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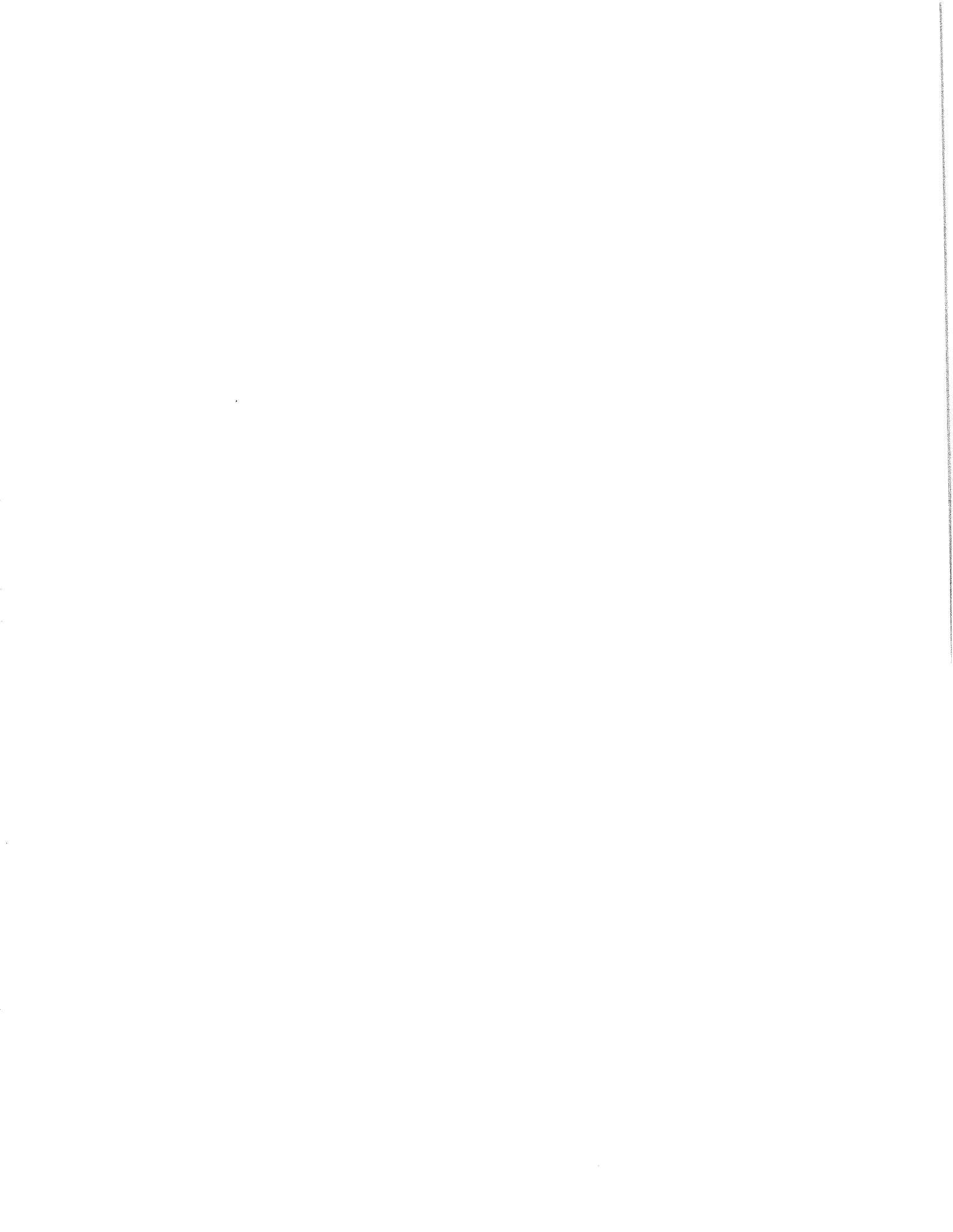
**SISTER SCHOOL  
ROSE URBAN RURAL EXCHANGE  
PROGRAM EVALUATION 2003**

PREPARED FOR  
ALASKA HUMANITIES FORUM

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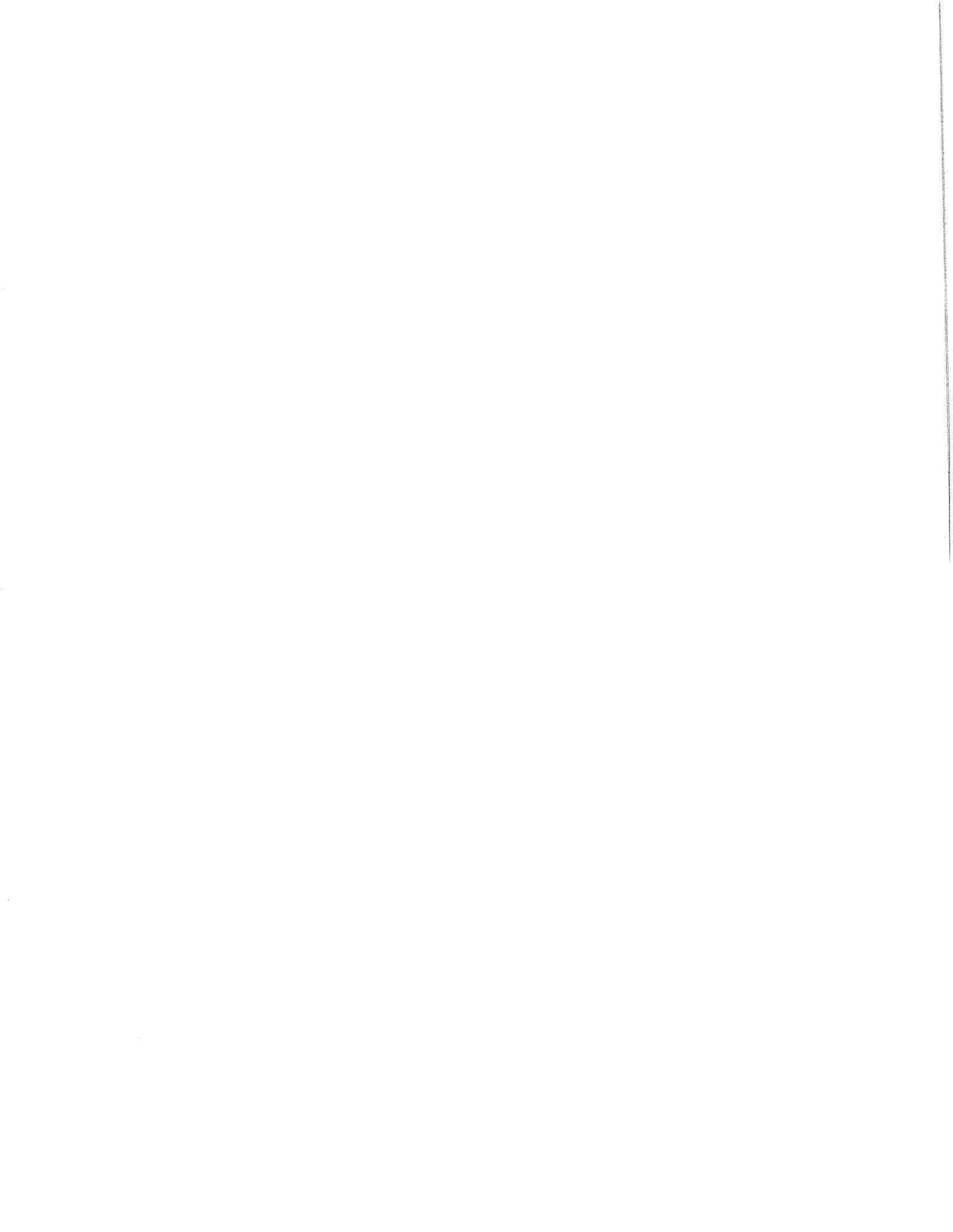
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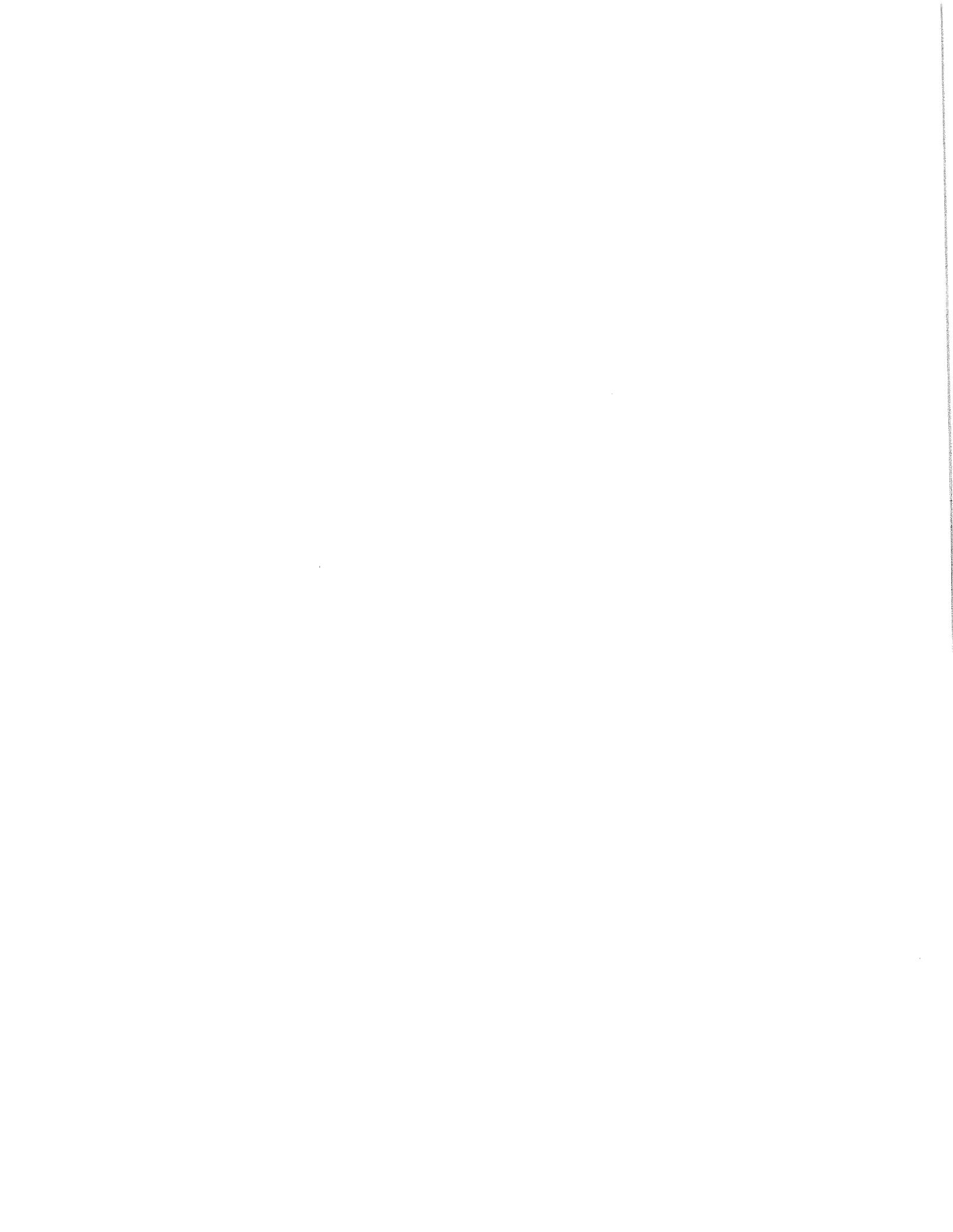
Pre-Visit Survey for Sister School Exchange

Summary for Results for Pre-Visit Survey for Urban Students who participated in the Sister School Exchange

Summary for Results for Pre-Visit Survey for Urban Students who participated in the Sister School Exchange

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Madden, Kerry, *Play's the Thing That Links Kids in L.A., London–Exchange: Pupils in the two cities use Internet to jointly study theater and learn about one another*, Los Angeles Times, June 12, 2002.



## **INTRODUCTION**

The Alaska Humanities Forum contracted with the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) to evaluate how well the Sister School Exchange component of Rose Urban Rural Program achieved its purpose in 2003. This is the first year of the Sister School Exchange. The Sister School Exchange, along with the Student Exchange and Teacher Training programs, make up the Rose Urban Rural Program. The Rose Urban Rural Program is made possible by the Alaska Humanities Forum and with funding from the U.S. Department of Education. It is intended to build understanding and a statewide sense of community by bringing urban students and teachers to rural Alaska, and rural students and teachers to urban Alaska, to learn about each other's cultures.

The Sister School Exchange provides urban and rural students with an opportunity to visit each other's classrooms and communities and form a foundation for sustainable relationships. Sponsoring teachers use a curriculum, developed by the program, intended to help students understand their host community's culture and history. Urban and rural teachers and a delegation of students visit each other's schools and communities for one week.

This evaluation report will focus on year one of the Sister School Exchange. We collected a wide variety of data including: (1) observations of orientation session(s); (2) interviews with urban and rural teachers and a rural school counselor; (3) pre-visit surveys of urban participants focusing on their opinions, perceptions, and knowledge of rural Alaska and urban and rural issues; (4) letters from rural host families; and (5) post-exchange essays written by rural participants.

We wanted to learn how the program changed participants' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions about the areas they visited and about their own home areas; how much they learned about the areas they visited; and how students and their teachers evaluated the content, format, and effectiveness of the program.

This is the pilot year of the Sister School Exchange. Hence, this evaluation is meant to assist with the future development of the program. We will describe what happened in year one, offer recommendations and suggestions for future years, and raise questions about program content and organization for consideration.

## **BACKGROUND**

In early 2003, the Alaska Humanities Forum contracted with Dr. Patricia Partnow to develop a curriculum to orient program participants and to oversee the implementation of the Sister School Exchange. Dr. Partnow is the past Vice-President for Education at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage. For the first two years of the Rose Urban Rural Student Exchange she oversaw the development and implementation of the urban and rural student orientations for the Student Exchange. She also developed curriculum and oversaw implementation of Teacher Training for the Rose Urban Rural Program.

## **RECRUITMENT**

### **SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS**

Dr. Partnow and the Alaska Humanities Forum staff identified urban and rural schools willing and able to implement the Sister School Exchange. Recruiting began in the fall of 2002—after the start of the 2002-2003 calendar school year—for a spring 2003 exchange. Staff focused primarily on rural schools that had earlier participated in the Student Exchange component of the Rose Urban Rural Program. They targeted urban teachers who taught the Alaska Studies curriculum in high school. Alaska Studies is currently an elective course in the high school curriculum of the Anchorage School District. However, starting in September 2004, it will be required for high school graduation.

While a number of teachers and schools were identified, ultimately only one urban and one rural school were able to participate in the Sister School Exchange's pilot year. The schools and teachers were in place by February 2003.

