded study of teacher retention issues in northern districts (headed by Ute Kaden of UAF), and over 160 teachers have completed it to date.

#### *Evaluation of the North Slope Borough School District Curriculum Alignment, Integration and Mapping Project*

Along with Dale Cope, Diane Hirshberg is evaluating the CAIM project, which involves using the district's Inupiaq Learning Framework as a foundation coupled with the Understanding by Design (UbD) process to create a curriculum that is both culturally relevant and meets Alaska and Common Core content standards.

#### *Evaluation of "Measuring Proportionally: Elders' Wisdom Applied to Teaching and Learning Math Project"*

Alexandra Hill is the external evaluator for Jerry Lipka's U.S. Department of Education grant, which is aimed improving the academic performance of Alaska Native students in math by incorporating the Elders' wisdom. The project is refining, developing, and implementing elementary-mathematics instructional materials as well as professional development (PD) that will develop Culturally Competent Mathematics Teachers (CCMT). T

#### *Alaska State Policy Research Alliance*

CAEPR researchers are continuing to collaborate with ASPRA partners on several initiatives focused on defining college and career readiness and developing an early childhood policy research agenda for Alaska.

**DRAFT**

Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

***Statewide Survey of Teacher Working Conditions and Factors Related to Teacher Retention***

We are surveying teachers in rural and urban Alaska about their views on working conditions and other factors related to teacher retention and the teaching profession. The survey is being conducted in partnership with UAF faculty (Ute Kaden, Phil Patterson, Barb Adams) as part of an NSF funded project.

The results will assist efforts to improve teacher recruitment and retention and also inform the development of better policies statewide. We completed a first round of rural teacher surveys in Spring 2013. This packet includes some very preliminary analyses of that data only. Initial reports on this data will be available starting in late March. Analysis of the “urban” (five big district) survey data is just beginning and reports will not be available until late spring.

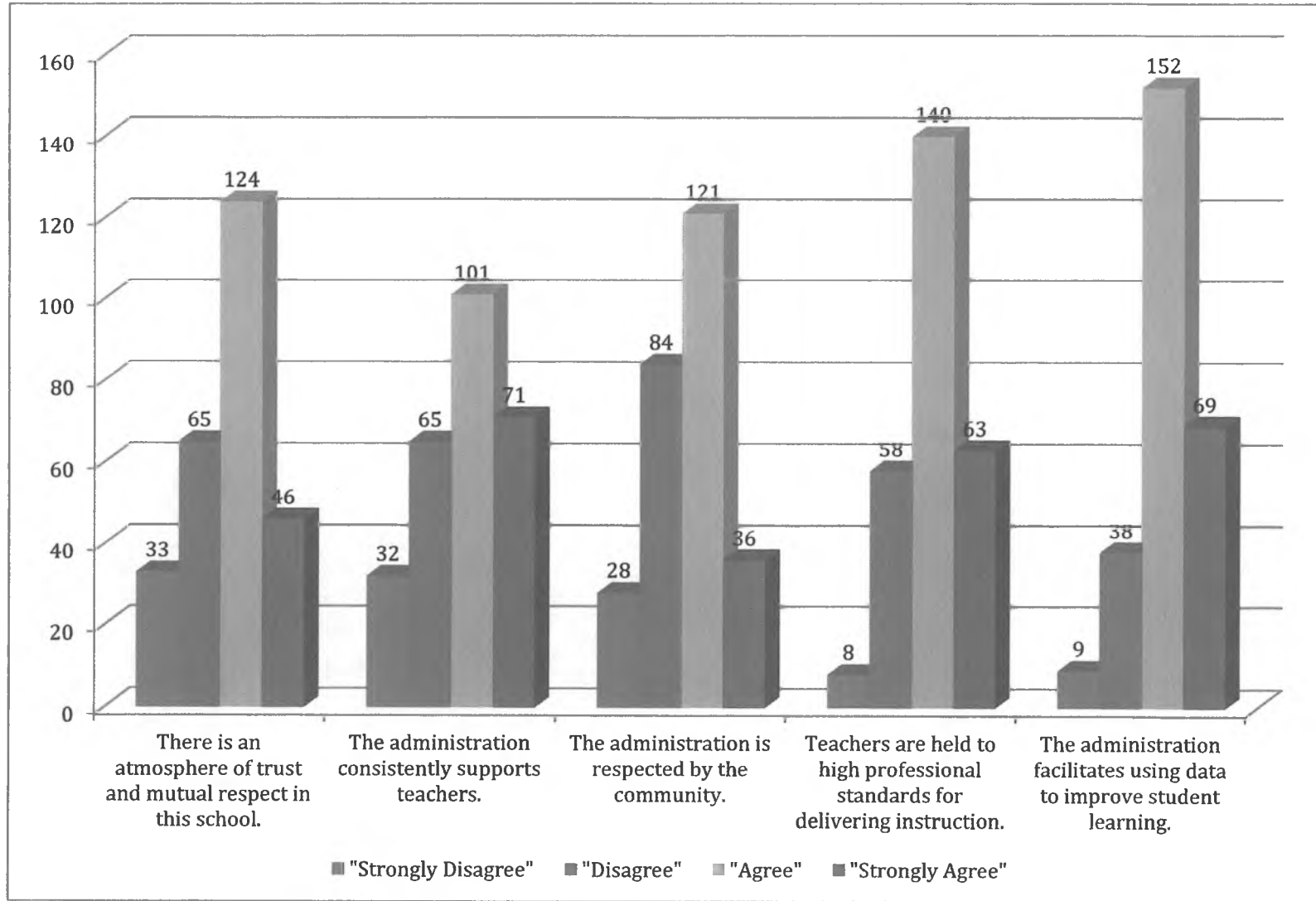
The current data includes respondents from 17 rural districts. The total number of respondents is over 270, though not all respondents answered all questions. They were asked both closed- and open-ended questions on a broad range of issues from living conditions to their relationship with parents and the community to perceptions of leadership at the school and district level. These are just a few of those results.

**For more information, contact Diane Hirshberg, CAEPR director, [dbhirshberg@alaska.edu](mailto:dbhirshberg@alaska.edu) or 907-786-5413.**



