

**Report on the Anchorage School District's  
Alaska Native Pilot Project  
at  
Willow Crest Elementary  
and Romig Middle Schools  
2006-2007**

**by**

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## Introduction

### ***“Schools are not welcoming for Alaska Natives.”***

*“By Junior High, our kids don’t feel included in the school. Sometimes it’s easier to send them to Mt. Edgecumbe or back to the village.”*

*“I feel invisible in school.”*

On September 14, 2005, the Catholic and Lutheran Alaska Native Community Organizing Ministries organized a meeting to air concerns about Alaska Native students in the Anchorage School District (ASD). The meeting was a culmination of many months of research by members of Anchorage Faith and Action–Congregations Together (AFACT), a group of 11 faith congregations that formed in 2003 to address social issues around Anchorage. More than 300, including Alaska Native parents, leaders in the Native community, Carol Comeau (Superintendent, ASD), and others gathered at Central Lutheran Church to discuss why Alaska Native students struggle in Anchorage schools, consistently performing lower on proficiency tests and graduating at lower rates than any other ethnic group in the district.

AFACT presented the results of research on Native student underachievement in the district as well as findings from visits and interviews with Native families and with educators and “experts.” AFACT estimated that while Alaska Native students make up 12% of the Anchorage School District enrollment in grades 7 through 12, they account for nearly 30% of the dropouts. Moreover, in grades 3 through 10, 42% of Alaska Native students were not proficient in language arts, and 47% of Alaska Native students were not proficient in math. The report concluded that school personnel do not understand Native cultures, and that Native parents and families do not feel comfortable or welcome in Anchorage schools. The report called for “immediate action on the part of the Anchorage School District.”

The school district immediately committed to creating a pilot project in one elementary and one middle school to attempt to address these concerns. The components of the Alaska Native Pilot Project included the following:

- Training all school staff in Alaska Native cultures and, particularly, in the communication styles of Alaska Natives.
- Intensive outreach to Alaska Native families in the school district.

In November 2005, the district selected the two schools for the pilot project—Romig Middle School and Willow Crest Elementary School. In summer 2006, AFACT approached the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) and asked us to serve as the outside evaluator for the Alaska Native Pilot project. This report presents the findings of this evaluation.

## Alaska Native Pilot Project Schools

### Romig Middle School

Romig Middle School, located on Minnesota Drive just north of Northern Lights Boulevard, served 835 students in grades 7 and 8 during the 2005-2006 school year. Its School District Report Card describes the school:

*Romig Middle School serves seventh and eighth graders. It offers the middle school model to students receiving traditional, gifted, ESL, special education, remedial and accelerated services. Romig has a Spanish Immersion program and the Anchorage School District's Highly Gifted program. We are currently piloting a Native American Program for the school district. Our mission is to provide an environment which allows students to develop to their highest potential and become productive citizens in an ever-changing, diverse society. Our science wing provides advanced study and exploration; our three computer labs and mobile labs provide technology opportunities for students. Romig is attached to West High, which allows our students to take advanced classes in math and world languages. Romig is dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment. Romig has been selected as a Social Emotional Learning Center for the district.*

White students make up just under half of Romig's enrollment; Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander students each comprise about one-sixth of the student body. Forty percent of the students are from low-income families; just under one-third have limited English proficiency; and 11 percent experience some disability. Student attendance is about average for the district—93 percent of the students attend each day. About eight percent of students are not promoted each year, and a few drop out each year (4 in the 2005/06 school year).

**Table 1. Romig Middle School Ethnicity Counts<sup>1</sup>**

Ethnicity	Enrollment, 2005/06		Standardized Test Scores, 2006 % Proficient in:			Cert. Staff
	Number	Percent	Reading	Writing	Math	
<b>Caucasian</b>	384	45%	88%	82%	77%	53
<b>AK Native/American Indian</b>	132	16%	65%	54%	52%	0
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	143	17%	78%	79%	70%	1
<b>Hispanic</b>	90	11%	60%	57%	43%	1
<b>Multi-Ethnic</b>	43	5%	70%	67%	50%	0
<b>African American</b>	55	6%	60%	57%	33%	4
<b>Disabled</b>	89	11%	33%	15%	13%	
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	238	28%	62%	59%	49%	
<b>Low Income</b>	343	40%	62%	55%	45%	
<b>Total</b>	835	100%	77%	73%	64%	

Source: Enrollment and Test scores: School Site AYP worksheet, Spring 2006; Certified Staff: Certified Staff Accounting Database, Fall, 2006

<sup>1</sup> Data from Anchorage School District Profile of Performance (2005–2006).

## **Willow Crest Elementary School**

Willow Crest Elementary School, located on Tudor Road just west of Arctic Boulevard, enrolled 370 kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade students during the 2005-2006 school year—about 75 percent of building capacity. Although white students are the largest single ethnic group, they make up only about one-third of enrollment. Alaska Native students comprise about one-quarter of the school population; Asian/Pacific Islanders, one sixth; Hispanic and multi-ethnic students are each one-tenth of enrollment; and about 4% are Black. About 20 percent of the students experience some disability, and about 35 percent have limited English proficiency. The school serves children from several homeless shelters, which contributes to a highly transient student population; and 65 percent of the school’s children live in low-income families. Student attendance is about average for the district—93 percent of the students attend each day. Typically, all students are promoted each year. The 2005-2006 *School Report Card* describes the school:

*Willow Crest is a Title I neighborhood school that serves approximately 375 students. Numerous support services and activities are provided for students and families, including bilingual education, first-grade reading tutors, 21<sup>st</sup> Century after-school tutoring, athletic opportunities, monthly family nights, and a family/school services coordinator. Willow Crest has recently implemented the Guiding Star project, a pilot initiative to enhance the educational opportunities for students who are Alaska Native.*