The urban school that participated was West High School in Anchorage. West High School is one of seven high schools in the Anchorage School District and offers 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education. It has approximately 1,898 students, 100 certified faculty, and 40 support staffing as of September 30, 2002.<sup>1</sup> Its principal is Jim Bailey. The urban teacher identified was Ms. Dagmar Phillips who teaches Alaska Studies in the Social Studies department.

The rural school that participated is Kaltag School in the village of Kaltag, under the jurisdiction of the Yukon/Koyukuk School District. In 2002-03, the school enrolled 56 students, in pre-school thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade taught by a staff of six certified teachers. The school principal is Irene Bowie. The rural teacher was Mr. John Betters, who taught all grades in Kaltag School, along with school counselor Mr. Terry Stein. Two staff were selected by Kaltag School so that rural students would have two chaperones, rather than just one, when they traveled to Anchorage.

Both West High School and Kaltag School have had students and/or teachers participate in the Rose Urban Rural Program in the past. Detailed descriptions of Anchorage and Kaltag are located in the Appendix.

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<sup>1</sup> Anchorage School District Profile of Performance 2002-2003, West High School Characteristics, p. 300, <http://www.asdk12.org/publications/reportcards/850reportcard.pdf>

#### PARTICIPANT/STUDENT

Ms. Phillips at West High School and Mr. Betters in Kaltag recruited students from their respective schools to participate in the Sister School Exchange. Ms. Phillips distributed flyers to the approximately 50 students in her two Alaska Studies classes. Nine students expressed interest in participating in the program. Of these, five had passing grades in their courses outside of Alaska Studies, and hence were eligible to participate in the exchange. All five participating students were female. Mr. Betters selected four students, three boys and one girl, from students in grades 8 through 10.

#### RECRUITMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

##### *SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS*

- Alaska Humanities Forum staff, Dr. Partnow, and ISER agree that recruitment of teachers should occur in the spring, preferably before the end of the school year, in the year before the year during which the exchange will occur. In this age of state and federally mandated assessments and accountability, the competition for scarce instructional time has never been greater. This program is in addition to the normal duties of the teacher. By recruiting early, teachers will have more time to incorporate the Sister School Exchange into their schedules, plan their own Sister School Exchange activities, negotiate with program staff, and seek assistance.
- Potential urban teacher participants are now recruited from Teacher Training participants who had recent experiences with rural Alaska culture. An alternate recruitment plan should be developed in the event that an urban teacher is not recruited from Teacher Training.
- The recruiting process for participating teachers from rural schools needs to be specified.
- In the future, rural schools whose students have participated in the Student Exchange will continue to be considered for the program.

## *STUDENTS*

- The recruiting process at West High—where the participating Alaska Studies teacher recruited from among her students—seemed to work well for the urban school.
- The Kaltag school counselor suggested that a single individual at the rural school be designated site coordinator for the program. This person would recruit, help screen and interview students. This person would also plan and carry out the orientation of students and explain the program to students and their parents in the village. The key would be to ensure that the right person filled this role.

## **ORIENTATION**

### TEACHER ORIENTATION AND CURRICULUM

Dr. Partnow and Alaska Humanities Forum staff prepared the urban and rural teachers for the Sister School Exchange by providing a curriculum and two formal teleconferences.

The course curriculum, developed by Dr. Partnow, includes videotapes, guest speakers, and other course materials for five teaching periods. (See Appendix) The material focuses on various Native groups—Aleut, Yup'ik, Cup'ik, Inupiat etc. The material is intended to be incorporated into existing courses. While the curriculum is compatible with the existing Alaska Studies course, it may be more difficult to incorporate it into other courses of study. Sister School Exchange teachers received the curriculum after the start of the spring semester, making it impossible for either to incorporate it into a year-long curriculum.

Although Ms. Phillips, the urban teacher, had already planned instructional activities for the semester before she received the curriculum, she did work to incorporate some parts of the curriculum into her established Alaska Studies program. The rural teacher, Mr. Betters, also used some parts of the curriculum. He advised Dr. Partnow and the Alaska Humanities Forum staff that parts of the curriculum were beyond the understanding of some of his students. He suggested using tourist-like materials and incorporating “media-literacy” into the curriculum. He also suggested that materials be collected from the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and forwarded to the rural school.

Two formal teleconferences between the urban and rural teachers, Dr. Partnow and Alaska Humanities Forum staff provided teachers with an outline of the Sister School Exchange program. Areas discussed include: what the Alaska Humanities Forum program staff hoped to accomplish with the Sister School Exchange; logistics such as the time and dates for the exchange; length of time for the exchange visits; placement of students in homes; what students would be doing during the exchange visits; what Kaltag students would be doing in Anchorage in addition to the school exchange experience; and introductory videotapes the rural and urban students could make to prepare one another for the exchange visit.

A planned teleconference between the two schools that was to include urban and rural teachers and students could not be scheduled and, therefore, did not occur.

#### URBAN STUDENT ORIENTATION

Beginning in February and continuing until their departure in April, Ms. Phillips met with the participating students weekly during the lunch break to orient them for the Sister School Exchange. Ms. Phillips did not want the program preparations to occur during the Alaska Studies class time. She used 20 to 30 minutes of each lunch to review the paperwork required by the Alaska Humanities Forum for parents and students and to prepare for the cultural exchange. Students brought their lunches and on one occasion Ms. Phillips prepared lunch for the group. They reviewed materials provided by the Rose Urban Rural Program staff. The group wrote letters to their host families, and read through the Department of Community and Economic Development report on Kaltag. Ms. Phillips answered student questions about the exchange experience and reviewed the materials with the students to ensure they understood what they were reading. She called parents in evenings, as needed, to answer questions and to explain program features.

Sister School Exchange staff provided an orientation session for Ms. Phillips, participating students and their parents prior to the exchange. This session focused on travel plans and, to a lesser extent, program expectations. Four of the five urban students attended as well as parents of three of the four students who were present.

Urban students worked on the development of an introductory video that was to be exchanged between the two schools prior to the visits. However, their video camera was stolen, along with the tape during the making of the video. Due to the theft the urban students were unable to send a tape to the students in Kaltag.

#### RURAL STUDENT ORIENTATION

Prior to rural students' visit to Anchorage, the rural teacher, Mr. Betters, discussed what it would be like to visit an urban school and how it would be different from their own school. He discussed with students how to deal with social situations and host families. These discussions included tips on how to: introduce one's self and others; speak up in social settings; eat in restaurants; and how to meet urban expectations for social pleasantries such as thanking people.

Rural students planned and taped a video that included:

- ❑ A tour of Kaltag via snow machine and on foot showing the church, river, store and school building.
- ❑ Interviews of rural students discussing what they hoped to gain from their urban Alaska experience
- ❑ A cultural exhibit, including examples of trapping, fishing, sewing and beadwork, on display at the school.
- ❑ People teaching traditional skills to students during culture week at a nearby village.

While the video was completed before the exchange, due to weather delays that kept planes from taking off in Kaltag, it did not make it to Anchorage before the exchange. Urban students did have an opportunity to view the video after the exchange.

#### Communication among program staff and participants during orientation

Urban and rural teachers communicated with each other via email. However, during debriefing, it was suggested that there needed to be more communication among all program participants. Communication between the teachers and students in urban and rural Alaska prior to the exchange is critical. Urban and rural teachers need a communication channel to ensure that information about their needs, issues, and problems reach the program staff in a timely manner. Participants suggested that teachers and students could use email and include digital photographs.

During the debriefing, the urban teacher discussed problems in communications between the participating teachers prior to the exchange. The teachers clearly need to know what their counterpart is communicating to the students about their visits. The teachers need the opportunity to discuss expectations for the activities and events in which the students will participate during the exchange. The teachers need to exchange information on their students' interests so that each can plan accordingly.

## ORIENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

### *GENERAL*

Orientation is needed for the eight different groups participating in this exchange: urban and rural teachers, students, parents and host families. Orientations sessions could include more than one group. At the same time, each group should receive the information that it specifically needs. Thus, orientations might begin with all groups together to learn about information that is vital for all, followed by sessions for each subgroup.

### *CURRICULUM*

- We suggest that the curriculum focus more on sociological and historical information and perhaps less on ethnographic data. A similar development has taken place in the orientation for the Student Exchange portion of the program. The curriculum developed for the pilot Sister School Exchange focuses on various Native groups and may be overly specific to address the goals of the Rose Urban Rural Program.
- A more general sociological approach would orient both urban and rural students to differences in rural and urban experiences, without reference to particular ethnic populations. During the student exchange, discussion focuses on the values and norms found in both locations and the emphasis is on learning to identify and respond to the differences. The goals are to develop useful social skills and to deepen understandings of the current social, economic, and place-based realities that fellow Alaskan citizens from different geographical regions face. Games and activities that are age-appropriate rather than formal lectures encourage students to participate in and recognize differences between people and their interpretations of various social situations. These games and activities also constitute team-building opportunities that encourage students to support one another during the actual exchange portion of the program.
- In addition, a more general sociological focus allows participating students to explore differences in the ways that rural and urban residents experience issues such as education, health care, governance, and subsistence.
- Another issue raised by the current orientation curriculum is the additional time it demands—about five teaching periods. The volume of material may make it more difficult to integrate it into other courses, especially those courses other than Alaska Studies.
- A more general sociologically-oriented curriculum may make the program accessible to a more diverse range of teachers and students. Teachers in departments other than those offering Alaska Studies may see ways to involve their students who are interested in such areas as political science, literature, health careers, and teaching.

- We also suggest that the curriculum be organized as “modules.” Such a flexible organization would make it much easier for teachers to fit the information and activities into their existing curriculum or even as brief breaks from the regular curriculum.

*COMMUNICATIONS:*

- The Sister School Exchange program should arrange regular communications between the rural and urban teachers just as it does with the students. Providing the teachers telephone cards and their counterpart’s e-mail address could facilitate communication. Staff could check with the teachers periodically to ensure that they are, in fact, communicating. The teachers could simply copy the Alaska Humanities Forum staff on any e-mail communications. In addition, staff should check with teachers frequently to learn about orientation activities.
- During the debriefing the rural teacher and counselor indicated that video interactions and telephone conferences might not be sufficient to enable urban and rural students to get to know each other prior to the actual visits. Since rural and urban students use email, emails exchanged between urban and rural students might be a more effective medium that is also easier to coordinate – not to mention less expensive.
- The use of videotapes as part of the orientation seems to be worth continuing, however tapes need to be started and completed earlier to allow sufficient time for tapes to be exchanged.
- As suggested above, the designation of a “site coordinator” for rural schools, would facilitate communication.

**HOST FAMILIES**

URBAN HOST FAMILIES

The urban teacher was supposed to recruit urban host families. Due, however, to lack of time and resources, this did not happen. Consequently, a teacher, a staff member at the Alaska Humanities Forum, and Dr. Partnow hosted rural teachers and students. No host family orientation was conducted.

The rural teacher reported that the urban host family experience was very beneficial for the rural students. The rural students were separated from each other and spent evenings with an urban host family. This placed rural students in situations where they had to communicate with urban family members and provided them an opportunity to see an urban family’s everyday interests and points of conversation. The rural teacher thought this was the best place to provide the students with the opportunity for interaction and to learn “rules and regulations” of the urban culture.

#### RURAL HOST FAMILIES

The two initial rural host families had been host families in the Student Exchange portion of the Rose Urban Rural Program. However, prior to the urban student's departure from Anchorage both families experienced situations which would not allow them to host students for the Sister School Exchange. Mr. Betters and Mr. Stein located two alternative rural host families. Even with this last minute change there was sufficient time to do background checks on the new rural host families. In Kaltag, two of the urban students were placed with a single mother and her young son. The other two students were placed with a couple that Mr. Betters and Mr. Stein referred to as "grandparents." The host families knew at least one month in advance that they were going to be host parents and began planning for the students' visit, however no formal orientation was held.

Usually students are placed singly with host families, however the Kaltag community felt more comfortable having students paired up. This was due to an earlier experience with the Student Exchange program. An urban student in that program had gone off on her own and gotten lost and disoriented. It was the feeling of the community that by having two students with each host family this sort of situation could be prevented. At the debriefing meeting, the rural teacher and counselor discussed the idea of placing urban students individually, each with a different family. No conclusion was reached concerning changing this policy, however it deserves consideration in future program planning.

Mr. Betters and Mr. Stein also recruited a family to host Ms. Phillips.

#### HOST FAMILY RECOMMENDATIONS

- One of the greatest challenges appears to be the recruitment of urban host families. Although recruitment should be coordinated with the urban teachers, program staff needs to take responsibility for finding placements. The identification of host families must occur sufficiently early to allow for background checks prior to the placement of rural students. Ideally, students would exchange home settings. For this to work, families need to learn and agree to this as part of the student recruitment process.
- We also suggest that urban host families be given a contact list of other host families (and perhaps the families of the students who the rural students are shadowing). This gives the families a chance to plan activities among the visiting rural and urban students.

## **EXCHANGE**

### **URBAN STUDENTS' VISIT TO KALTAG**

The entire community appeared to be at the airport to greet the urban teacher and students when they arrived in Kaltag. During the school day, urban students and Ms. Phillips spent time in the classroom. In the morning the rural students had math and the urban students did homework. After math, Ms. Phillips led a lesson for both urban and rural students. On one occasion, the urban students made individual presentations about Anchorage. While rural students had afternoon physical education, urban students took that time for sewing and beading instruction from a local beadier for three of the five days of exchange.

The urban teacher did not feel there had been much preparation for the urban students visit by the community or the teacher in the school. However, things did come together during their visit that worked very well including an impromptu snow machine trip arranged by the community and the afternoon sewing and beading class. Ms. Phillips thinks the community felt that making prior plans would have been an imposition on the urban teacher and students.

### **RURAL STUDENTS' VISIT TO ANCHORAGE**

The welcome at West High School was one of the highlights of the trip for the rural students. The urban students were waiting for the rural students on the front steps of the school with signs that read, "Welcome to West High School."

The rural students shadowed West High students in various classes in the morning. Being with the urban students made the rural students feel more comfortable. They did not feel like "outsiders" and gained a sense of confidence. The rural students followed the West High students throughout the morning, attending classes with them. Some of the rural students did report being bored in classes. They also complained about getting up for classes that began around 7 a.m., instead of the later 9 a.m. that school starts in Kaltag.

In the afternoons rural students took field trips in Anchorage and Mat-Su Valley. They visited the zoo and saw animals they had not seen before. A visit to the Job Corp was intended to expose rural students to job options, however it may have been more appropriate for older students who are more actively thinking about what they would like to do after graduation. A trip to the Chocolate Factory was entertaining and provided an opportunity to those interested in machinery. Lastly, a shopping trip gave students a chance to buy things that are not readily available in their village. Rural students did additional activities with their host families.