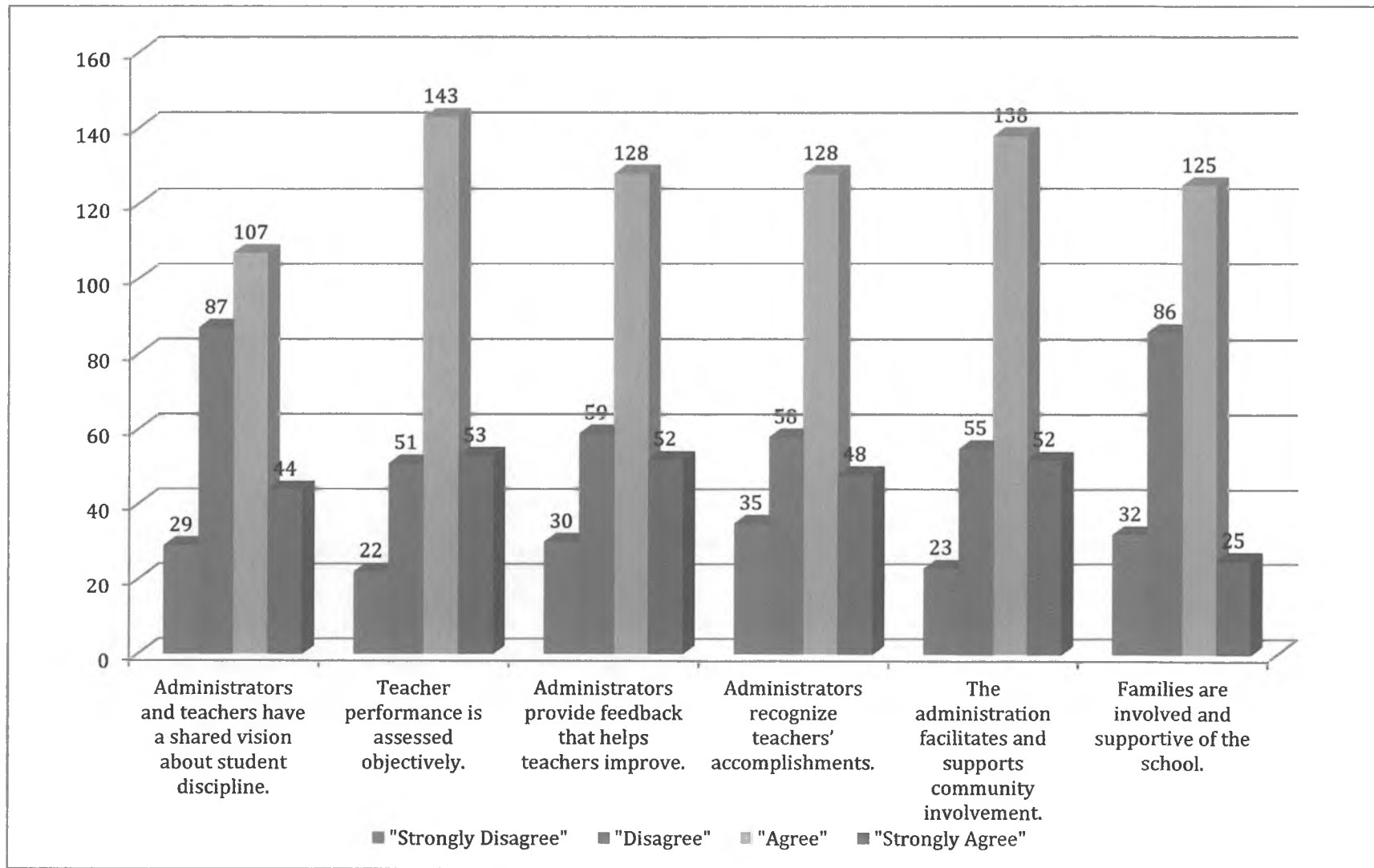
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following about your school



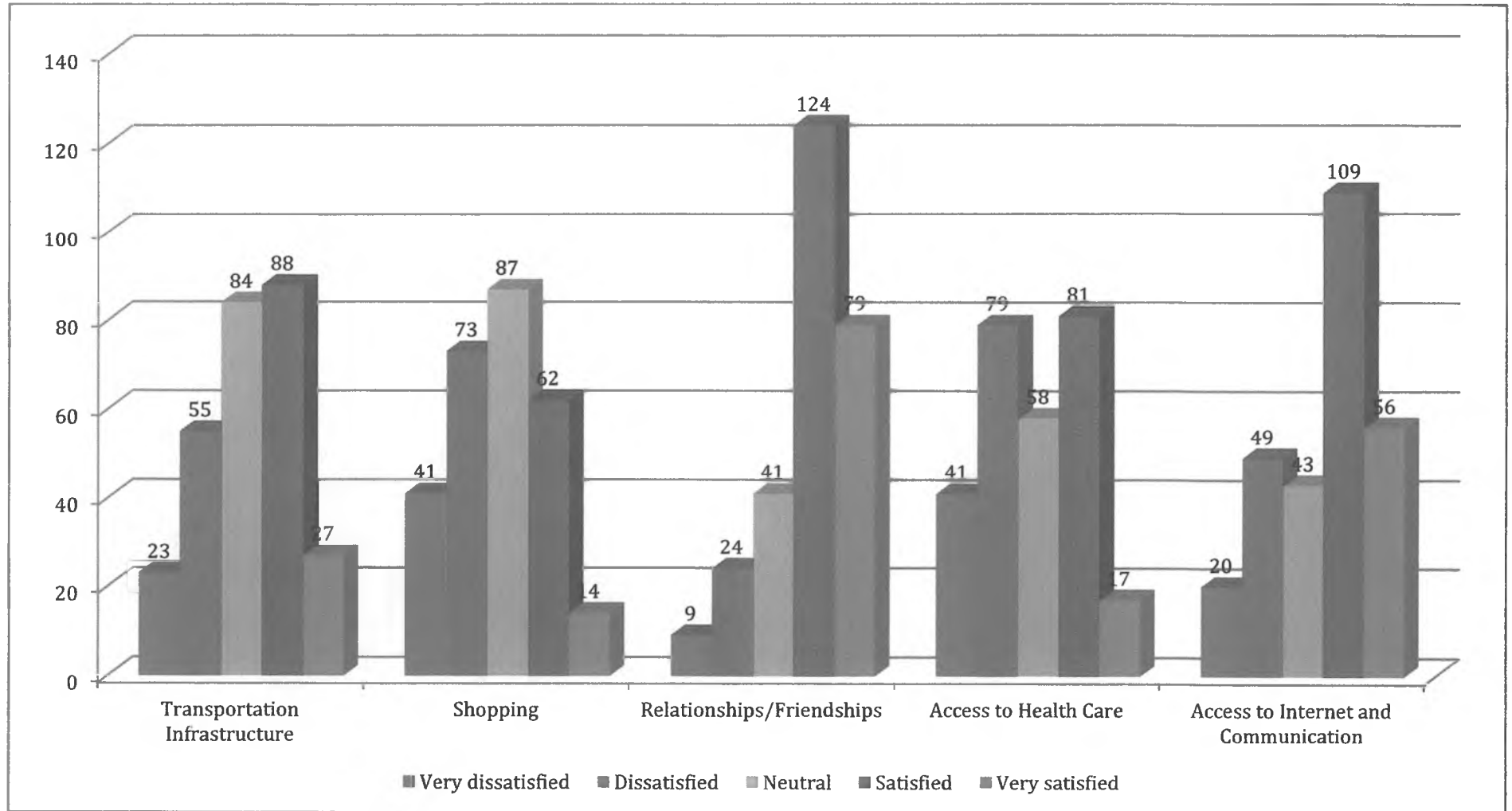
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following about your school