## EXCHANGE VISIT RECOMMENDATIONS

### *URBAN STUDENT EXCHANGE*

- Better communication between the urban and rural teachers prior to the exchange to share suggestions and ideas of potential activities is encouraged for next year. Sending a list of activities that urban teacher and students would be interested in along with a request that the activities be planned in advance would also help.
- The rural teacher and counselor commented that a list of activities that they might plan for the urban students would be helpful. Other activities they mentioned were:
  - Ice Fishing
  - Tent Camping
  - Snow Machine Riding
  - Snow Shoeing
  - Cross Country SkiingOutdoor events, of course, depend on weather conditions. The lack of snow made snow machine riding difficult during this past year.

### *RURAL STUDENT EXCHANGE*

- The problem of boredom for rural students in urban classrooms—especially in classes which are of no interest or subjects, like a foreign language, that the student does not understand—is not new. It has also arisen in the Student Exchange program. Remedies tried in that program include having the rural student work on a journal, or write about the class itself, why they did not like it or have an interest in it. Rural students should have some schoolwork with them that they can work on during class.
- Splitting the day between classes in the morning and field trips in the afternoon seemed to work well for the rural students. Additional places that rural students might visit:
  - Anchorage Museum
  - Alaska Native Medical Center
  - Port of Anchorage – especially on a day the ships are being worked
  - Farm in the Mat-Su
  - Municipal Green House
  - Portage Glacier

## **POST-EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES**

### URBAN STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Because the school year ended when the urban students completed their rural visits, no post-exchange activities occurred. Preparation for finals, completion of class projects, and other year-end activities, understandably, took precedence.

### RURAL STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Rural students wrote short essays on their experience. Copies of the text are in the appendix. Highlights of the rural student essays include that that student shadows were helpful and that the host family experience is valuable. Rural students were also impressed with the physical size of West High, the number of students and the way students changed classrooms every period. They enjoyed family and group activities outside of the school exchange including bowling, visiting the water park, seeing a baseball game and visiting the Alaska Zoo. All these activities left strong impressions. However, the most memorable experience appeared to be the trip to Big Game Alaska Wildlife Center. In addition, rural student's noted in their essays that the group tour of the Chocolate Factory and Job Corp had them thinking about their lives beyond high school.

Kaltag students had comments and suggestions for future Sister School Exchanges. Mr. Stein compiled these suggestions from the students:

- Before leaving Kaltag, practice the steps of meeting new people, carrying on conversations with them, and befriending them.
- Bring some schoolwork from Kaltag in case one or more of the urban classes are too advanced to comprehend. For example, one Kaltag student this year was placed in a second semester Spanish class but had no prior exposure to the language. (However, I think the student benefited from just observing in that class because now she is trying on her own to speak and read Spanish!)
- Be willing to try new things. Go with an open mind.
- Be willing to take risks with personal comfort zones in order to get to know new people.
- Stay alert so you will not get lost.
- Face your fears.
- Place students individually in urban homes rather than putting two with one family because rural students are likely to focus more on each other than on the new opportunities around them.

- Budget your money so that you do not run out early in your exchange visit.
- Bring a camera.
- Go with the expectation of learning a lot and having a great time!

Mr. Stein also provided post-visit comments from the Kaltag principal, host families, and his own which are located in the appendix.

#### POST-EXCHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

We have learned that having students experience new settings and environments does not necessarily lead to the new understandings and knowledge for which we hope. As John Dewey noted nearly a century ago, experiences have the potential to be as mis-educative as they can be truly and positively educative. The key is the opportunities that students have to reflect on their experiences, connect those experiences with prior knowledge and understandings, and consciously recognize what they have learned.

Consequently, the follow-up activities that are planned for students are absolutely critical to the success of this program. A great deal more thought needs to be given to this dimension. The rural teacher recognized the need for follow-up, requiring students to write reflective essays.

- We suggest that the program engage the participating teachers during the planning process in designing activities to help students process what they have learned. We can imagine asking students to write reflective essays and then share these with classmates and their teacher. The teacher could identify common themes or ideas that cut across the essays of the participating students and bring these to the attention of the students. Such an activity would not be time-consuming and could probably be completed in one or two class periods.
- Although more elaborate presentations of the type students have made as part of the rural-urban student exchange are a good model, many teachers can not afford the time such projects entails. Hence, a less time-intensive approach may work best.

#### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF THE SISTER SCHOOL EXCHANGE

During the debriefing, the rural teacher and counselor noted the positive relationships that can be developed when an exchange program like this continues over the long term. Initially, they saw this as just “one more program.” Anyone who has taught in rural communities knows that schools are inundated with “programs.” Many schools lack the capacity to participate productively in all the programs that come their way.

The community of Kaltag's initial reaction was that participating in the program was risky and they worried that the community lacked the capacity to pull it off. Yet, after the urban students arrived, attitudes in the community changed as residents realized the benefits for the school. Residents became gradually more comfortable and supportive, so comfortable and supportive that they organized a potlatch for the visitors on their last day. Half the town showed up to meet the urban teacher and students. Residents who had not previously been involved with the school participated in activities for the urban students such as the snow machine trip and the potlatch.

Another unanticipated benefit of the program was that the rural students behaved better in their classrooms while hosting the urban students.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT EXCHANGE**

**ORIENTATION:** Orientation is needed for the eight different groups participating in this exchange: urban and rural teachers, students, parents and host families. The orientations might begin with all groups together to learn about information that is vital for all, followed by sessions for each subgroup. It would be especially helpful to have a designated site coordinator for the program in the rural school. This person could plan and carry out the orientation of students and explain the program to students and their parents in the village.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** The Sister School Exchange program should arrange regular communications between the rural and urban teachers, students and program staff in order to coordinate orientation and exchange visits. Providing the teachers telephone cards and their counterpart's email address would facilitate communication. The teachers could copy the Alaska Humanities Forum staff on any email communications so that all parties are informed.

**PROGRAM CURRICULUM:** We suggest that the curriculum focus more on sociological and historical information and perhaps less on ethnographic data in order to make the program accessible to a more diverse range of teachers and students.

**EXCHANGE VISITS:** Better communication between the urban and rural teachers prior to the exchange to share suggestions and ideas of potential activities is encouraged.

**POST EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES:** We suggest that the program engage the participating teachers during the planning process in designing activities to help students process what they have learned. We can imagine asking students to write reflective essays and then share these with classmates and their teacher. The teacher could identify common themes or ideas that cut across the essays of the participating students and bring these to the attention of the students.

**In sum, we have a number of suggestions for the coming program year:**

- Clarify expectations on the maintenance of the sister school relationship.
- Provide ideas and suggest activities that would facilitate the maintenance of this relationship.
- Develop and implement a process to monitor this on-going relationship. A key question is: How long would you like the relationship to last?

In planning the program, four basic activities need to be developed for each of eight different groups.

	URBAN	RURAL
TEACHERS	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange
STUDENTS	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange
PARENTS	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange
HOST FAMILIES	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange	Recruit Orientation Exchange Post-Exchange

After appropriate activities have been planned and scheduled, someone must monitor tasks to assure they are completed. As noted above, the informational needs of several of these groups overlap so orientation sessions may be easily combined. The critical issue is to ensure that each group receives the information it needs.

**REVISED EVALUATION PLAN FOR YEAR TWO**

Next year, we would like to conduct both pre- and post surveys to gauge changes in the views and attitudes of rural and urban teachers and students. If the curriculum is changed as we recommend, we will also assess pre- and post-surveys of the knowledge included in the curriculum. A copy and summary of the pre-visit survey of urban students is located in the Appendix. This year we were unable to perform a pre-visit survey of the rural students and post-visit surveys of both the urban and rural students. We were unable to do the post-visit surveys since students were preoccupied with finals, class projects and other end of year activities at the time they returned from their exchange visits.

Prior to the exchange urban students stated they had the most knowledge about urban Alaska regarding:

- What urban schools are like;
- Social Problems in urban Alaska such as substance abuse, domestic violence, etc. and;
- How urban residents get their food

In responding to their knowledge of rural Alaska no one responded that they had a lot or extensive knowledge of any areas in rural Alaska. The areas they felt they had a little and some knowledge included:

- How rural residents get their food;
- Sports, leisure and recreational activities in rural Alaska

The urban students were also asked about their opinion of different aspects of urban and rural Alaska culture. Thinking about urban Alaska the urban students had positive and highly positive opinions of the:

- Effectiveness of middle and high school education
- Television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. that are available
- Availability, accessibility, and diversity of cultural life (art, dance, music, drama, literature)

For rural Alaska urban students had positive and some neutral opinions of:

- Television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. that are available
- How family members relate to one another;
- Customs and traditions (including religion and spiritual beliefs)

The last portion of the questionnaire has general knowledge questions. The urban students' pre-visit responses are located in the appendix.

Whether or not we find changes in views or knowledge depends, to a great extent, on how well participating teachers actually implement the program curriculum. Thus, we will also need to determine how the program curriculum is used. As direct observations of classes are beyond the resources of the evaluation, we may depend on semi-structured interviews with teachers and students.

Examples of interview questions include:

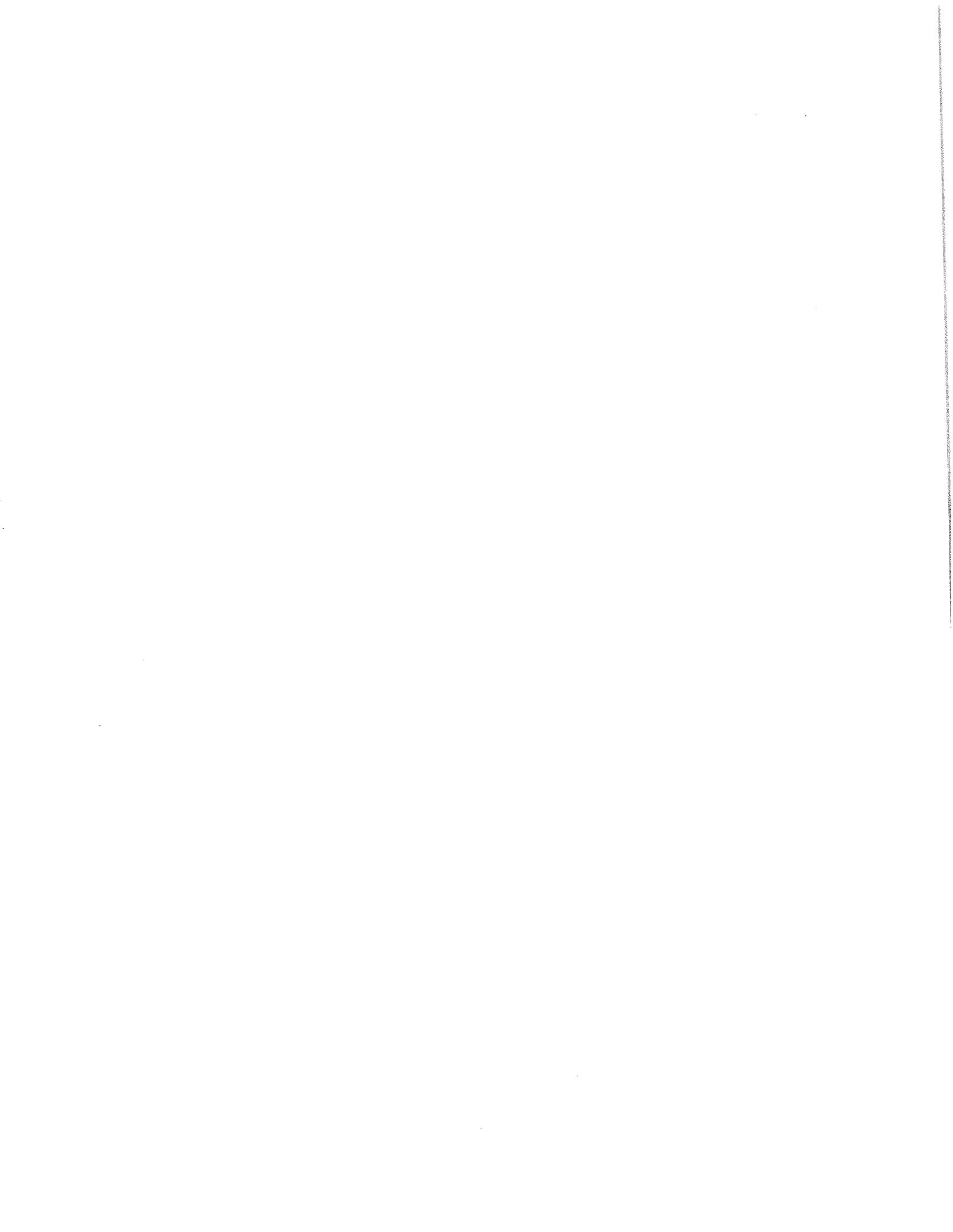
- Please describe your Sister School Exchanger experience.
- Please give me details on the activities you participated in as a part of orientation and during the rural/urban visit.
- What were the best parts of the program?/the worst?
- What did you learn that you did not know before the exchange experience? (three things)

The pre-visit survey results from the pilot year are included in the appendix. Obtaining contact information for the teachers and students early in the process will help with administering pre- and post- surveys and interviews.

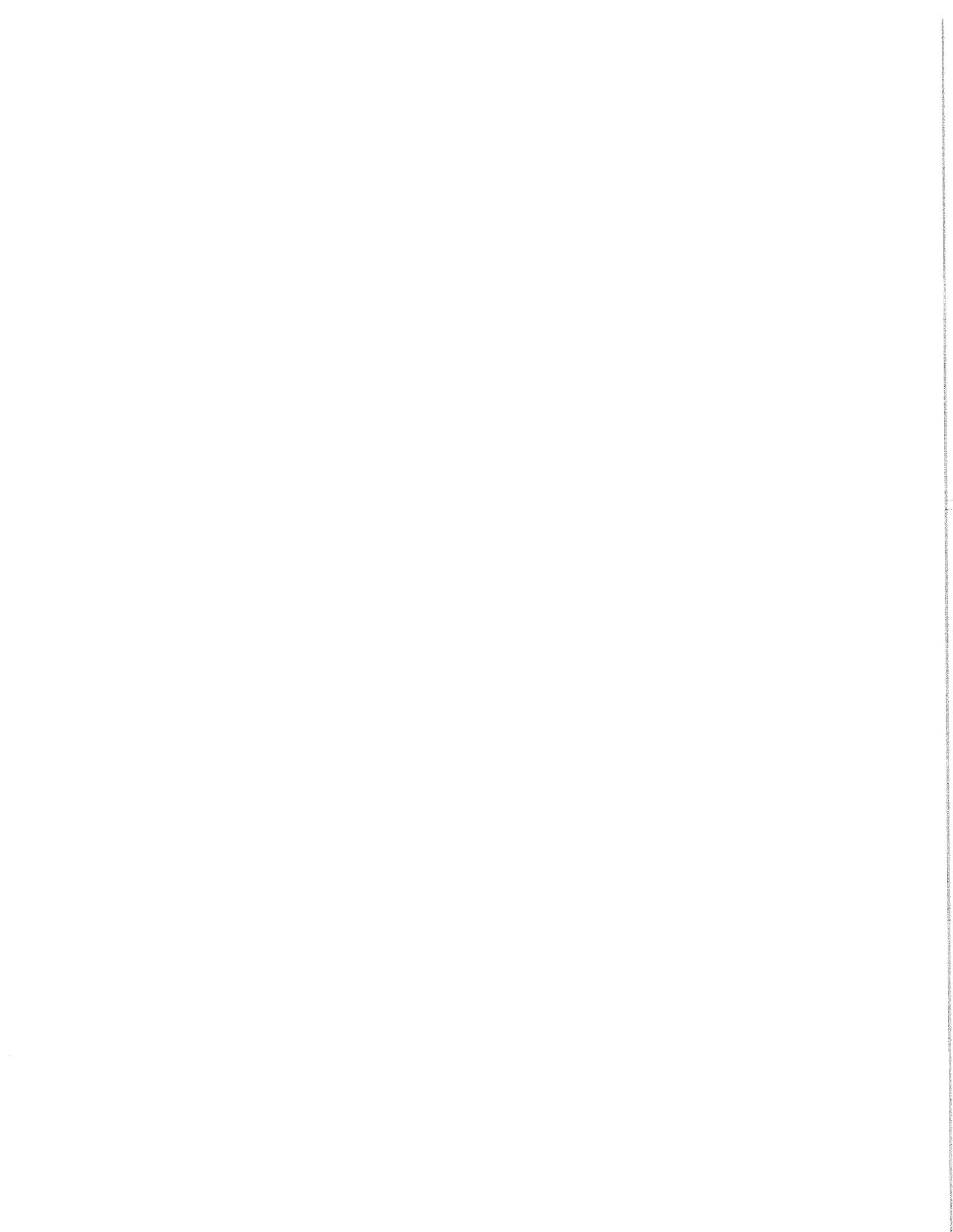
During the debriefing, the urban teacher asked if data will be gathered on changes in non-participating students from the same class. Because the program evaluation focuses on the effects of the Sister School Exchange experience, we have not collected data from non-participating students. We may, however, want to collect such data, resources permitting. The non-participating students could serve as a control, allowing us a better understanding of whether the actual visit has an affect on participating students.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR THE STAFF TO CONSIDER**

1. Are participating students expected to make public presentations after their visits to promote the Sister School program? What about the participating teachers?
2. Can a teacher presentation be incorporated into the in-service training that is provided to middle and high school teachers as a means of disseminating information about the program and recruiting more teachers to participate?
3. Are the participating teachers encouraged to use the lesson plans developed by teachers in the Teacher Training program?
4. Who or what is the link to keep the schools connected? The teachers, students, schools or some combination?
5. Is the orientation curriculum the same or different for the urban and rural schools?
6. Have you monitored which curriculum or parts there of the teachers have selected and used? If yes, how much of the curriculum was used by each teacher? And which parts?
7. What follow-up activities do the urban and rural students do after they return to their respective schools?
8. What are the program's requirements for parental consent and orientation? (One student did not have a parent at the orientation. Another student did not show up at the orientation.)



## Appendix



These are excerpts from reports on Anchorage and Kaltag located at the Alaska Community and Economic Development Community Database website at [http://www.dced.state.ak.us/cbd/commdb/CF\\_COMDB.htm](http://www.dced.state.ak.us/cbd/commdb/CF_COMDB.htm). More detailed reports for these and other Alaska communities can be found at this website.

#### **ANCHORAGE**

Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska, is located in southcentral Alaska at the head of Cook Inlet. It is 3 hours' flight time from Seattle. The area encompasses 1,697.2 sq. miles of land and 263.9 sq. miles of water. The average temperatures in January range from 8 to 21 degrees; in July, average temperatures range from 51 to 65. Annual precipitation is 15.9 inches, with 69 inches of snowfall.

10.4% of the population are Alaska Native or part Native. Anchorage has a history of cultural diversity. Many residents participate in nearby recreational and subsistence activities. Anchorage has over 162 parks, including 10 large reserves. Recreational activities include downhill and cross-country skiing, ice hockey, fishing, golf, swimming, hiking, biking and camping. The George Sullivan Sports Arena, Alaska Performing Arts Center, Egan Convention Center and many other facilities host cultural and entertainment events.

During the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 100,368 total housing units, and 5,546 were vacant. 1,107 of these vacant housing units are used only seasonally. 134,240 residents were employed. The unemployment rate at that time was 6.76%, although 30.37% of all adults were not in the work force. The median household income was \$55,546, per capita income was \$25,287, and 7.35% of residents were living below the poverty level.

#### **KALTAG**

Kaltag is located on the west bank of the Yukon River, 75 miles west of Galena and 335 miles west of Fairbanks. It is situated on a 35-foot bluff at the base of the Nulato Hills, west of the Innoko National Wildlife Refuge. The area encompasses 23.3 sq. miles of land and 4.1 sq. miles of water. The area experiences a cold, continental climate with extreme temperature differences. The average daily high temperature during July is in the low 70s; the average daily low temperature during January ranges from 10 to below zero. Sustained temperatures of -40 degrees are common during winter. Extreme temperatures have been measured from -55 to -90. Annual precipitation is 16 inches, with 74 inches of snowfall annually. The river is ice-free from mid-May through mid-October.

A federally recognized tribe is located in the community -- the Village of Kaltag. 87% of the population are Alaska Native or part Native. Kaltag's residents are Koyukon Athabascans. The Stick Dance Festival draws visitors from many neighboring villages. This one-week festival of potlatches is sponsored by

relatives of the recently deceased, in appreciation of those who helped during their time of mourning.

During the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 78 total housing units, and 9 were vacant. 2 of these vacant housing units are used only seasonally. 69 residents were employed. The unemployment rate at that time was 29.9%, although 56.6% of all adults were not in the work force. The median household income was \$29,167, per capita income was \$9,361, and 33.88% of residents were living below the poverty level.

DRAFT  
Prepared by Patricia Partnow  
2/18/03

Alaska Humanities Forum Urban/Rural Sister Schools Pilot Program

*Curriculum Outline*

For an exchange between high school classes in Anchorage and Kaltag

1. Traveling urban students, their parents, and the teacher will attend the pre-visit student Urban/Rural training session on March 7, 2003, at the BP Energy Center, from 6 to 9 p.m. Dinner will be served. This meeting will cover aspects of travel in rural Alaska, including safety issues, protocol, and expectations.
2. Traveling rural students will receive a briefing on travel to and in Anchorage, provided by Panu Lucier of the Alaska Humanities Forum (she will either travel to Kaltag or take part in an audioconference).
3. Both urban and rural teachers will prepare their classes for their visits through a curriculum that includes: (A) a unit on Alaska geography; (B) a brief overview of Alaska history; (C) background on Athabascan culture (Anchorage class only); (D) a classroom visit by an Athabascan individual (Anchorage class only); and (E) Athabascan oral traditions.
  - A. General Alaska Geography (both classes) (three options, as follows)
    - (1) Attached curriculum OR
    - (2) Film and study guide OR
    - (3) Alaska in Maps: A Thematic Atlas and activities, including:
      - Read and review Chapter 2, Physical Geography with the class (pp. 20-42); note the activity ideas in the Teacher's Guide, pp. 11-16.
      - Read and review Chapter 3, Human Geography (pp. 43-60); note the activity ideas in the Teacher's Guide, pp. 17-21.
      - Read and review pp. 61-63 (seasonality and subsistence), Map 43 (Subsistence Harvests in 7 Villages), p. 80, and Map 45 (Hunting and Trapping), p. 82; note the activity ideas in the Teacher's Guide, pp. 22, 24-5
      - Appropriate expanded lessons are described, in detail, on the following topics in the Teacher's Guide:
        - Cultural Map Lesson, p. 36
        - Electronic Geoportrait Lesson, p. 40
        - Wildlife Harvest Surveys Lesson, p. 51
      - Other activities to consider in preparation for audioconferences, travel, and the visit from rural Alaskans include the following, which are not described in detail in the Teacher's Guide:
        - Alaska from Memory, p. 59
        - Cartogram activity, p. 60

- Changes brought by technology activity, p. 60
- Cultural Resource Posters Activity, p. 61
- Heating Costs activity, p. 63
- Local Resource Use Activity, p. 64
- Subsistence Activity, p. 68
- Transportation activity, p. 68
- Trip planning activity, p. 68

B. Brief overview of Alaska history: Alaska History Game (both classes) (lesson plan and materials attached)

C. Background on Athabascan culture (Anchorage class only); three alternatives:

- (1) Athabascan Paperdoll Game from [www.akhistory.org](http://www.akhistory.org) OR
- (2) *The Athabaskans: People of the Boreal Forest* by Richard Nelson, with Teacher's Guide suggestions
- (3) Anchorage Museum of History and Art and Alaska Native Heritage Center Treasure Hunts, to be performed as homework and turned in at some time during the semester. Each week a different Treasure Hunt is devised.

D. Getting to know Athabascans (Anchorage class only): Visit from Dwayne Sipary of Nulato; possibly also from Shirley Jimerson of Tetlin

E. Athabascan oral tradition from *As My Grandfather Told It* by Catherine Attla, with Teacher's Guide by Niki McCurry and Eliza Jones

- Foreword (pp. 1-2)
- Teacher's Guide Athabaskan Oral Literature (pp. 4-7)
- Keeysoolinh (pp. 7-30); Teacher's Guide (pp. 8-18)
- The One Who Used to Put His Nephew into a Fishtail (pp. 41-64); Teacher's Guide (pp. 30-38)
- The One Who Took Back the Sun (pp. 87-106); Teacher's Guide (pp. 58-66)
- Optional: *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallis

4. Joint curriculum project between the two sister schools, which will entail videotape or computer presentations and at least two audio- or videoconferences (depending on the technology available)

- Assignment one: Each class prepares a presentation, in video or computer form, about "Who we are, where we live." This could take the form of an Electronic Geoportrait, described on p. 40 of Teacher's Guide to *Alaska in Maps*
- Assignment two: A presentation for the sister class on a theme that the two classes jointly agree upon. Examples of themes might include:
  - Education in our school and community
  - Economics in our community

- Food
- Transportation
- Health care
- Public safety
- Decision-making and governance in our community

*In order to help students design their presentation, discuss what they would like to tell their sister school about the chosen topic. Divide the topic into subtopics.*

*For instance, if the topic is food, the task can be divided into:*

- What we eat (a sample menu, photographs of various foods)
- How we get it (videotape a trip to the supermarket or tape people fishing or hunting)
- How we prepare it (videotapes or recipes)
- Where it comes from (e.g., if it is imported, students might have a visual geographic display of the food's origins; if it comes from the sea, photos or videotapes of the sea)
- When we eat it (what occasions, what times of year, what times of day)
- How we feel about it

*Divide the class into working groups, assigning each group one of the subtopics.*

*Within each group, assign roles. Roles might include:*

- Videographer or photographer: this person pulls together images or take the class's videotape on location
  - Interviewers (of hunters, store workers, restaurant employees, cooks)
  - Writers (these students compose the presentation)
  - Narrator
  - Illustrator or cartographer (if additional visuals besides photographs or video programs are needed)
- Assignment three: Information in the form of a videotape, computer program, or print material on "What you need to know about visiting our school." This could take the form of a Cultural Map, described on p. 36 of Teacher's Guide to *Alaska in Maps*
  - Audio- or videoconference: The two classes "meet" while the urban students are in the rural school. The classes need to prepare ahead of time to know who will speak, when, and on what topics, and to prepare visual material to show the other class
  - Audio- or videoconference: The two classes "meet" while the rural students are in the urban school

5. Choose the five students who will travel based on a rubric

- Grades are high enough to miss five days of other classes
- Other teachers are willing to give students assigned work to do while traveling
- Parents are willing to sign all necessary permission and release forms for AHF
- Completion of classroom work

- Participation in group work and oral sessions
  - Participation in audioconferences
  - Attendance at pre-visit workshop
  - Special presentation designed by students to talk about their own culture
6. Plan for the visit of sister class teacher and students
- Determine housing for visiting students and teachers
  - Each class assigns special hosts or buddies to be paired with the visiting students
  - Class plans classroom activities about what the visiting students need to learn about the school, the city, transportation, family life and special customs, teen life in the community
  - Class plans fieldtrips on above topics, to be done after school or on weekend

**Alaska History Match Game**  
**Annotated Teacher's Edition**  
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*Card 1*

10,000 B.C. to 9,000 B.C.

The earliest known human sites in Alaska are along the Tanana River. They contain mammoth ivory tools and microblades. Because no human remains were found at the sites, it is impossible to tell which group of indigenous people the sites belonged to.

*Comments*

Refer to the attached article, "Peopling of Alaska" by Karen Workman for background information on the first people to arrive in Alaska. This article also describes microblades.

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*Card 2*

8,000 B.C.

The Bering Land Bridge flooded, becoming the Bering Sea. Since that time people have continued to travel between Siberia and Alaska, but by boat rather than foot. This heralded the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age.

*Comments*

The attached article, "Peopling of Alaska," deals with this topic. Keep in mind that the Bering Land Bridge was not actually a bridge; it was a thousand-mile wide continuation of the Asian continent that made Asia and North America a single megacontinent for several periods in its history. Also keep in mind that the Bering Land Bridge was alternatively flooded and exposed many times during the Ice Age (Pleistocene), which covers the period from 1.8 million years ago to 10,000 years ago.

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*Card 3*

100 B.C.

Archaeological evidence shows that a whaling culture on St. Lawrence Island was in full flower by this time. These hunts required a great deal of skill and cooperation by a fairly sedentary society, which had to have been organized in complex groupings

*Comments*

We have just made a huge leap in Alaska's history in the interests of time – but a lot has occurred between 8,000 B.C. and 100 B.C. For one thing, a very famous site on Anangula Island in the Aleutians has been inhabited (beginning in 6400 B.C.). For information on this, refer to the attached article, "Aleutian Archaeology," by Karen Workman. For another, a huge development in Eskimo technology and culture has occurred. Refer to the attached article, "Eskimo Prehistory" for more information on the culture of St. Lawrence Island in particular and Eskimo archaeology throughout the north

in general. A good source of visuals for both can be found on the [www.akhistory.org](http://www.akhistory.org) web site. From the Lesson Plan menu, click on the Eskimo unit and follow the directions.

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*Card 4*

1600 A.D.

Dogsled technology was perfected. No one knows when dogs were first laden with packs to help carry human belongings, but by this date the full complement of dogsled equipment was in use throughout northern Alaska. This included harnesses, toggles, sleds, and bone sled shoes.

*Comments*

The earliest evidence of the domestication of dogs comes from Israel and dates to 11,000 B.C. Domesticated dogs also accompanied the first humans to enter North America from Asia. Dogsled technology itself is very complex, involving many parts and requiring much training of both human and canine to make the system work.