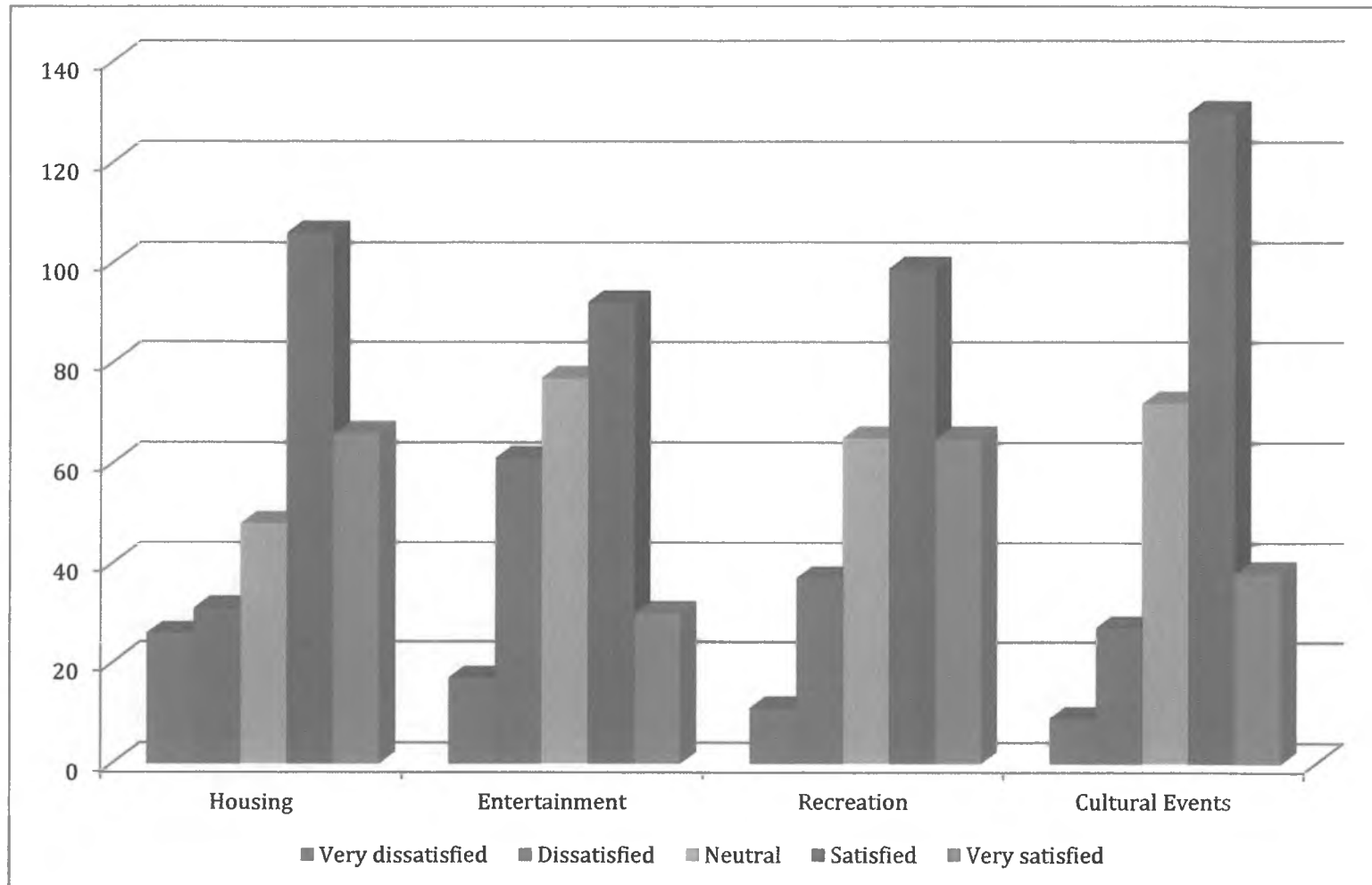
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your community?



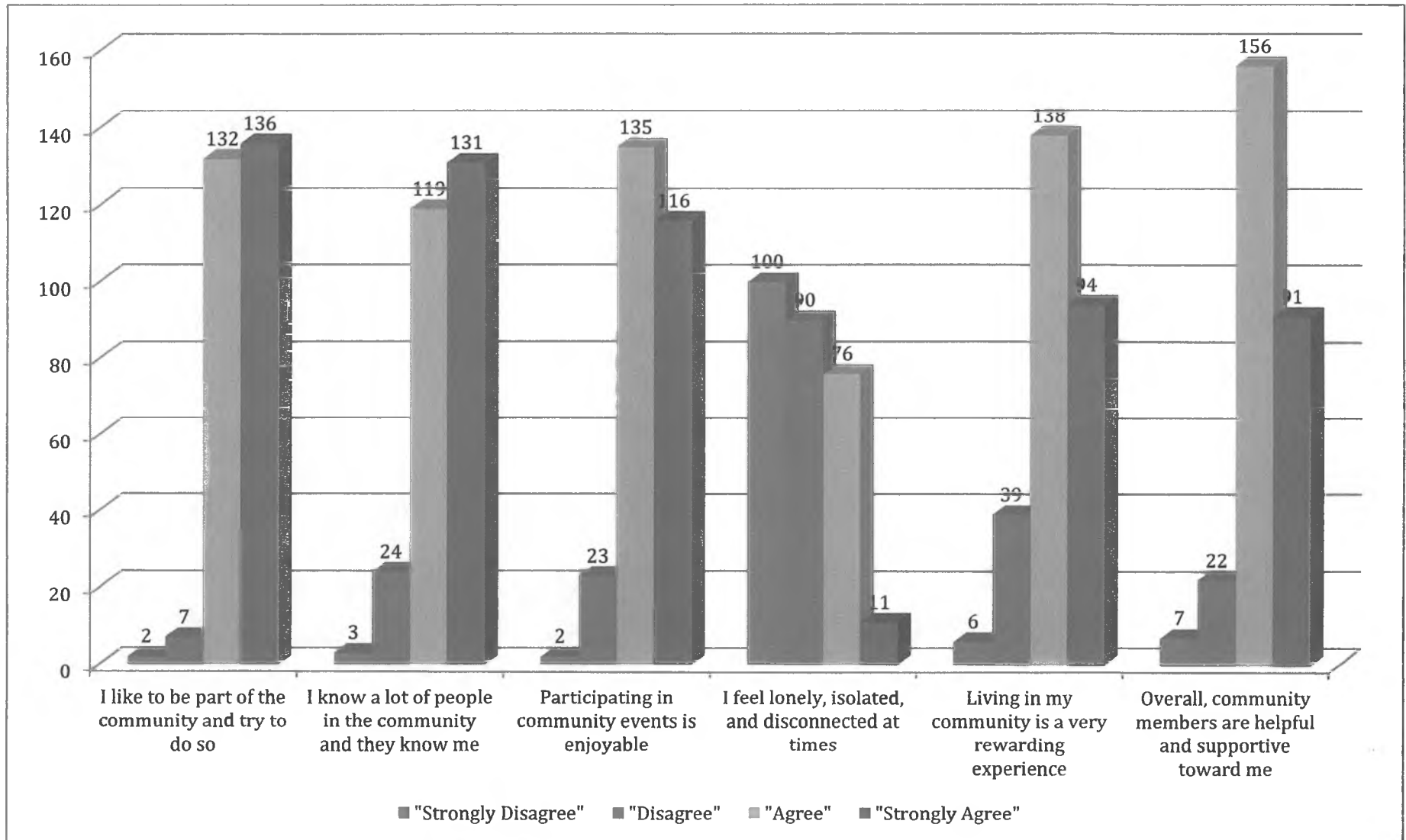
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your community?



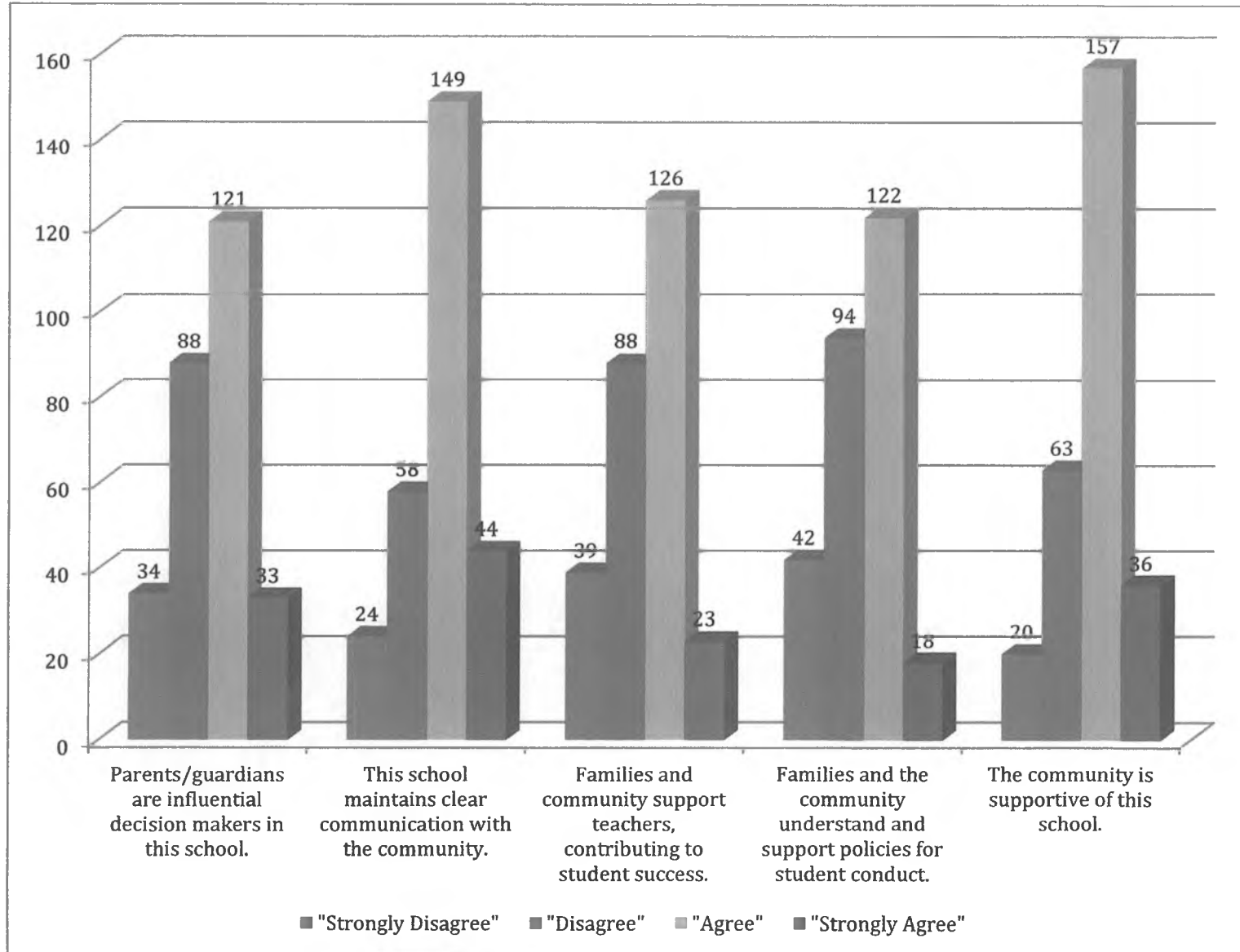
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about living in your community