---

*Card 5*

1700 A.D.

Yup'ik wars began. When Russians first encountered Alutiiq and Yup'ik people, they witnessed the end of a long sequence of wars that had spread throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and onto the Alaska Peninsula. The wars had already lasted several generations by the time the Russians learned of them.

*Comments*

Even today, people in Southwest Alaska tell stories about the Bow and Arrow Wars. They started during a friendly dart game when one boy's dart accidentally flew into another boy's eye and blinded it. The injured boy's father grabbed a dart and poked out the eye of the first boy. The fight escalated and eventually spread from village to village, adding new injuries onto existing grievances. The period is said to have ended when Yup'ik elders decided to "fight" through song and dance as a way to preserve lives and stop wasting time and resources on war.

---

*Card 6*

1743 A.D.

The first Russians voyaged to the Aleutian Islands for the fur trade in this year. For the next century and a half, Russians traded in Alaska, first forcing, then hiring Aleuts (both Unangan and Alutiiq) to hunt for them.

*Comments*

1743 was not the first date Russians sailed to Alaska. This occurred in 1732, when a sailor named Simeon Dezhnev journeyed across the Bering Strait, then returned to Siberia to report on the appearance of the Seward Peninsula. 1741, of course, is the year

Bering and Chirikov sailed their ships under orders from the Russian tsar to Alaska – but 1743 was the year the fur trade itself began. The sea otter was the first target for the fur hunters. The Unangan Aleuts are those from the Aleutian Islands, the Alutiiq are from Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula, Prince William Sound, and the southern portion of the Kenai Peninsula.

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*Card 7*

1784 A.D.

The Russians established a trading post on Kodiak Island. Others followed in southwestern and western Alaska. There were never more than 500 Russians in Russian America at a time, so the land was not occupied by Russians. It was only used for a series of fur trading posts.

*Comments*

The Kodiak Post was not the first in the colony (Unalaska, as well as several other Aleutian Island artels or posts, had been established decades earlier) – but it became the first capital, marking the introduction of Russian government into Alaska. The establishment of posts marked a huge change in the lifestyles of the Alaska Native people who lived near them. Because they were forced into the fur trade, they had less time to spend on subsistence pursuits. They were encouraged to sell all their furs rather than use them for their own clothes, so they began trading for wool and cotton cloth. They readily saw the advantages of iron tools and implement, so their household goods began to take on a more European look as well.

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*Card 8*

1794 A.D.

The first Russian missionary in Alaska, Archimandrite Iosaf Blotov, arrived on Kodiak Island. He was followed over the next century and a half by many other Russian Orthodox priests and monks. Russian Orthodoxy became and has remained the religion of most Unangan and Alutiiq people, whose ancestors were converted by the mid-eighteenth century.

*Comments*

Like the fur trade, the introduction of Christianity to Alaska brought about a huge change in Native cultures. Many people converted after a disastrous smallpox epidemic of 1838-39, when only those who were vaccinated by priests or Russian merchants survived. Russian Orthodox priests were unusual among Christian missionaries in Alaska, however, in that they believed that the converts should worship in their own languages. They set about translating the Bible and prayer books into various Native languages, and trained generations of Native communicants to be literate.

---

*Card 9*

1802-04 A.D.

The Russians attempted to establish a trading post at Sitka, within Tlingit homeland. The Kiksadi clan repulsed the Russians at first, but they were unable to keep them away when they returned two years later. The Russians negotiated a settlement and built a palisaded fort, from which they conducted trade operations with the Tlingits.

*Comments*

As the fur supplies became depleted in the Aleutian Islands and Southcentral Alaska, the Russians moved south and east. The two Battles of Sitka are important in history because they established a different relationship between the Tlingits and Russians than had been obtained with the Aleuts. Tlingits were never a subjugated people; rather, most (with the exception of orphans, house servants, and industrial workers) retained a degree of autonomy and status as trading partners, rather than employees. Still, it would be a mistake to think that the Tlingits were the only Natives who rebelled against the Russians. There was a two-year rebellion staged by a confederation of Aleuts in 1763-64 when Russian ships were burned and sailors were killed. In the end, however, the Russians overpowered the Aleuts, confiscated their weapons, and subjugated them more harshly than in the past.

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*Card 10*

1821-1867 A.D.

This is the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> charters of the Russian-American Company, marked by the coming of age of the first generation of Creoles (children of Russian fathers and Aleut, Alutiiq, Yup'ik, Tlingit, or Dena'ina mothers). Many were educated at company expense in Sitka, Kodiak, or Russia to be priests, tradesmen, navigators, teachers, or naval officers. These Creoles largely ran the affairs of the company.

*Comments*

The Russian-American Company began in Alaska as one of many fur trading companies. By 1799, however, it had won over the crown of Russian and arranged to be named the sole business with the authority to trade in Russian America (Alaska) under provisions of its first charter. At the same time, it became a quasi-government: the managers of the company were also named colonial governors, a handy way for the Russians to rule without expending time and effort. Because so few Russians actually resided in Alaska, the company had an active policy of encouraging marriage between Russian men and Alaska Native women so that their children could become the company's work force. The plan worked admirably.

---

*Card 11*

1830s A.D.

A smallpox epidemic swept throughout Russian America, as a result of contact with Europeans. Entire villages were wiped out. This was followed by many epidemics over the years, many of which decimated villages of their elders, thus disrupting the transmission of culture and history.

*Comments*

As mentioned above, epidemics also led to the acceptance by Alaska Natives of Christianity, as well as other aspects of Russian culture. This occurred because so many elders and mothers died, leaving no one to train the children or make important decisions for the communities.

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*Card 12*

1867 A.D.

This year, the U.S. purchased the Russian holdings in Alaska from the Russians. Russia did not claim title to the bulk of Alaska's land, nor to the land occupied by Native people, so it is inaccurate to say that the U.S. purchased all of Alaska under the Treaty of Cession.

*Comments*

The Treaty of Cession was very explicit about what part of Alaska Russia owned, and therefore what part it was selling to the United States. Unfortunately, this "fine print" was not well understood, and it was not until the passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971 that the repercussions were fully understood. Arnold's book *Alaska Native Land Claims*, as well as the [www.alaskool.org](http://www.alaskool.org) web site, contain excellent discussions of this complex issue.

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*Card 13*

1879 A.D.

The canned salmon industry began in Klawock in Southeast Alaska. The industry grew to a highly mechanized business that eventually destroyed whole runs of salmon. It was a politically powerful industry with little regard for subsistence needs of Southeastern Natives.

*Comments*

Canneries soon followed in other parts of Southeast Alaska, on Kodiak Island, the Alaska Peninsula, and Bristol Bay. In each case the primary interests were owned by outsiders who had neither knowledge of nor interest in how the industry affected subsistence practices of indigenous people. Furthermore, for many years the canneries refused to hire Native workers, importing instead seasonal Chinese cannery workers and hiring immigrant Scandinavian fishermen. It was not until statehood (1959) that the fish traps that had captured entire runs of salmon were outlawed.

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*Card 14*

1880 A.D.

Gold is discovered in Juneau, bringing thousands of people from the United States to the territory. This rush was followed by a series of others, including the Klondike, Nome, Fairbanks and the Interior over the next quarter century. This era heralded the first direct contacts many Natives had with outsiders.

*Comments*

The various gold rushes in Alaska and western Canada were important for two reasons: they brought to a head the question of private land ownership (there had previously been no provisions for individuals to own land or mining claims, and for many years Natives were prohibited from both), and they were the occasion for the first large influx of non-Natives to the Territory. For the first time, Alaska Natives could not ignore the culture and influences of the United States.

---

*Card 15*

1884 A.D.

Civil government was created in Alaska this year through the Organic Act. This arranged for a system to protect the possessory rights of both Natives and non-Natives to the lands they occupied. Before this date, the military had kept order in the territory.

*Comments*

As mentioned above, with the discovery of gold in the Territory, pressure was put on Congress to deal with ways to allow individuals to own land and mining claims. With more white people moving in, there was also a demand for education, so the Organic Act also established an educational system. There had been abuses of military force and several instances of clashes between the Navy and Tlingits before civil government was established and the office of Territorial Governor (a man appointed from Washington, D.C.) was established.

---

*Card 16*

1906 A.D.

The Alaska Native Allotment Act gave Alaska Natives the right to choose up to 160 acres of land for occupation or use. The act represented a move in the US Congress to turn Native Americans into agriculturalists, in the hopes that they would assimilate into the European-inspired culture of white Americans.

*Comments*

The history of Indian-white relationships in the United States has been a see-saw between two opposite ideals: containing the Indians on reservations so they wouldn't bother the whites, or assimilating them into American society so they wouldn't be a separate class. The problem was that from the nation's establishment, Indian tribes had been recognized as sovereign dependent nations within the United States. The Alaska Native Allotment Act was welcomed by many Natives because it established their rights to lands their families had traditionally used.

---

*Card 17*

1912 A.D.

The Alaska Native Brotherhood was established by Tlingits, Haidas, and Tsimshians in Southeast Alaska. Its goals included the education and elevation of Natives to full and equal citizenship and economic equity.

*Comments*

The formation of ANB fit with the assimilationist policy mentioned above. Southeast Natives saw that if they were to have any say in their future they would have to become educated citizens. They therefore put on a major literacy and English-language push, operating according to Roberts Rules of Order. At the same time, in their homes, the people continued their subsistence pursuits and many of their cultural practices.

---

*Card 18*

1924 A.D.

Alaska Natives become U.S. citizens. This was also the year when the first Native legislator, Tlingit lawyer William Paul, Sr., was voted into the Alaska Territorial Legislature, largely as a result of a drive for voter registration among Alaska Natives, led by the Alaska Native Brotherhood.

*Comments*

In 1924, the U.S. Congress adopted the Citizenship Act which conferred citizenship on all Native Americans. However, an earlier act, the Dawes Act, provided that an Indian who had “severed tribal relationships and adopted the habits of civilization” could become a citizen, and it was under this provision that some Tlingits voted before 1924, placing William Paul, Sr. in the Territory Legislature.

---

*Card 19*

1936 A.D.

The Indian Reorganization Act was extended to Alaska. Six reserves, 66 Alaska Native villages, and two regional Native entities were organized. One of its legacies was the issue of whether IRA entities have the same rights, powers, and immunities as recognized tribes in the contiguous 48 states.

*Comments*

It is from this act that Alaska’s IRA Councils were established. Many villages have IRA councils, which are considered tribal governments, as well as village corporations, village governments chartered under the state of Alaska, and traditional councils.

---

*Card 20*

1940 A.D.

Alaska’s population is no longer primarily Native. This year, the balance shifted to non-Native majority. Today Alaska Natives represent about 19% of the total.

*Comments*

The increase in the non-Native population of Alaska up to 1940 was the result of gradual immigration of farmers (who came as part of the the Matanuska-Susitna Agricultural Colony experiment as part of the New Deal), commercial fishermen, miners, and government workers. In addition, though the number of service men and women increased even more during World War II, the years immediately before 1940 also saw an increase in the number moving to the Territory.

---

*Card 21*

1942 A.D.

Japan bombs Dutch Harbor and Aleuts are evacuated to abandoned fishing camps in Southeast Alaska. During the internment, the Aleuts were not provided with adequate housing, sanitation, health care, or food. Many died. When they returned home to the islands, many of their homes had been destroyed after being occupied by the U.S. military.

*Comments*

An excellent film called *Aleut Evacuation*, produced by the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, details the hardships faced by Aleutian Islanders and Pribilovians during the war. It also provides good general information on the war in the Aleutians.

---

*Card 22*

1945 A.D.

The Anti-Discrimination Act passed in Alaska. A heavy lobbying and education effort by the Alaska Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood, culminating in an emotional and eloquent speech before the territorial senate by Elizabeth Peratrovich, resulted in the passing of this landmark bill.

*Comments*

The Alaska State Legislature has named February 16 Elizabeth and Roy Peratrovich Day in honor of their efforts to bring this legislation about. A good biography of these two Tlingit leaders can be found in *Haa Kuusteeyi: Tlingit Life Stories* by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer (1994).

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*Card 23*

1959 A.D.

Alaska becomes a state. One effect on Alaska Natives was that the state constitution guaranteed every Alaskan an equal right to harvest fish and game regardless of whether for subsistence, commercial, or sport purposes, and regardless of residence. This year the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska also won a lawsuit providing them with some monetary compensation for land taken by the federal government to form the Tongass National Forest.

*Comments*

The Statehood Act later fell out of compliance with federal law (which always has precedence over state laws), which allowed for rural preference of subsistence harvests or fish and game. Alaska's legislature is still attempting to deal with this conflict. Another provision of the Statehood Act was the outlawing of fish traps. The Tlingit and Haida case against Tongass National Forest had dragged on for 30 years. It was a landmark decision, because it acknowledged that the government should compensate Natives for the 16 million acres taken, just as occurs when the land of non-Natives is taken under the right of eminent domain.

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*Card 24*

1971 A.D.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is passed to settle land claims and develop economic engines for Alaska Native economies. As a result of the act, 13 regional corporations and over 200 village corporations were established. ANCSA corporations were recognized as tribes for statutory purposes. This ended the Department of the Interior's trustee duty to former reserve lands in Alaska.

*Comments*

The web site [www.alaskool.org](http://www.alaskool.org) has an excellent and comprehensive curriculum and discussion of ANCSA.

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*Card 25*

1980 A.D.

The Alaska National Interest Land and Conservation Act, ANILCA, passed the U.S. Congress. This act sets aside wilderness areas and provides for the protection of subsistence rights in rural parts of the state.

*Comments*

As mentioned above, the 1980 ANILCA introduced a federal provision that is in conflict with the Alaska State Constitution about subsistence rights.

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*Card 26*

1990 A.D.

Federal management of game began this year, in response to the state's noncompliance with the subsistence clauses in ANILCA. Federal management of subsistence fisheries and navigable waters began in 1999 as a result of the Katie John case.

*Comments*

As of this writing, subsistence fisheries and navigable waters remain under federal management. For more information on the Katie John case, refer to the AFN web site, [www.nativefederation.org](http://www.nativefederation.org).

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April 17, 2003

Dear Student:

As a participant in the Sister School Exchange, you know that the purpose of the program is (1) to build understanding and knowledge about rural Alaska residents and the issues they face and (2) to promote a statewide sense of community as a means to begin healing social, political, cultural, and economic divisions that have grown between urban and rural Alaskans. The Alaska Humanities Forum has asked the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the University of Alaska to evaluate the implementation of the Sister School Exchange. We need your help to do this evaluation. We want to know your thoughts and perceptions of rural and urban Alaska prior to your participation in the program.

Today, we have a few brief questions about your knowledge of, attitude toward, and opinion of rural and urban Alaska. We are asking similar questions of both rural and urban students. After your school exchange visit, we will have a final set of questions assessing your preparation, what you learned, and your overall assessment of the program.

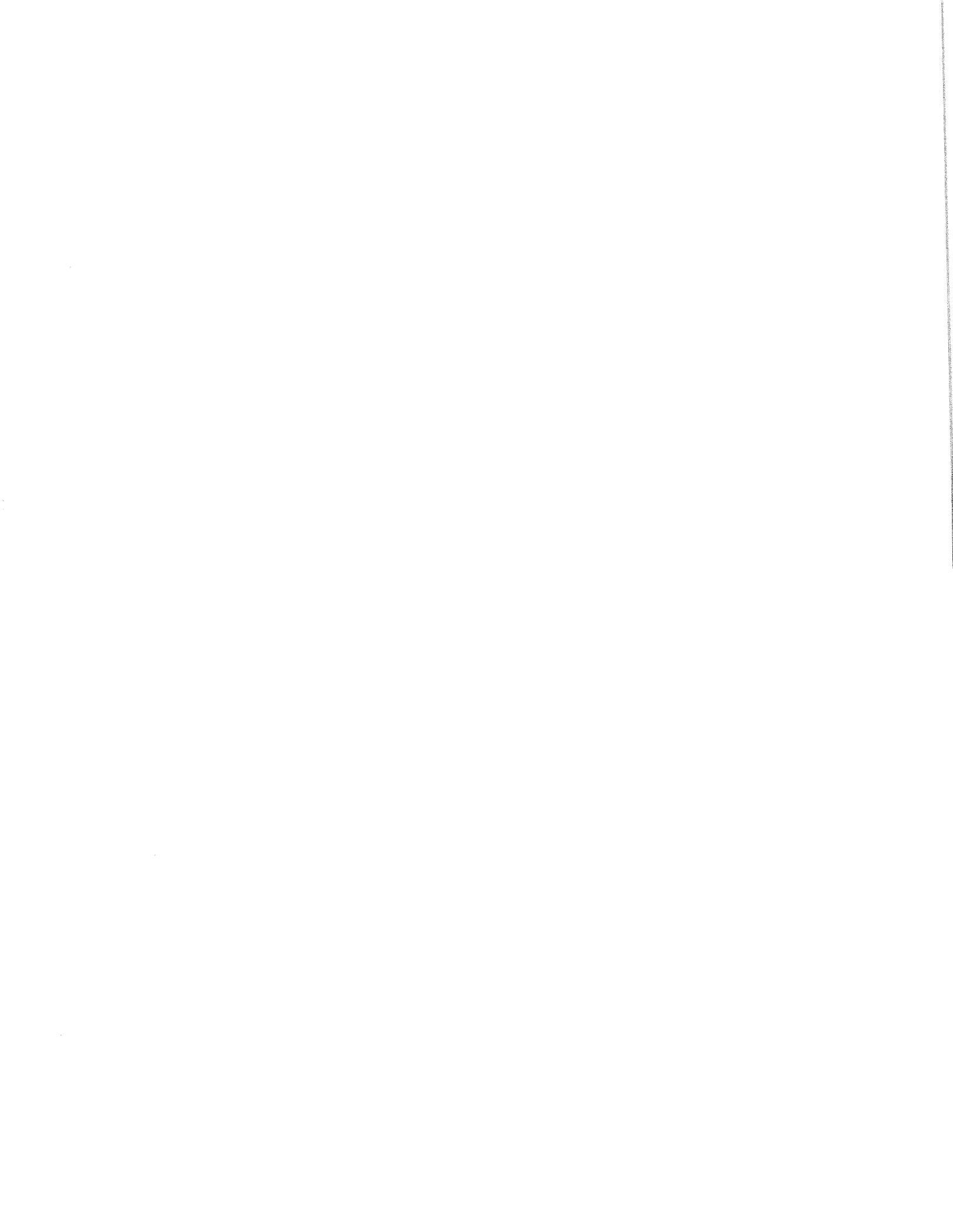
Here are some things to remember as you answer the questions.

1. Your answers will be kept confidential. We will assign a number to your questionnaire, but not your name or phone number. We will not put your name with your answers.
2. This survey is voluntary. It is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. Please be as honest as you can and answer the questions based on how you think and feel.
3. In the final report your answers will be used only in combination with the answers of others; this way no individual can be identified.

This questionnaire will take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Before you begin, please read and sign the youth consent form on the front of the questionnaire and have your parents read and sign the parent consent form. Please return your completed questionnaire to your teacher. If you have any questions, please contact me using the information below.

Sincerely,

Rosylnd Frazier, Research Associate  
(907) 786-7721 phone  
[anrrf@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:anrrf@uaa.alaska.edu) email



**Sister School Exchange**  
**SPONSOR: Alaska Humanities Forum**  
**Youth (15-17 years old) Assent Form**

**Researcher:**

Rosylind Frazier, Research Associate  
Institute of Social and Economic Research  
University of Alaska Anchorage 99508  
(907) 786-7710

**Description:**

The Alaska Humanities Forum contracted with the Institute of Social and Economic Research to evaluate how well the forum's Sister School Exchange will achieve its purpose in 2003. The Alaska Humanities Forum makes the Sister School Exchange possible. The program is intended to build understanding and a statewide sense of community by bringing urban students to rural Alaska, and rural students to urban Alaska, to learn about each other's cultures. It will continue through 2004.

You are being asked to participate in a program evaluation. The pre- and post- visit questionnaires will take about 15 - 20 minutes each to complete.

**Confidentiality**

Each person completing the questionnaire will be given an identification number, and this number will be placed on the questionnaire. The identification numbers and personal identifiers are accessible only by the researcher and the Institutional Review Board at UAA. At the end of the study all personal identifiers will be destroyed. Your name will not be attached to any reports or publications describing the results of this study.

**Benefits**

The results of this study will benefit the development and implementation of the Sister School Exchange. There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study.

**Risks**

You may consider some of these questions to be of a sensitive nature and they may make you feel uncomfortable. There are no other known risks.

**Voluntary Nature of Participation**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may stop at any time and are not required to answer any questions. No adverse effect will result if you choose not to answer any of the questions. However, we do encourage you to answer all of them if at all possible.

**Contact People**

If you have any questions about this study, please call me at the number above. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Brian Saylor, Office of Academic Affairs at the University of Alaska Anchorage at (907) 786-1921.

**Reporting Burden**

Reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30-45 minutes per person, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing, and reviewing the reported information.

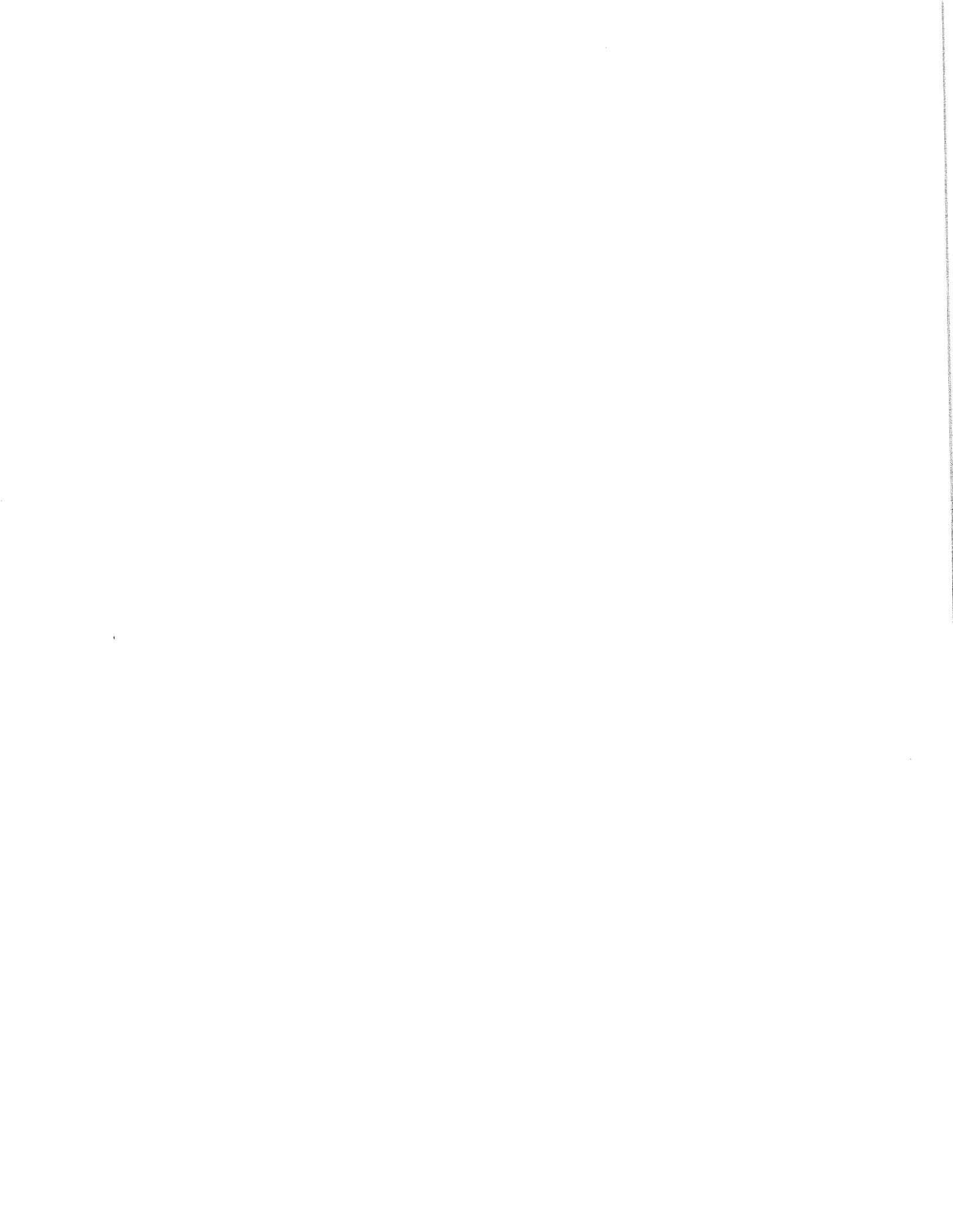
**Signature**

Your signature below means that you have read the information above and agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them at any time during the study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

**A copy of this consent form is enclosed for you to keep.**



**Sister School Exchange**  
**SPONSOR: Alaska Humanities Forum**  
**Parent/Guardian Consent Form for Youth Respondent**

**Researcher:**

Rosyland Frazier, Research Associate  
Institute of Social and Economic Research  
University of Alaska Anchorage 99508  
(907) 786-7710

**Description:**

The Alaska Humanities Forum contracted with the Institute of Social and Economic Research to evaluate how well the forum's Sister School Exchange will achieve its purpose in 2003. The Alaska Humanities Forum makes the Sister School Exchange possible. The program is intended to build understanding and a statewide sense of community by bringing urban students to rural Alaska, and rural students to urban Alaska, to learn about each other's cultures. It will continue through 2004.

You are being asked to give your consent for your 15-17-year-old child to participate in a program evaluation of the Sister School Exchange. If you agree that your child can complete the pre-visit questionnaire, we will also ask your child to participate in a post-visit questionnaire that will take place after the village visit. The pre- and post- visit questionnaires will take about 15-20 minutes each to complete.

**Confidentiality**

Your child's responses to the questionnaire will be confidential, as his or her name, address, nor any identifier will be attached to any of your child's responses. Each person completing the questionnaire will be given an identification number, and this number will be placed on the questionnaire. The identification numbers and personal identifiers are accessible only by the researcher and the Institutional Review Board at UAA. At the end of the study all personal identifiers will be destroyed. Your child's name will not be attached to any reports or publications describing the results of this study.

**Benefits**

The results of this study will benefit the development and implementation of the Sister School Exchange. There will be no direct benefit to your child from participating in this study.

**Risks**

You may consider some of these questions to be of a sensitive nature and they may make you feel uncomfortable. There are no other known risks.

**Voluntary Nature of Participation**

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may stop at any time and is not required to answer any questions. No adverse effect will result if you choose not to answer any of the questions. However, we do encourage you to answer all of them if at all possible.

**Contact People**

If you have any questions about this study, please call me at the number above. If you have any questions about your child's rights as a research subject, please contact Brian Saylor, Office of Academic Affairs at the University of Alaska Anchorage at (907) 786-1921.

**Reporting Burden**

Reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30-45 minutes per person, including the time for reviewing instructions, completing, and reviewing the reported information.

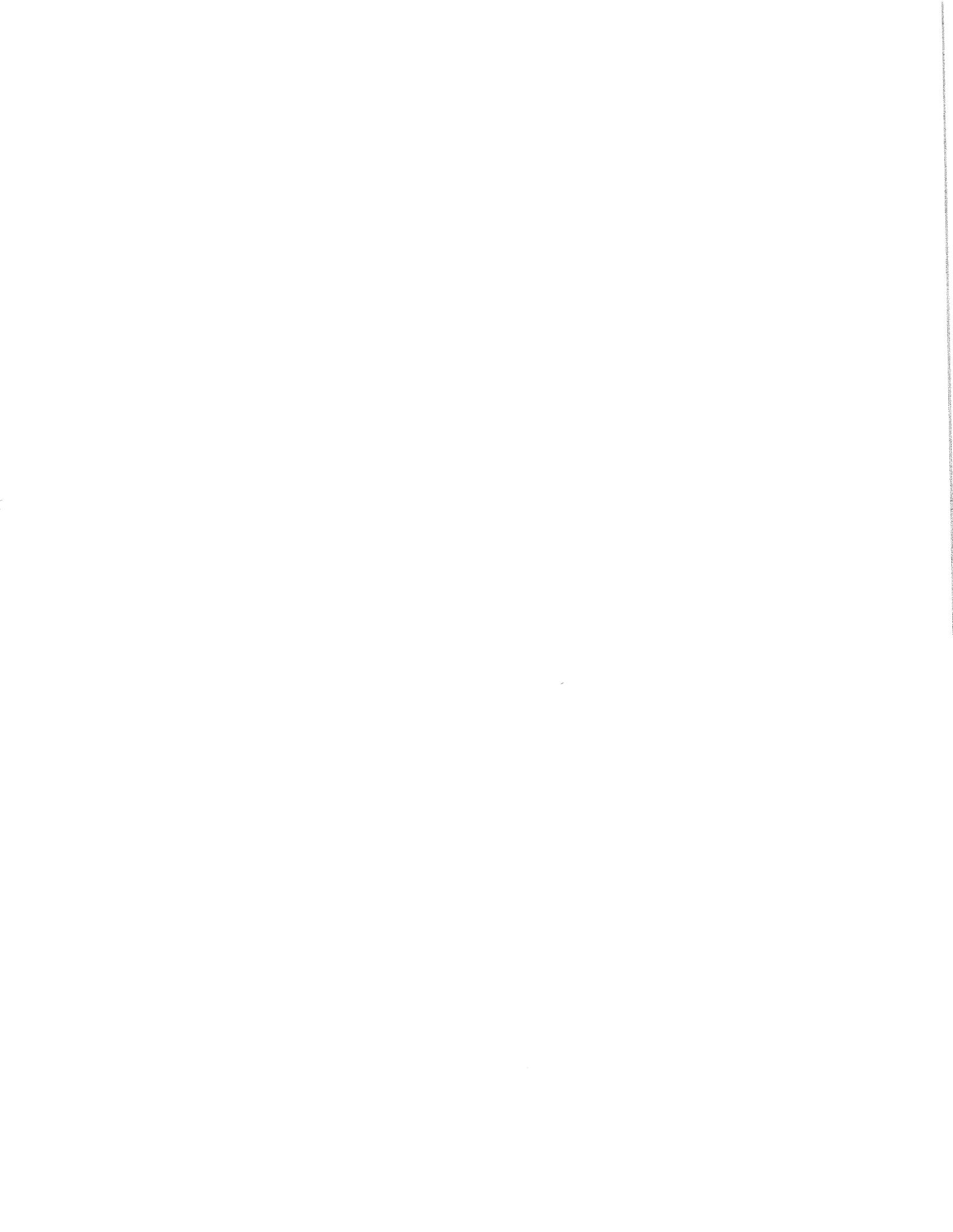
**Signature**

Your signature below means that you have read the information above and agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them at any time during the study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name of Youth \_\_\_\_\_

**A copy of this consent form is enclosed for you to keep.**





We would like to know about your opinion on different aspects of urban and rural Alaska culture. What is your opinion of each?