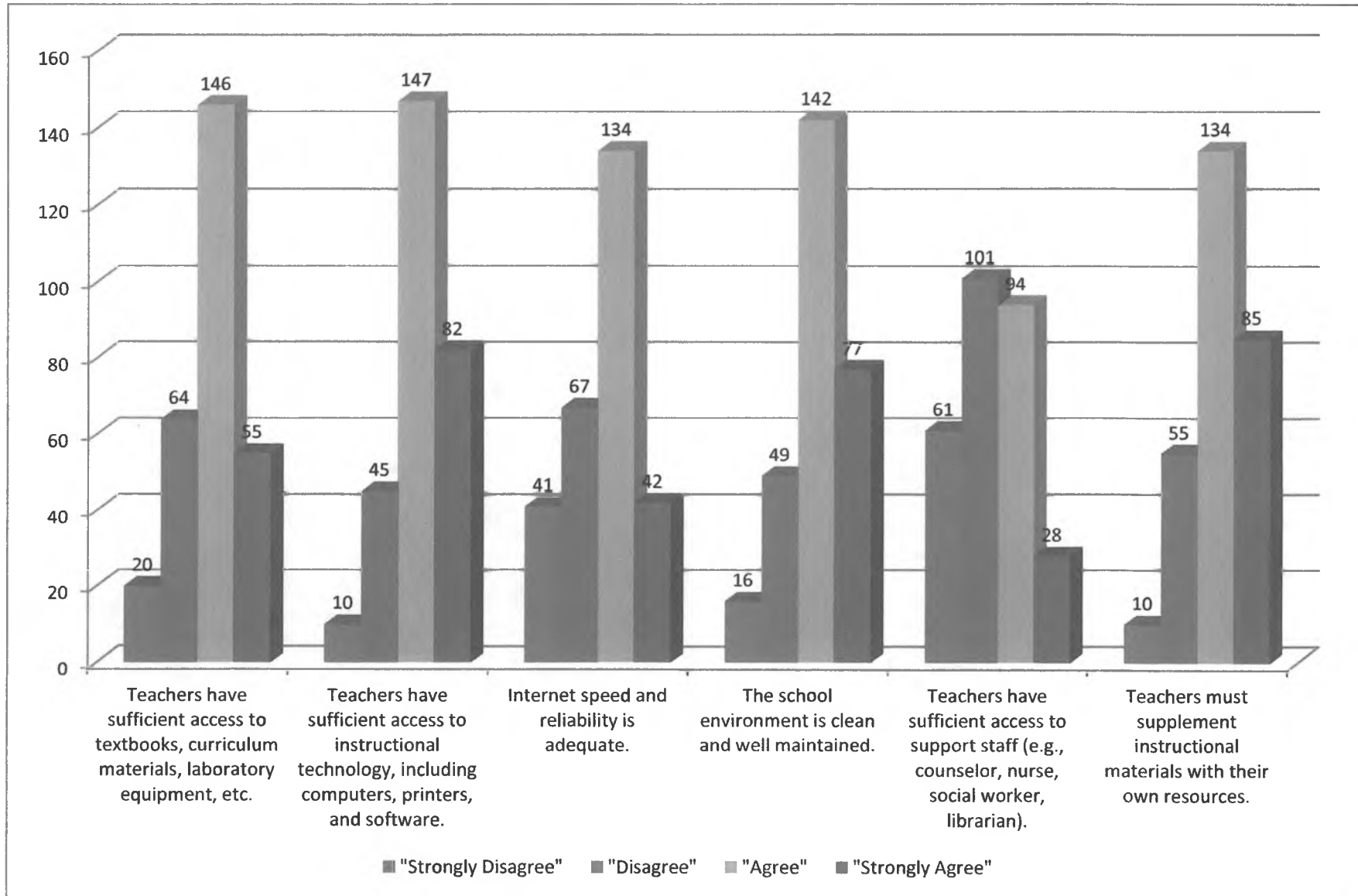
Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?



Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school facilities



**Selected Open Ended Questions**

**Q 6.5 Name three advantages to working in your current school and community.**

The most frequently stated advantages were the positive support received from colleagues and administrators as well as the community.

*"Love my school - the students, my colleagues, my administrator."*

*"I have been here long enough to have relationships with the families of the students I have. I believe this is why they (the community) are more supportive. I am involved in the community in ways that might be difficult in larger cities."*

Benefits were mentioned often but benefits were not just salaries, healthcare and other monetary values. They included professional and personal growth afforded through the context of living in conditions that were both beautiful and challenging.

*"A good chance to live within another's culture. A good chance to live in a totally remote area. Wonderful opportunity to help children learn."*



Selected Preliminary Findings – 2013 Survey of Rural Teachers

**Q 6.6 List three disadvantages to working in your current school and community.**

Disadvantages were related to discouraging living situations. There wasn't any one item but a range of items from the high cost of living to feeling isolated from family and friends.

*"Very far away from friends and family, very far away from healthcare if needed, very isolated."*

A large number of respondents also felt unsupported in many ways by administrators. They mentioned policies not clarified or enforced or changed frequently. The greater criticism was a feeling of not having support in the day to day effort of job performance. This was followed by a lack of resources in both funding and the appropriate number and expertise in personnel.

*"The administration is not proactive when a student is chronically absent, noncompliant, or does no classwork."*

**Q 10.4 What are three obstacles to educating students in your current school.**

Respondents identified family conditions they felt did not support student's abilities to learn. School attendance, adequate sleep and nourishment or unstable home situations were mentioned. Respondents cited substance abuse, domestic violence and other community social issues as deterrents to learning.

*"Limited or absent family support at home."*

Lack of student motivation to succeed in school was tied to relevancy of education to village life, available jobs, and role models.

Respondents identified students learning difficulties as a concern which keeps them perpetually behind in performance.

*"Working to bring students up to grade level." "Being several grades behind in reading."*





# UAA Center for Alaska Education Policy Research UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE

**DRAFT**

## **RURAL AND INDIGENOUS TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN ALASKA: A RESEARCH BRIEF**

Audrey Leary, Bernice Tetpon, Diane Hirshberg & Alexandra Hill  
February 2014

### **Introduction**

Within the State of Alaska 80% of rural students are Alaska Native. However, Alaska imports 74% of its teaching force from outside the state, and fewer than 5% of certified teachers in Alaska are Alaska Native. The average time teachers new to rural Alaska remain in a community is less than two years. All these factors – high teacher turnover, many teachers unfamiliar with their students' communities and cultures, and relatively few role models in education for Alaska Native students – add to the many challenges rural schools face in educating their students. As a result, many community and education leaders in Alaska have called for the state to recruit and prepare more rural and Alaska Native teachers.

Since 1970, there have been numerous alternative teacher certification programs targeted at Alaska Natives and rural residents (see Table 1). These include the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps and the Cross Cultural Education Program, the Rural Education Preparation Partnership, the UAS Bachelor of Education Distance Elementary Program, the Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools, the Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Program and the Alaska Transition to Teaching Program. These programs have been operated by the Schools and College of Education in the University of Alaska system, Alaska Pacific University and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Many of these programs were supported by federal funding, and lasted only as long as federal funding was there to support them. Appendix A describes these programs in more detail.

In addition to university-based programs and the State of Alaska's program, two school districts, Lower Kuskokwim (LKSD) and Kashunamiut have included career ladder programs for paraprofessionals to earn their teaching certificate. Since the 1980s, LKSD has budgeted funds for Yup'ik language teachers, elementary and secondary teachers to either take distance delivered courses or move on-campus to earn teacher certification with all expenses paid. Since the early 1980s, over 60 Alaska Native teachers have been certified with district support. In a similar fashion, the Kashunamiut School District, in partnership with UAA, has obtained private funding for 12 paraprofessionals to earn their teacher certification.

Through these efforts, teacher educators have learned a great deal about how to successfully recruit and prepare rural students and Alaska Native students, using both face to face, distance, and hybrid programs. However, these lessons have not been well documented or applied to all of Alaska's ongoing teacher certification programs. In this report, we begin this work by documenting these programs, their graduates, and key lessons that have been learned.

This brief does not address current efforts at each of the three University of Alaska campuses to increase the number of rural and indigenous teachers graduating from their regular

programs. It is important to point out, however, that the University of Alaska Anchorage, University of Alaska Fairbanks and University of Alaska Southeast all have developed distance-delivered teacher preparation programs at the bachelors and post-baccalaureate level, in an effort to better meet the needs of students from rural communities and grow the local pool of teacher candidates. A list is provided in Appendix B.

**Table 1. Program funding, years of operation and current status.**

Program	Funding	MAU or Other	All Initial Cert.	AK Natives Cert.	Years of Operation	Current Status
1. Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (ARTTC)	Both ARTTC & X-CED were funded by Fed. Teacher Corps, Career Op. Program, PL 874, Johnson O'Malley, State of AK	UAF		101	1970-1990	1974 ARTTC replaced by X-CED
2. Cross-Cultural Education (X-CED) Program						1978 X-CED replaced by Center for Cross-Cultural Studies
3. B.Ed. Distance Elem.	General Funds	UAS	70	16	2003-2013	Continuing
4. Rural Educator Preparation Partnership (REPP)	US Department of Education, Office of Indian Ed	UAF	116	23	1995-2006	Discontinued
5. Rural AK Native Adult (RANA)	US Department of Education	APU		34	1999-2011	On Hold
6. Preparing Indigenous Teachers & Admin. for Alaska's Schools (PITAAS)	US Department of Education, Alaska Native Education Equity Program	UAS	32	12	2000-Present	Continuing
7. Alaska Transition to Teaching (AKT2)	US Department of Education	EED	46	1	2007-2013	Discontinued
8. Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Program (ANTPP)	US Department of Education, Office of Indian Education	UAF	19	19	2008-2012	Discontinued
9. Chevak Teacher Education Initiative	Private Funding, Grants	UAA	12	12	2010-present	Continuing
10. Village Teacher Grant Program	US Department of Education, Office of Indian Education	UAS	27	27	2011-Present	Continuing

### What have we learned?

In 2013, we gathered information about ten teacher preparation programs that targeted Alaska Natives from 1970 to the present. In that time, 206 Alaska Natives have been certified under these 10 programs. In addition, other Alaska Native teachers have earned their certification from regular on-campus programs. There are several themes that emerged from our interviews with students, directors and faculty of the rural and distance teacher certification programs. These revolve around the broad areas of recruitment, program delivery and program sustainability.

### Recruitment

All of the rural and distance delivery programs targeted Alaska Natives students, but some included both indigenous and non-Native students. Several programs were designed to prepare adults who already had a bachelor's degree for teaching. These programs consistently faced a limited pool of potential participants. Other initiatives which included completion of a bachelor's degree in education found that many students took a long time to complete the degree. This occurred for many different reasons, including that many of the participants were adult

students balancing family, work and community obligations with school. These challenges continue to hold true for current efforts – there are not a lot of adults with bachelor’s degrees in rural Alaska who are eager to move into the teaching profession, while adults interested in obtaining a bachelor’s degree in education often cannot commit to a full-time course load, and need more than four years to complete their teacher preparation program.

### Program Content and Delivery

All programs had to meet the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development requirements for teacher certification programs. However, they had different approaches to preparing their students for teaching in rural and indigenous communities. ARTTC, X-CED and the Chevak Teacher Education Initiative developed new curriculum related to local and cultural issues. The Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Program (ANTPP) enrolled students in the existing teacher preparation program at UAF. The ANTPP director stated that incorporating Alaska Native perspectives and Indigenous pedagogies into the core of the elementary and secondary program coursework would have benefited all students.

Almost all programs used (or continue to use) a mix of distance and face-to-face delivery methods. Some brought students together for intensive periods of time and then provided the remainder of instruction via teleconference or online methods. For example, ARTTC/X-CED and REPP met face-to-face at the beginning of the program year and each regional group of students was assigned a faculty member to communicate with during the life of their participation in the programs for academic and financial advising. So, each student had an identified faculty member with whom they could consult prior to finding themselves in a situation that could jeopardize their academic or financial standing in the program. Regional meetings also helped to maintain student and faculty communications. The Chevak initiative brings faculty to the community as well as meeting with students at UAA in summer intensives. The exception was the AKT2 program which provided team-developed distance delivery courses allowed through changes in teacher certification regulations and statutes.

Intensive student support was critical to the success of students in the ARTTC, X-CED and RANA programs. For example, the Praxis I test, adopted by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development in 1998, was identified as a barrier to becoming a teacher for many rural teacher candidates. Students in the RANA program received extra support for getting through the Praxis. They took a Praxis I pre-test and then instruction was provided in areas where they struggled. They were also given the opportunity to retake the test several times if needed, with coaching provided before the test. In many of the rural teacher preparation programs, directors acted as the liaison between faculty and students to open communications that were sometimes difficult given the distances. Students in these programs stated that that being able to stay in their home community while going to school, with their support system intact, rather than moving to Anchorage or Fairbanks helped them complete their teacher certification program.

### Sustainability

Sustainability has been a challenge for all of the programs we looked at. There was a pattern of programs being reinvented whenever new federal funding was available. Most of these initiatives failed to become permanent or self-sustaining either when external funding ended, or because of political decisions to close them. University administrations in Alaska typically have not made the commitment to continue these efforts, though as noted below, momentum toward

developing more sustainable efforts is building in the University of Alaska system. However, providing sufficient levels of academic, social and fiscal support to rural students academically, socially and financially is expensive. For programs targeting rural and Alaska Native students to become sustainable, a significant and ongoing investment of resources is needed.