Now, thinking about **URBAN** Alaska . . .

Now, thinking about **RURAL** Alaska

What is your opinion of . . .					What is your opinion of . . .					
<i>Please respond on a scale from 1=highly negative to 5=highly positive</i>					<i>Please respond on a scale from 1=highly negative to 5=highly positive</i>					
1 highly negative	2 negative	3 neutral	4 positive	5 highly positive		1 highly negative	2 negative	3 neutral	4 positive	5 highly positive
					Effectiveness of middle and high school education					
					Effectiveness of informal, out-of-school education					
					Effectiveness of local community government					
					Television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. that are available					
					How new residents to the community are treated					
					How residents get the food they need? (purchase, hunt, fish, gather, trade, share, etc.)					
					How family members relate to one another					
					Customs and traditions (including religion and spiritual beliefs)					
					Availability, accessibility, and diversity of cultural life (art, dance, music, drama, literature)					
					Availability, accessibility, and diversity of sports, leisure/recreational activities					

Comments:

Please answer the following questions.

**Alaska Native Worldview**

1. Which of the following best captures a key part of the Alaska Native worldview?  
Mark only one.
  - a. Humans and animals are distinct creatures and should be viewed separately from their environment.
  - b. The earth and the creatures of the earth were created to serve humans.
  - c. Humans, the land, and all creatures are part of an indivisible world – what happens to any of these affects the others.
  
2. What are some of the ways that game can be managed/regulated? Mark all that apply.
  - a. licensing
  - b. permits
  - c. designated openings and closings
  - d. hunting and fishing regulations
  - e. rural designations
  
3. Alaskans harvest more of what than the average American buys from the grocery store?
  - a. meat and fish
  - b. berries
  - c. eggs
  
4. Traditional rural Alaskans' diet is quite different from the diet of urban Alaskans because it is higher in which of the following?
  - a. protein
  - b. fat
  - c. sugar
  
5. In the Katie John case, federal regulation was expanded to most navigable waters as well as federal lands. Thinking about the urban/rural divide, this case is important to which issue?
  - a. subsistence
  - b. education
  - c. health
  - d. public safety
  - e. governance and sovereignty
  - f. economic survival and development

### **Educational Issues**

6. Education is a concern of people around the world because it is seen as a path to a better future and as a way to encourage economic growth. What are some of the differences in education between rural and urban Alaska? Mark all that apply.
- a. the amount of money spent per student
  - b. facility maintenance and operation
  - c. mainstream education and its ability to meet the needs of the community and prepare students for transition to college
  - d. teacher turnover
7. Please complete this sentence. Almost half of the cost of schools in urban Alaska are paid for through . . . Mark only one.
- a. Income tax
  - b. Federal Funds
  - c. Sales tax on purchases
  - d. Tax on local property such as homes, businesses, etc.
8. Almost all of the cost of schools in rural Alaska are paid through . . .
- a. State Funds
  - b. Federal Funds
  - c. Sales tax on purchases
  - d. Tax on local property such as homes, businesses, etc.

### **Health Issues**

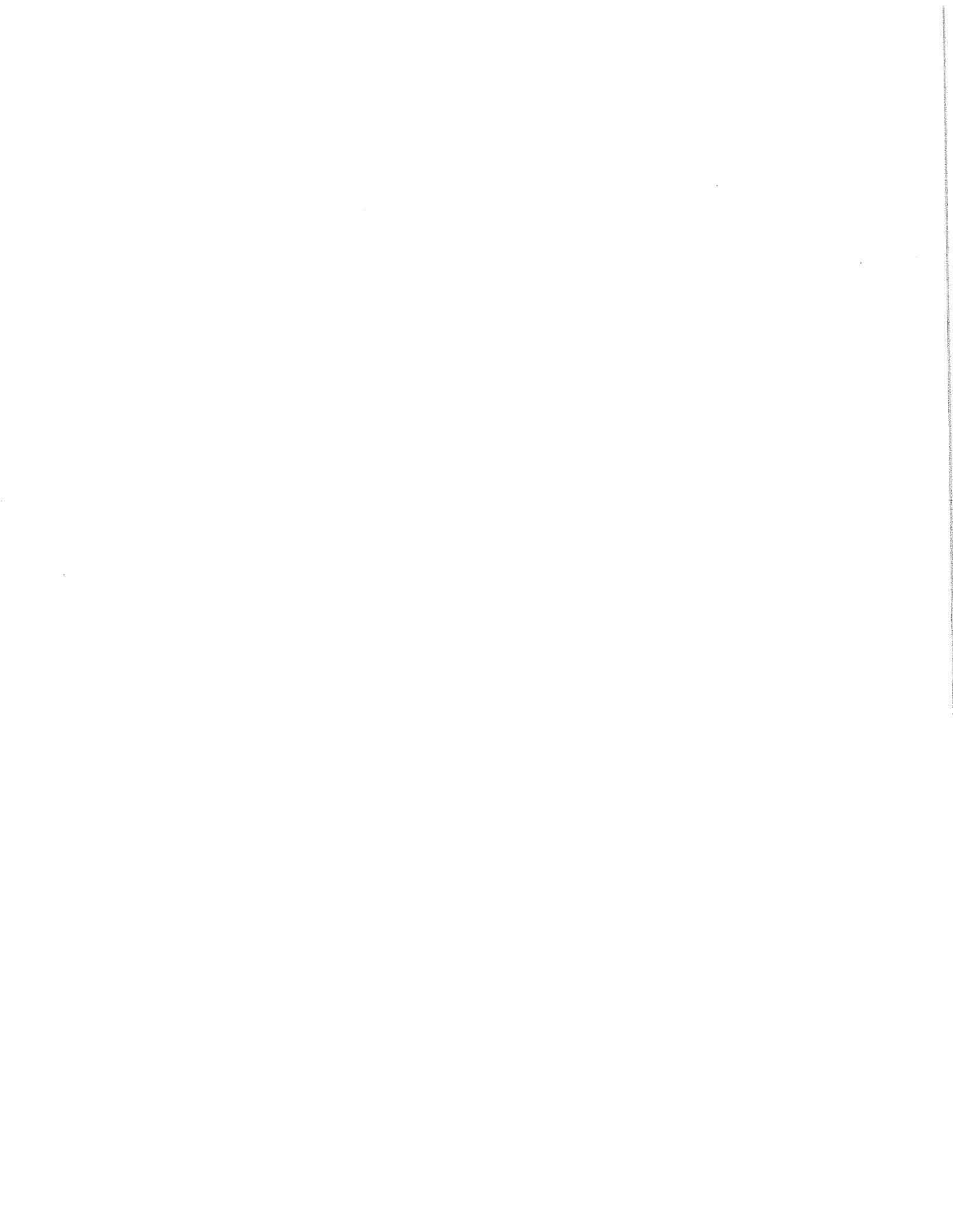
9. Sanitation in rural Alaska is substandard because many people lack flush toilets
- True                  False
10. High construction and operating cost for sewer and water systems is a major problem in rural Alaska.
- True                  False

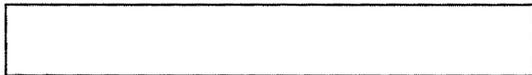
### **Governance and Sovereignty Issues**

11. Tribal governments in rural Alaska are recognized political organizations.
- True                  False
12. Some communities in Alaska have both a municipal government and a tribal government.
- True                  False

**Economic Survival and Development Issues**

13. Urban Alaska relies predominately on a cash income economy?
- True                  False
14. Rural Alaska relies predominately on a cash income economy?
- True                  False
15. A “mixed economy “ is a term that is used in Alaska to describe which of the following
- a. an economy that has a wide and varied diversity of industries.
  - b. an economy that has a mixture of cash and subsistence
  - c. an economy that has a number of state and federal employees





## Summary of Pre-Visit Survey of Students for Sister School Exchange

### 1. Culture

We would like to know about your interest in different aspects of urban and rural Alaska culture. How much do you currently know about the following?

Thinking about **URBAN** Alaska . . .

Thinking about **RURAL** Alaska

How much do you know about . . .						How much do you know about				
Please respond on a scale from <i>1=no knowledge to 5=extensive knowledge</i>						Please respond on a scale from <i>1=no knowledge to 5=extensive knowledge</i>				
1 none	2 a little	3 some	4 a lot	5 extensive		1 none	2 a little	3 some	4 a lot	5 extensive
			2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	What schools are like?	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)			
1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)				Informal, out-of-school education?	3 (100%)				
	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)			How communities are governed?	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)			
		3 (100%)			Attitudes of residents toward rural residents?					
					Attitudes of residents toward urban residents?	3 (100%)				
		3 (100%)			What the most important political issues are?	3 (100%)				
	1 (33.3%)		2 (66.7%)		How new residents to areas are treated?	3 (100%)				
		2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)		How residents earn money?	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)			
		3 (100%)			How residents get the food they need?		2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)		
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		How family members relate to one another?	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)		
	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)		Customs and traditions (including western religion and traditional spiritual beliefs)?	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)			
	1 (33.3%)		2 (66.7%)		Cultural life (art, dance, music, drama, movies, literature)?	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)			
		2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)		Sports, leisure/recreational activities?		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		
		1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	Social problems (i.e. substance abuse, domestic violence, etc.)?	2 (66.7%)		1 (33.3%)		

Comments: The urban students provided no comments.

We would like to know about your opinion on different aspects of urban and rural Alaska culture. What is your opinion of each?

Now, thinking about **URBAN** Alaska . . .

Now, thinking about **RURAL** Alaska

<b>What is your opinion of . .</b>					<b>What is your opinion of . . .</b>					
Please respond on a scale from <i>1=highly negative to 5=highly positive</i>					Please respond on a scale from <i>1=highly negative to 5=highly positive</i>					
1 highly negative	2 negative	3 neutral	4 positive	5 highly positive		1 highly negative	2 negative	3 neutral	4 positive	5 highly positive
			2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	Effectiveness of middle and high school education			3 (100%)		
		2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)		Effectiveness of informal, out-of-school education			3 (100%)		
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		Effectiveness of local community government			3 (100%)		
			3 (100%)		Television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. that are available			2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	
		3 (100%)			How new residents to the community are treated			3 (100%)		
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		How residents get the food they need? (purchase, hunt, fish, gather, trade, share, etc.)		1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		How family members relate to one another			2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		Customs and traditions (including religion and spiritual beliefs)			2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)	
			3 (100%)		Availability, accessibility, and diversity of cultural life (art, dance, music, drama, literature)		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		
		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)		Availability, accessibility, and diversity of sports, leisure/recreational activities			3 (100%)		

Comments: The urban students provided no comments.

The number and percentage with the correct response is shown with each question.

Please answer the following questions.

**Alaska Native Worldview**

1. *Which of the following best captures a key part of the Alaska Native worldview? Mark only one.*
  - a. Humans and animals are distinct creatures and should be viewed separately from their environment.
  - b. The earth and the creatures of the earth were created to serve humans.
  - c. (2 – 66.7%) Humans, the land, and all creatures are part of an indivisible world – what happens to any of these affects the others.
2. *What are some of the ways that game can be managed/regulated? Mark all that apply.*
  - a. (2 – 66.7%) licensing
  - b. (2 – 66.7%) permits
  - c. (1 – 33.3%) designated openings and closings
  - d. (2 – 66.7%) hunting and fishing regulations
  - e. (1 – 33.3%) rural designations
3. *Alaskans harvest more of what than the average American buys from the grocery store?*
  - a. (0 – 0.00%) meat and fish
  - b. berries
  - c. eggs
4. *Traditional rural Alaskans' diet is quite different from the diet of urban Alaskans because it is higher in which of the following?*
  - a. (3 – 100%) protein
  - b. fat
  - c. sugar
5. *In the Katie John case, federal regulation was expanded to most navigable waters as well as federal lands. Thinking about the urban/rural divide, this case is important to which issue?*
  - a. (2 – 66.7%) subsistence
  - b. education
  - c. health
  - d. public safety
  - e. governance and sovereignty
  - f. economic survival and development



**Economic Survival and Development Issues**

13. Urban Alaska relies predominately on a cash income economy?

(3 – 100%) True False

14. Rural Alaska relies predominately on a cash income economy?

True (3 – 100%) False

15. A “mixed economy“ is a term that is used in Alaska to describe which of the following

- a. an economy that has a wide and varied diversity of industries.
- b. (3 – 100%) an economy that has a mixture of cash and subsistence
- c. an economy that has a number of state and federal employees

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM MR. STEIN KALTAG SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Every person in Kaltag with whom I have spoken about the Sister School Exchange experience has been enthusiastically positive.

Irene Bowie, our Principal, stated: "I'm just so happy about it! It was far better than I thought it would be, and I think everyone gained a lot from it." I also invited each participant to offer suggestions for next year's program, and I am enclosing their responses:

Kaltag host parents:

1. Have the urban students come to Kaltag earlier in the year when the snow conditions are more favorable for snow machine travel. Also, if possible, choose a visitation time that coincides with a cultural celebration taking place in the village. (The Iditarod race is not considered cultural.)
2. When the urban exchange students visit Kaltag, provide more time for them to be with their host families on an informal basis. (The host parents genuinely valued their time with their guests and all were sorry to see them leave. Perhaps adding an extra day on the weekend would help.)
3. Allow more unstructured time for the youth of both communities to mingle in Kaltag.