### **Conclusion**

Over the past 44 years there have been 206 Alaska Native graduates who earned teacher certification through rural and distance delivered programs or about 4 to 5 Alaska Native teachers per year. At this rate, there will never be sufficient numbers of rural and indigenous teachers prepared to meet the state's needs, especially since all of the indigenous teachers prepared through the ARTTC and X-CED programs are of retirement age. Even to get to the same proportion of Alaska Native teachers as Alaska Native students would require the graduation of 200 Alaska Native teachers **per year** for 8 years.

The programs described in this brief provide insight into challenges facing teacher preparation programs to increase the number of certificated Alaska Native teachers. Success will require expanded efforts around access, such as distance and hybrid delivery models; around content, such place-based and indigenous knowledge-infused curricula; and around pedagogy, such as Native ways of teaching and learning. It will also require effective student support (which would benefit non-Native as well as indigenous teacher candidates).

Stakeholders should not be limited to school superintendents and administrators. The programs with the highest number of graduates- ARTTC and X-CED - included Alaska Native communities as stakeholders. Native community involvement can be key in both recruitment and retention of high-quality Alaska Natives teacher candidates. Through community involvement, elders, parents and community leaders can identify, support, and mentor Alaska Natives to enter the teaching field.

Many of the elements needed to increase the number of indigenous educators are already in place in the University of Alaska system. Since X-CED began in 1974, UAF has created the College of Rural and Community Development (CRCD) which includes rural campuses as well as several centers focused on cross cultural and distance education. Likewise, UAA and UAS have community campuses in several rural communities. With this support structure, students in rural areas can begin their college experience in rural hubs or via E-learning and face-to-face summer or fall symposiums. They can then continue on to a bachelor's degree either on campus or via distance.

And as noted earlier, all three campuses have on-going efforts to recruit and prepare Alaska Natives which both provide student support services and include Native-based content and pedagogy. The University of Alaska teacher education programs committed to this work through the 2011 Teacher Education Plan, (Caulfield et.al., 2011). We hope that as they move forward, they build from what has been learned from past efforts, in order to create the best possible programs for growing Alaska's indigenous education workforce.

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## **Appendix A: Rural & Distance Teacher Education Programs in Alaska, 1970-2013**

### **1. UAF: Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (ARTTC): 1970 – 1974**

The first program aimed at preparing indigenous people to teach in their own communities was the Alaska Rural Teacher Training Corps (ARTTC). ARTTC began recruiting participants in the summer of 1970. Established under the auspices of the State-Operated School System, University of Alaska Fairbanks and Alaska Methodist University, ARTTC was operated through a statewide consortium of educational organizations. Joint funding came from the Federal Teacher Corps, the Career Opportunities Program, Public Law 874, the Johnson O'Malley Act, and the State of Alaska. Established during an era of increased civil rights awareness and with national emphasis on overcoming past discrimination in educational opportunities for minority groups, ARTTC was a four-year experimental teacher education program with the primary purpose of preparing Alaska Native elementary school teachers. Students who enrolled in this program would have to meet the usual requirements for the Bachelor of Education degree and an elementary teaching certificate. ARTTC provided elementary teacher certification only, since most rural schools at the time were Kindergarten through the 8th grade (Tetpon, 1998).

The State decided to provide alternative teacher education through ARTTC/X-CED because there were so few certificated Native people teaching in Alaska – only seven in 1970 – and far too few indigenous people were pursuing higher education at an Alaskan campus; Only 70 Alaska Natives had graduated from the University of Alaska system over a period of 50 years, from 1917-1970. In addition, the state saw a need to involve Native communities in education and, as continues today, faced difficulty in finding and retaining qualified teachers who could adapt to living and working in a rural community (Booker, 1987). The first cohort of 21 students (10 Alaska Native) had already completed two years of college as of the program start, and they graduated in 1972. Two years later, in 1974, 22 more Alaska Native students graduated and the X-CED program was formed to replace ARTTC.

### **2. UAF: Cross-Cultural Education Development Program (X-CED): 1974 - 1990**

In 1974, the X-CED program took over from ARTTC as the field-centered teacher education program serving rural Alaska. University of Alaska tenure track faculty were now placed in rural communities with the responsibility for program activities within their respective regions, each serving several village sites surrounding the regional centers. Six regional centers were organized and staffed by these 'field coordinators' each living in their regional center and traveling to outlying villages to instruct and hold meetings with their students. During this time there were regional centers in Bethel, Dillingham, Fort Yukon, Kotzebue, Sitka and Tanana. By 1984 regional centers were based in Barrow, Kotzebue, Dillingham, Nome, Nulato, Fort Yukon, Holy Cross, and Bethel. (Booker, 1987).

Alaska Natives were recruited based upon the report by the Alaska Commission Key Facts and Findings reported that the cultural differences between students and teachers in Alaska's schools are exacerbated by a lack of Native teachers and administrators. The result of this program between 1972 (ARTTC) through 1991 (X-CED) there were 101 graduates and 35 continuing students. X-CED graduates tended to be older, having entered the program at a median age of 24 years. The range of ages at entry was from 17 to 48. The youngest graduate,

during this period was 23 years old while the oldest was 52 years old. Of the 96 graduates, 69 (72%) had a high school diploma when they entered, 2 (2%) had a GED, and 25 (26%) were admitted as special status students. A large number of graduates brought transfer credits into the X-CED program. Many graduates have since gone on to complete graduate work. Twenty-eight years after the inception of ARTTC in 1970, the X-CED program was shut down due to fiscal and political issues, including changes in UAF leadership.

### 3. UAF Rural Educator Preparation Partnership (REPP): 1997 – 2006

REPP was a partnership between the University of Alaska Fairbanks, school districts and the Alaska Department of Education with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education. Candidates worked on-site with district mentor teachers and university faculty. REPP had the following purposes: Development and delivery of a competency based/standards driven teacher education; development of a University content literacy that defines the academic content of a candidates university degree; and, development of the components of Alaska Native Culture Literacy. REPP recruited Native classified staff employed in rural school districts as well as high school students or other citizens who wished to work towards teacher certification. Agreements were developed between UAF and rural school districts for resources to support teacher mentors and REPP candidates. REPPs purpose was to increase the number of Alaska Native educators in Alaska's elementary and secondary schools because of its belief that students learn best from teachers who reflect the students' cultural heritage and their family and community values. In the 2002/2003 REPP evaluation report, 32 teachers in REPP PD schools were white (79 percent) and female (76 percent). Four–13.8 percent of those who responded to this question in the program evaluation– identified themselves as Alaska Natives.

### 4. UAS Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education: 1988 – Present

During the reorganization of the UA system in 1987, UAS was assigned the statewide responsibility to provide elementary teacher certification coursework and developed distance delivery options. Funding is provided through the state legislature in the UA system budget allocation. There is no external grant funding. This program prepares students for recommendation in the State of Alaska for initial teaching certification in grades K-8 for students in rural Alaskan communities and others who desire the flexibility of a distance program. Students can complete this program while staying in their home communities. The senior year consists of a nine month intensive internship, with students completing a 2.5 days per week practicum experience in schools with their mentor in the fall and a 5 days per week student teaching experience in schools with their mentor in the spring. Student supervision is collaborative and highly interactive. Methods classes are taken throughout the senior year.

Alaska Native graduates total 13 constituting approximately 23 percent of BA graduates in the program thus far. All are currently working in the education field, with 7 being classroom teachers and the rest working in programs such as Head Start, SERRC, etc. Five of these 13 are either enrolled in a UAS Master's program and/or have graduated from one or more. There are 26 Alaska Native students currently in the program constituting approximately 24 percent of students currently in program.

#### 5. Alaska Pacific University (APU) Rural Alaska Native Adult Program (RANA): 1999-2011

The RANA program, currently on hold due to lack of funding, assisted students in preparing for their K-8 Elementary certification. Assistance was provided through scholarships from APU's U.S. Department of Education grants to pay for textbooks, tuition and transportation to face-to-face meetings. APU also provided mentoring to support students preparing for the Praxis tests. To date 34 Alaska Natives have earned their teacher certification through the support of RANA. The last students enrolled through RANA in Spring 2011.

#### 6. UAS: Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools (PITAAS): 2000 – Present

The PITAAS program at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) since 2000 has been largely funded by five consecutive grants through the U.S. Department of Education, Alaska Native Education Program (ANEP). The program's specific aims are to increase the number of qualified Alaska Native teachers and administrators graduating from the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS); improve on-campus support for Alaska Native students; collaborate with partners to build a support network for PITAAS participants; and, cultivate culturally responsive and culturally supportive programs at UAS by modifying the existing Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Bachelor of Science programs.

Thirty-three PITAAS scholarships awarded in the Fall, 2012, and 32 (16 undergraduates, and 16 graduates) in the spring semester at UAS. The average GPA this year was 3.56, a significant increase over past years. Eleven PITAAS students graduated from UAS in May, 2013. By the end of August there were an additional five graduates, including three who completed their cohort degree program in Educational Leadership, one completed a Masters of Arts in Teaching and one a Bachelors in Elementary Education.

#### 7. Alaska Transition to Teaching (AKT2): 2007-2013

Funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, AKT2 Alaska Transition to Teaching was an alternative teaching certification program for individuals who had already earned a bachelor's degree and were interested in becoming secondary teachers in rural Alaska. A partnership between the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development and participating rural districts, AKT2's unique design expedited the process through which candidates completed their teacher preparation and were ready to enter the classroom. The program offered candidates the opportunity to work on their pre-service preparation while holding their current jobs. Fifty-four participants used the AKT2 program to teach in rural Alaska with approximately forty-three continuing on to earn State Recommendations for Teacher Certification. The program has ended.

#### 8. UAF: Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Program: 2008-2012

The UAF School of Education's Alaska Native Teacher Preparation Program provided funding for a number of Alaska Natives to complete teaching degrees. A cohort of 19 Alaska Native students was advised academically and financially by the program coordinator. Major challenges included the Praxis exam and Praxis workshop attendance and student

reflections/evaluations were additional responsibilities rather than integrated into the program. Students took the regular on-campus teacher certification coursework. Twenty-seven students enrolled and 19 Alaska Natives earned their teaching certificates.

#### 9. UAA: Chevak Teacher Education Initiative: 2010 – Present

A partnership between the UAA College of Education (COE) and the Kushunamiut School District was formed in 2010. This partnership, known as the Chevak Teacher Education Initiative, embraces the concepts of inclusivity and culturally relevant teaching. Course work reflects both Western and Cup'ik cultures and philosophies. By December 2013, about half of the group will have earned their associates degrees. This initiative is providing important insights about the power of collaboration as an indigenous community, school and university come together to create a space that supports cultural and language revitalization.

Program graduates will be proficient in both Western and Cup'ik teaching and learning histories, philosophies and practices and prepared to fully integrate both traditions in their school and classrooms. Further, it is hoped that this project will lead to the development of a model of a bi-cultural teacher education program that can be implemented in other communities throughout Alaska.

#### 10. UAS: Village Teacher Grant Program (VT): 2011 – Present

The Village Teacher Grant is a four-year pilot project of the University of Alaska Southeast funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education. The VT grant is a loan opportunity for upper level graduate Alaska Native Educators interested in expanding their excellence in teaching at the University of Alaska Southeast. Students who are accepted into the program receive funding that covers all tuition, fees and books associated with the M.Ed. program in which they enroll. Village Teacher students receive individualized support through the project director, VT & Native organizations partnerships, the VT mentorship program and induction services upon graduation. Students must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA upon entry and then are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA in order to continue receiving funding. Also, in order to receive VT funds students must be admitted to one of the following degree programs at UAS: Master's in Education- Math & Reading Specialist, Principals Endorsement – Educational Leadership. Currently, 16 Alaska Native educators are preparing to earn Reading Specialists Endorsement and 11 are preparing to earn their Math Specialist Endorsement.

**Appendix B: Hybrid and Distance Delivered Education Certification Programs at the University of Alaska**

<b>Baccalaureate degrees with Certification (Institutional Recommendations)</b>	<b>UAA</b>	<b>UAF</b>	<b>UAS</b>
Elementary Education K-6		D	
Elementary B.A. K-8			D
Special Education B.A.			D
<b>Undergraduate Certificates (Institutional Recommendations)</b>			
Undergraduate Certificate, K-12 Art,		D	
Undergraduate Certificate, Secondary 7-12		D	
<b>Post-Baccalaureate Certificates (Institutional Recommendations)</b>			
Elementary Education K-6		D	
Secondary 7-12		D	
K-12 Art		D	
Special Education		D	
<b>Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Certification (Institutional Recommendations)</b>			
Elementary Education MAT			D
Secondary: Content Areas MAT, Distance	D	D	H
Special Education MAT			D
<b>Graduate Certificates (Institutional Recommendations)</b>			
Counseling		D	
Educational Leadership: Principal	D		
Educational Leadership: Superintendent	D		
Special Education	D		D
<b>Master of Education (MEd) with Licensure (Institutional Recommendations)</b>	<b>UAA</b>	<b>UAF</b>	<b>UAS</b>
Counseling	D, H	D	
Educational Leadership (principal)	D		H
Educational Technology			D
Mathematics Education			D
Teaching and Learning	D		
Special Education	D	D	D
Reading Specialist			H
<b>Non-Licensure Programs</b>			
Counseling Graduate Certificate	D, H		
M.Ed. Community Counseling		D	
M.Ed. in Online Innovation & Design		D	

**Type of Program Key:**

*D = Distance, H = Hybrid*

# Diane Hirshberg

Director  
Center for Alaska Education Policy Research  
Associate Professor of Education Policy  
University of Alaska - Anchorage



Research: education policy analysis; Alaska Native education

- PhD in Education, UCLA, 2001.
- Master of Public Administration, Columbia University, 1990
- B.A., UC Berkeley, Peace & Conflict Studies & Slavic Languages and Literature, 1987

Diane Hirshberg is the director of the Center for Alaska Education Policy Research—a center within ISER—as well as an associate professor of education policy at ISER. The center was established in 2011 to conduct non-partisan research on education policy issues at all levels of education—from early childhood education through higher and adult education.

Dr. Hirshberg has a broad interest in education policy analysis, with a focus on Alaska Native education, as well as issues affecting other ethnic, racial, and linguistic minorities. Her research at ISER has included studies of long-term effects of boarding schools on Alaska Native students and assessments of turnover among Alaska's school teachers.

Before joining ISER in 2003, she was a visiting assistant professor of educational leadership at the University of Oregon and a project manager at Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), an education policy research organization based at UC Berkeley. There she directed the California Department of Social Services Child Care Planning Project, a multi-year look at the impact of welfare reform on the supply of and demand for childcare in California.

She was born in Massachusetts, and clings to her Red Sox obsession, despite moving to California when she was 10.

See more at: <http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/people/hirshberg/#sthash.CYUAdHwc.dpuf>

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Dr. Terri Akey, Co-Director, Center for Research, Evaluation, and Assessment

Terri Akey's research background and interests are in the areas of youth development, school reform, arts education and programming, and community development—all viewed from a systems perspective. Dr. Akey is particularly interested in policy and practice related to providing adequate and equitable supports and opportunities for children and youth to develop healthy lives, and the role that communities and larger social structures play in providing those opportunities. Her work in evaluating school reform includes serving as principal investigator for several large-scale urban school reform efforts. She has served as principal investigator for multiple large-scale youth development program evaluations. In addition, she has provided technical assistance to federal grantees to help them develop performance measures, align program activities, and summarize overall performance. Akey received her Ph.D. in educational psychology and research, with emphases on developmental psychology and quantitative research methods from the University of Kansas in 1995. Since then, her work has included serving as research director for a large urban school district, an assistant professor at Auburn University, and as a research scientist for several educational and community research groups.