Kaltag Sister School Exchange students:

1. Before leaving Kaltag, practice the steps of meeting new people, carrying on conversations with them, and befriending them.
2. Bring some schoolwork from Kaltag in case one or more of the urban classes are too advanced to comprehend. For example, one Kaltag student this year was placed in a second semester Spanish class but had no prior exposure to the language. (However, I think the student benefited from just observing in that class because now she is trying on her own to speak and read Spanish!)
3. Be willing to try new things. Go with an open mind.
4. Be willing to take risks with personal comfort zones in order to get to know new people.
5. Stay alert so you will not get lost.
6. Face your fears.
7. Place students individually in urban homes rather than putting two with one family because rural students are likely to focus more on each other than on the new opportunities around them.
8. Budget your money so that you do not run out early in your exchange visit.

9. Bring a camera.

10. Go with the expectation of learning a lot and having a great time!

In addition to the suggestions we talked about previously, it also might be helpful for rural students to:

1. Practice giving speeches in their regular classes because urban teachers may request visiting students to share their life experiences or participate in oral class assignments at the sister school.

2. Learn city map-reading skills in advance of their trip.

Terry Stein :

. . . I am thankful for the opportunity to participate in the pilot Sister School Exchange program and for the first-hand experience in Anchorage with the students. . You have helped make the work light and the rewards many, and if you should need any kind of recommendation, I would be happy to tell anyone of your excellent work.

## **My Week at West High School**

For the second year in a row, I got selected to attend the Alaska Humanities Forum Student Exchange Program, and fortunately, for the second straight time, I had a wonderful family to live with while I was in Anchorage. This program offers an outstanding opportunity to view life in the world outside of Kaltag. I had a chance to experience schooling, transportation, recreation, and daily routine in a large city.

The striking thing about West High School is the time classes begin and the time students go to lunch. The school day starts at 7:30 a.m. and lunchtime is 10:30 a.m. The average class size is as large as Kaltag's high school and junior high put together. The West High bell rings twice to warn students to get to class. The hallway is monitored by security officers. The cafeteria has numerous fast food business where we could purchase lunch. In Kaltag, there are no warning bells, security people, or school lunch program. West High discipline is definitely more strict than at Kaltag School.

One class I attended at West High was in the auditorium where a number of people performed stunts and acting. I have never seen this kind of skill displayed before. Also, I had a very cool shadow to guide me around the school. There are 7.5 times as many students at West High as there people in all of Kaltag, and I really relied on her guidance.

My host family was special. They treated me like I was part of their family and made me feel like they were glad to have me. My host dad has a great sense of humor, and I got along really fast with him. They are all easy to talk with and we went to a lot of interesting places together. . . . , the son who is in high school, and I have talked about attending the same college. I hope I get a chance to see them again soon. We are still keeping in touch by e-mailing and calling. I also was able to contact my host family who was so good to me at last year's exchange program.

I toured the chocolate factory in Anchorage, and it was the first time I have ever seen the various machines that mass-produce chocolate candy. Job Corps is another tour we went on, and I was impressed to the point that I will consider applying there after I graduate from high school. The third tour was a first-hand inspection of the Dimond Mall bowling alley were my right arm held up for three games.

I recommend that any student who gets the chance to participate in the student exchange program go with an open mind. Expect to learn a lot and have a great time. I made at least 10 new friends at West High School and have a second family in Anchorage that I will never forget.

## **Exchange Student Program**

I was one of the four students from Kaltag School who participated in the Alaska Humanities Forum sister School Exchange this spring. One of my responsibilities was to attend West High School which begins classes at 7:30 a.m. daily. I had to arrive at 6:30 a. m. because my host parents are teachers at West High. Lunch period at the school begins about 10:30. School starts at 9:00 a.m. in Kaltag, and we have lunch from noon to 1:00 p.m. Before school began each day, I got to use the school gym which would hold my entire school in Kaltag.

We usually changed classrooms every hour at West High. It was unnerving to enter the hallways during class changes because I wasn't sure where my next class was and I was surrounded by hundreds of noisy students, some in a hurry, some standing around. I also notice that students tended to stick together in small groups. At least I had the advantage of a helpful student shadow with whom I attended classes.

Compared to my village school, the rules at West High seemed very strict. Tardiness is watched more closely, and detention is assigned for each offense. All and all, I learned to be responsible for getting to classes on time. More multi-day assignments are required, but I feel that with effort I could be a successful student in Anchorage. As mentioned above, my host parents were teachers at West High. Each host family has their own set of rules for their exchange children, and my host parents had one basic rule, which was to be quiet after 10:00 p.m. I lived in a five-story building which had apartments all around us.

One of my favorite experiences was my visit to Big Game Alaska Wildlife Center. I actually got to see and pet all sorts of animals there. I wish to thank all the people who made the student exchange experience possible. For other high school students wishing to have this same opportunity, I suggest that you focus on good grades, school behavior, positive attitude, patience, and setting a goal for the future, and don't spend all your money the first day.

## MY TRIP TO ANCHORAGE

This year, I was chosen to go to the Rose Urban Sister School Exchange Program in Anchorage. It is a program where students from Anchorage come to Kaltag and go to school, and students from Kaltag attend classes in Anchorage for a week. The purpose is to explore each other's cultures and develop new relationships.

While we were there, I lived with a host family. They treated me like their own son. We shared life experiences and compared differences in travel, especially by boat and snow machine. They live in a large apartment building about 5 or 6 stories high with a lot of security cameras. One new experience for me was that we had to be quiet after 10:00 p.m. Because of neighbors living close by, we couldn't wash clothes or use the dishwasher in the late evenings. As we got to know each other, I became more comfortable living there.

I attended daily classes at West High School. Both of my host parents were teachers at West High School, so we arrived by 7:00 a.m., an hour and a half earlier than I usually start school. I was assigned a West High student to follow to classes. In the classes I attended, the teachers assigned more research projects and class presentations than I am used to. Other differences I noted are that in Kaltag we stay in the same room all day, but at West High we changed classes every period. The hallways during passing time were filled with more people than there are in all of Kaltag. West High also had a huge gym, at least twice the size of Kaltag's. They also had a big cafeteria where you could order food, just like a fast food place. On my last day there, we saw some guys in the hallway break dancing and spinning on their heads. It looked cool and I would like to learn to do it myself. Perhaps my favorite surprise occurred when we first arrived. The four Sister School Exchange students who had spent the previous week with us in Kaltag met us at our van with a welcome sign and big smiles.

My Kaltag group was given a tour of the Palmer Job Corps site. We saw the areas where students study various trades and their dorms. I will remember what I saw in making my plans beyond high school.

For evening and weekend relaxation, I got to go bowling for the first time ever, and I improved in each of the three games we played. We also went to H2Oasis, the indoor water park. It was really fun because there were lots of things to do like play in the huge waves and slide down the long twisting slide. I had a blast there. On Saturday, we went to the Big Game Wildlife Park where I saw some types of animals for the first time. We took a lot of pictures and we even got to pet and feed some of the animals. I actually got charged by a buffalo there. I got really scared when it ran toward me, but I was on the opposite side of the fence.

Based on my week in Anchorage, I now feel that I have a general idea how to get around in a city. This experience is valuable preparation for me because next year I may be attending school in Sitka. I also have at least one new friend with whom I may keep in touch.

I would suggest that future Rural Exchange students be separated into individual homes rather than putting two students with the same family because the rural students are likely to spend more time with each other than with the host family. Also, students should bring their own school work in case their classes at the urban school are different from their normal courses. Finally, students need to know or be willing to learn how to turn strangers into friends.

## **My Experience at West High School**

As a Kaltag School student selected to participate in the Rose Urban Rural exchange program, I attended classes for one week at West High School. While there, I lived with a wonderful host family who accepted me for who I am. In Anchorage, I had the opportunity to participate in a number of activities that were new to me.

My host family, . . . , helped me and encouraged me to stay and not get homesick. Furthermore, they helped me feel right at home everyday. They were especially thoughtful and generous to each other and me. They also took time from their normal routines to do something special with me. As part of the family, I attended a live performance of the play, "Stomp." This was the first time I've seen people making their own music using household items or just recycled items in this unique manner. As a first timer, I greatly enjoyed it with a passion. On my host mother's mom's 75th birthday, we ate together at a fancy restaurant (named "Owar"). Through the week, I gradually met almost their entire family and close friends. Furthermore, I greatly enjoyed all of them. We still keep in touch with each other by e-mail, by letters through mail, and by phone.

West High was a far larger school than I had ever attended before. For the first time, I was in school classes with different races. However, I was able to make several new friends at this school. During my last period one day, I was going to meet the Kaltag boys at the lunchroom when all the students came out into the halls, and I got separated from my shadow, . . . . About two minutes later, I accidentally ran into my host brother, . . . . Thankfully, he came to the rescue. He kindly showed me the right way to the lunchroom, which was a relief.

The boys and I were conducted on a chocolate factory tour where we saw the famous waterfall that was filled with 3400 pounds of liquefied chocolate. All of the chocolate used at the factory started as fifty-pound bars. There are a large number of different types of machines that are used to make the various candies there.

At the Big Game Alaska Wildlife Center, I actually for the first time fed a real live moose. I also got to see two black bear up close wrestling playfully with each other. This was my first time seeing bison, elk, Sitka deer, and some other animals. At the Anchorage Zoo, it also was my very first time seeing live Siberian tigers, a huge elephant, great horned owls, a huge grizzly up close, and some more animals. The coolest thing about it was that it was my first time at the zoo.

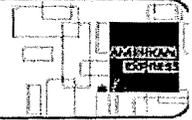
One of my favorite experiences while in Anchorage was attending my host brother's baseball game. It was very exciting for me because it was cool to

watch him and his team from West High play ball. He was the star pitcher on the winning team. (In other words, he was the best pitcher they've got.)

I felt like I learned how to be a good, well-trained ambassador during my exchange experience. I would like to recommend that future Rural Exchange students be willing to take the risk of meeting new people, be willing to try new things, stay alert so they won't get lost, face their fears, bring a camera, and HAVE FUN!!!! Overall, I benefited from this experience, and I know I will remember this.

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IN THE CLASSROOM

## Play's the Thing That Links Kids in L.A., London

**Exchange: Pupils in the two cities use Internet to jointly study theater and learn about one another.**

By KERRY MADDEN  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

June 12 2002

Before their Internet and theater exchange program began, the fourth- and fifth-graders in Los Angeles and London had some wry misconceptions about each other.

To name two: For recess in L.A., all children go to the beach to play volleyball. Some aristocratic kids in London still carry swords and write with those big feather pens.

Then along came WebPlay, a semester-long program in which children at 18 Los Angeles schools and the same number in London correspond online to learn about the others' culture and daily lives. They use that information to help write short plays set in the other city, with advice on the Internet and in person from British theater professionals. "Theater and the Internet are two of our strongest forms of communication; one is an ancient art and the other, brand new. We felt that together they could be a very powerful experience," said WebPlay's creator, Sydney Thornbury, a Los Angeles native and public school graduate who studied drama in London and worked in education there.

At El Sereno Elementary, one of the participating Los Angeles schools, fourth-grade teacher Joanne Medeiros said the exchanges open youngsters' eyes to a wider world, as well as to history, geography, computer literacy and playwriting skills.

"The students learn very fast that they have a lot more in common than they have differences," she said.

Angela Mazouzi, Medeiros' partner teacher at English Martyrs School in London, agrees: "The kids just loved it. All of a sudden, the Los Angeles children became very real to them. It was almost as if they were here with us."

During the computer exchanges, the students in each Los Angeles school are matched up with groups in London to question one another about hobbies, music, food and families. They can also refer to the WebPlay site to study photos, with sound effects, of scenes in both cities, such as L.A.'s In-N-Out Burger or the Tower Bridge on the Thames. Once written, their three-minute plays are rehearsed,

videotaped and posted on the Web site.

"With WebPlay, we can really talk to classes that are not in our states and make new friends by knowing how they feel," said El Sereno fourth-grader Seneisa Estrada. Her wish? To fly to London to meet those students face to face.

Her classmate, Arturo Guzman Jr., said: "The kids in London all have accents, but the funny thing is, they think we have accents."

The American and British students e-mail professional artists in London at the Polka Theatre with queries. Each week, someone from the Polka Theatre is featured on the Web site, and youngsters can tour the life of a costumer, designer, playwright, director or actor.

Polka Theatre actors performed an original play, "Star Gazer" by children's theater playwright Richard Shannon, in London and Los Angeles and conducted daylong workshops at each school in improvisation and playwrighting. The troupe was in Los Angeles for three weeks earlier this spring.

In both cities, groups of four or five students collaborated to create their own plays, with enough parts for everyone.

Students at English Martyrs set their plays at Venice Beach, a film studio in Hollywood, a drive-through hamburger joint and a shopping mall. El Sereno's writers used the Old Globe Theatre, Big Ben and Buckingham Palace as settings.

One El Sereno group wrote "Meeting Britney Spears," in which a giddy Prince William introduces his rock singer fiancée to Queen Elizabeth. Clearly unimpressed, the queen takes one look at the dancing American and shouts, "Guards, take her away!" Britney's response? "Hey, you're a wicked person, you know!"

On a recent morning in the El Sereno computer lab, Medeiros' students greeted WebPlay founder Thornbury by all donning black berets, her signature fashion item. She is a hands-on supervisor, coaching teachers, chauffeuring actors and even showing students how to impersonate Spears.

Thornbury and Medeiros make sure the dialogue is authentic. Special lists of British and American English words are posted, including "Diapers=Nappies, Potato Chips=crisps, French Fries=chips." One El Sereno play, "The Day the Building Was in Danger" was about how the Old Globe Theatre faced closure unless the Shakespearean troupe raised 3,000 British pounds. Thornbury, who also videotaped the plays, had to re-shoot a scene several times because one actor kept saying, "We need 3,000 dollars!" instead of "pounds."

The budget for WebPlay is about \$157,000. The majority of funding comes from British education authorities and two private British foundations, the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust and the Southwark Education Business Alliance. Each participating Los Angeles school pays \$1,000 from its arts budget, and the school district's arts and education branch provides matching grants.

Thornbury said her goal was to connect arts and technology for budding playwrights and actors. Through Oracle's Think.com, a closed site for teachers and students, WebPlay crisscrosses socioeconomic and national boundaries, she said.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Thornbury studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts and stayed in London eight more years working with schools through arts, technology and

business. She then focused on bringing WebPlay to Los Angeles, where it began last year in five schools.

Richard Alonzo, superintendent of Subdistrict F of the Los Angeles Unified School District, helped Thornbury mount El Sereno's computer lab when the program was launched. "Through a great literacy program like WebPlay, the students are able to make a person-to-person connection, write about it and then act it out. Shy kids can become stars as they meet new worlds," Alonzo said.

During the Polka Theatre's visit to Los Angeles, the troupe performed for all the WebPlay students at the Los Angeles Theatre Center and was honored at a reception humorously referred to behind the scenes as "Bangers and Mash Meets Chips and Salsa."

In a play teeming with special effects, rich characters and humor, the actors conveyed that theater has boundless possibilities. The associate director of Polka Theatre, Roman Stefanski, recalls: "It was such a joy to reach out across the pond and see the people with whom I've been communicating on the computer, not to mention the SUN, SUN, SUN of L.A.!"

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