Contact: [Terri.Akey@educationnorthwest.org](mailto:Terri.Akey@educationnorthwest.org)

Tel: 503-275-9629



## Overview

The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Alaska Anchorage has been at the forefront of public policy research in Alaska for half a century. ISER's multidisciplinary staff studies virtually all the major public policy issues Alaska faces. That work helps Alaskans better understand the state's changing economy and population—and the challenges and opportunities that come with change.

All ISER's research is available to the public, and ISER makes sure Alaskans benefit from that research by disseminating publications, presentations, and other products online and in hard copy to government agencies, private businesses, libraries, the press, and individual Alaskans. ISER faculty and staff routinely do presentations to public and private groups around the state, and sometimes in other states or countries. All recent and many older publications are available at this link: <http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/publications.php> ISER researchers also routinely respond to inquiries from the press and the public.

Besides doing research, ISER faculty teach graduate and undergraduate classes at UAA. Classes taught vary by semester, but include economic research, history of the Alaska economy, environmental economics and policy, public land management, research methods, and communication policies and strategies.

## ISER's Mission

ISER enhances the well-being of Alaskans and others, through non-partisan research that helps people understand social and economic systems and supports informed public and private decision-making.

*ISER carries out its mission by:*

- Focusing attention on critical economic and social issues in Alaska, the Arctic, and similar regions
- Engaging in basic and applied research leading to better understanding of those issues
- Disseminating knowledge through publications and other media, community involvement, public service, and teaching

## ISER Structure and Funding

ISER is an institute within the College of Business and Public Policy at UAA and has a staff of about 35—including faculty, research associates, and support staff. To learn more about ISER faculty and staff, see: <http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/people/>. ISER also frequently hosts visiting researchers and employs student interns. It has an average annual budget of about \$3 million, about one third of which comes out of the legislature's appropriation for the University of Alaska. ISER faculty and staff raise two-thirds of the budget through grants from and contracts with public and private organizations at the local, state, and national levels.

For more about ISER's history see this link: <http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/home/history.php>

## REL Northwest

Serving Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington



Regional Educational Laboratory  
at Education Northwest

REL Northwest is part of the [Regional Educational Laboratory \(REL\) Program](#) funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences. Operated by Education Northwest for nearly 50 years, REL Northwest serves the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Our purpose is to build regional stakeholders' capacity to identify, access, use, and apply data and research to meet their self-defined improvement goals. Along with the other nine RELs across the country, REL Northwest seeks to build a national knowledge base of reliable, actionable evidence to help improve student outcomes.

The core of the RELs' work is strengthening the capacity of policymakers and practitioners to use data and other high-quality evidence through [research alliances](#), which are partnerships between the REL and local education groups and stakeholders. REL Northwest is currently working with eight alliances that are focused on these key regional issues:

- [Turning around low-performing schools](#)
- [Increasing graduation rates and preparing students for postsecondary success](#)
- [Achieving greater equity by improving outcomes for all students](#)

In addition to working with research alliances, REL Northwest continues to offer customized assistance, including research-based answers to educators' questions through its free reference desk service, [Ask A REL](#). And, we will continue to inform education policy and practice in the Northwest by conducting and disseminating studies that address critical regional challenges.

[REL Northwest](#) [Development](#) [Research](#) [Technical Assistance](#)

Source URL: <http://educationnorthwest.org/rel-northwest>



## The Alaska State Policy Research Alliance (ASPRA)

February 19 2014  
Alaska State Legislature  
Joint Education Committee

## What is a Research Alliance?

“A group of stakeholders who share a specific educational concern and agree to work together to learn more about the concern so that they can make sound decisions to improve education outcomes.”

(REL Performance Work Statement, April 2011)



## Alaska State Policy Research Alliance (ASPRA)



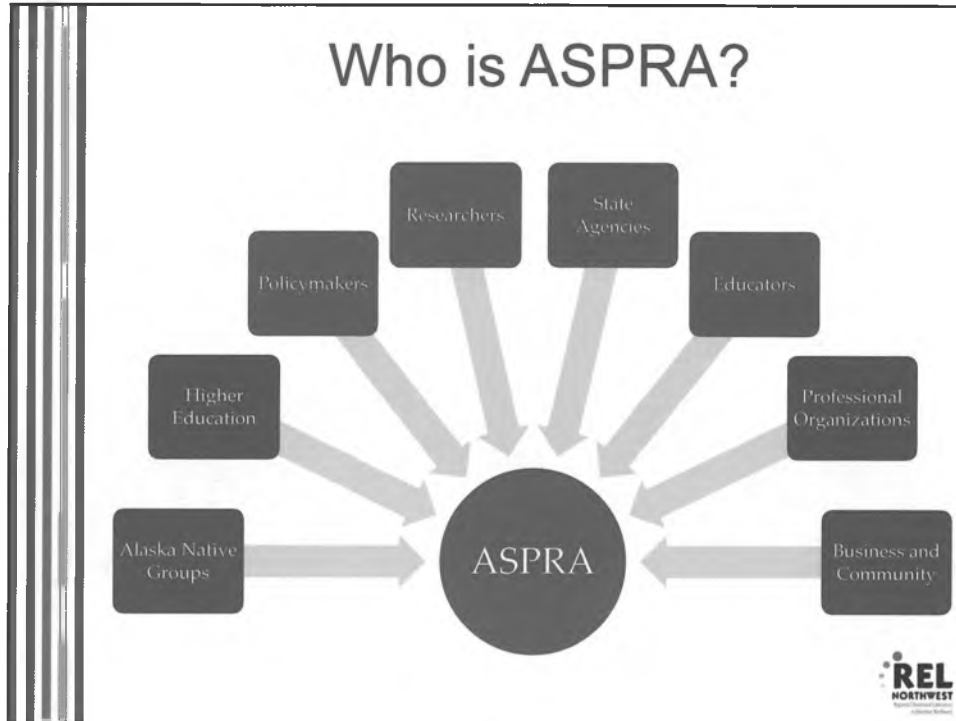
- Seeks to increase use of research evidence to make policy decisions
- Provides a forum for Alaska policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders
- Examines evidence-based solutions to preparing Alaska students for postsecondary success



## ASPRA's Desired Outcomes


- Shared research agenda
- Increased awareness and knowledge of research evidence
- Increased SEA and higher education research capacity
- Increased use of research evidence in making policy decisions





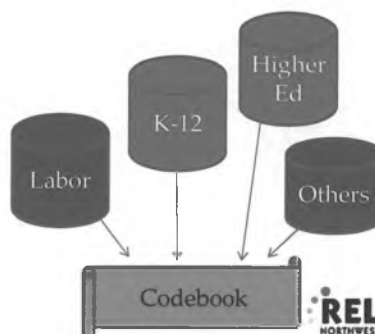
## Research Agenda

- What pathways do Alaska students take into college and career?
- What policies can best support successful transition into college and careers for Alaska students?
- How can Alaska Native students be best served to promote successful college/career/life transitions?



## What Does Alaska Measure?

- **ASPRA Goal:** Increase evidence use in policy decisions
- **Problem:**
  - Data are siloed in different agencies
  - Difficult to know whether good quality data exist to answer a policy question
- **Solution: Data codebook**
  - Catalogues what's available
  - Describes quality and access
  - Links to policy questions
  - Aligned with SLDS



## Defining College, Career, and Community Readiness and Success



## Exploring Pathways of Alaska Students

- What do Alaska students do after they leave high school?
- How did the young adults in the state get to where they are today?
- Do rural and Alaska Native students have different trajectories?
- Study conducted in partnership with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Preliminary results in late spring



## Next Steps

- Learn how to evaluate state policies and set policy research agenda
- Help researchers and policy makers work together
- Develop indicators to measure college, career, and life readiness and success
- Create accessible data briefs and displays for policymakers