**Table 2. Willow Crest Elementary School Ethnicity Counts**

Ethnicity	Enrollment, 2005/06		Standardized Test Scores, 2006 % Proficient in:			Cert Staff
	Number	Percent	Reading	Writing	Math	
<b>Caucasian</b>	131	35%	79.7%	77.0%	76.7%	27
<b>AK Native/American Indian</b>	96	26%	57.4%	59.3%	53.7%	2
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander</b>	61	16%	47.2%	47.2%	52.8%	0
<b>Hispanic</b>	31	8%	56.5%	47.8%	47.8%	1
<b>Multi-Ethnic</b>	39	10%	56.3%	56.3%	43.8%	0
<b>African American</b>	16	4%	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%	1
<b>Disabled</b>	41**		25%	30%	28%	
<b>Limited English Proficient</b>	74**		51%	47%	47%	
<b>Low Income</b>	242		57%	53%	51%	
<b>Total</b>	370	100.00%	62.7%	60.8%	58.8%	

Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity: [http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/SchoolEthnicity/2006\\_School\\_Ethnicity\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/SchoolEthnicity/2006_School_Ethnicity_Report.pdf) Test scores and Disabled, LEP and Low-income enrollment: School Site AYP worksheet, Spring 2006; Certified Staff: Certified Staff Accounting Database, Fall, 2006

\*\*Disabled, Low Income, and LEP enrollment is tested population, grades 3-6 only.

## Project and Evaluation Description

ISER was initially approached to evaluate the Alaska Native Pilot Project (ANPP) by AFACT staff. The project was explained as a teacher-home-visit initiative, based on a model implemented in the Sacramento Unified School District in the 1990s. AFACT staff agreed to provide training to teachers in the two pilot project schools, and ISER committed to looking at the impact of the visits on parent attitudes toward and involvement in the school as well as at the effect of the visits on student engagement (e.g., attendance), behavior, and, eventually, academic outcomes.

However, from the school district's perspective, the ANPP included much more than home visits, and most of the educators involved did not consider the visits to be the most important aspect of this effort. School staff visited the Alaska Native Heritage Center, held reading groups around Native literature, attended in-service sessions on Alaska Native education issues, and other similar activities. They also worked with school district staff on self-assessment using a Culturally Responsive Education Continuum, which dovetails with the district's recently adopted Social and Emotional Learning standards.

In planning how to evaluate the success of the project, we considered that project activities might improve student outcomes by two routes. First, if teachers were better able to understand and communicate with their students (through better understanding of the students' cultures and the current context of their lives), their ability to target and tailor instruction to each of their students would improve—potentially resulting in improved student learning. Similarly, teachers' ability to correctly interpret student behavior (for example, making or avoiding eye contact) might improve their effectiveness at managing student and classroom behavior. Second, if students and parents felt more welcome at the school and more comfortable with the teachers, the parents should be better able both to advocate for their children and to support the schools' expectations. Measuring these changes directly would be difficult and would largely be through self-report. However, if the project did result in improved student behavior and learning, then these might be reflected in data already collected by the schools—standardized test scores to reflect learning, and attendance and discipline to reflect behavior; we also planned to review those data as well for evidence of success.

Table 3 shows the data we planned to use in the evaluation and the degree to which we were able to gather and/or compile the data. Unfortunately, it was not possible to collect much of the data we sought. Most importantly, we were not able to recruit sufficient numbers of parents who had received home visits to conduct focus groups, and instead relied on a handful of individual interviews. We also were not able to get all of the outcomes data we had hoped for, in particular, attendance and in-school suspension data. Finally, because we often were not aware of professional development activities associated with the project, we were unable to collect evaluation data on each activity, but instead relied on asking about all of the activities in the teachers' end-of-year survey. Still, we finished with sufficient data to draw some preliminary conclusions and offer some suggestions for strengthening the Anchorage School District's efforts to better serve Native students and their families.

**Table 3. Planned and Implemented Data Collection**

<b>Information Source</b>	<b>Planned Data Collection</b>	<b>Level of Implementation</b>
Teachers	Participant evaluations for each professional development activity	Partial: evaluations completed after initial training session
Teachers	Surveys: (1) after parent-teacher home visits and (2) at end of the school year	Partial: survey at end of school year
Parents	Focus Groups after the parent-teacher home visits	Partial: interviews with the few parents we were able to contact
Key Project Planners and Participants	Interviews with the following: project directors school principals ASD administrators others as appropriate	Complete
Existing Data	Attendance Grades Test scores Discipline referral data	Partial: standardized tests scores as reported for AYP; discipline data reported to School board
Other Data Sources	Evaluation materials from other project-related activities (e.g., ASD-led training, PD from outside organizations such as the Alaska Native Heritage Center).	Not implemented: unclear what, if any, other evaluation materials exist

## **Results of Data Collection**

In this section, we provide an overview of the data we collected at different times throughout the 2006-2007 school year. We draw these findings together in our summary and recommendations section.

### ***Home Visits Training***

One of the major goals of the Alaska Native Pilot Project was to make parents more comfortable and involved in their child's school. One way to do this, according to AFACT organizers, was for teachers to visit parents in their home. They based their support for a home-visit initiative on the success of a program implemented in the Sacramento Unified School District by a sister organization.

In early fall 2006, teachers and staff at both schools received training in home visits from AFACT organizers. The training, which lasted 1 to 2 hours, addressed why home visits were considered an effective means for involving Native parents, issues around how to arrange and conduct the visits, and concerns the educators had about the process. Training was conducted at Romig Middle School during an in-service day prior to the start of the 2006-07 school year on August 18 and at Willow Crest Elementary School during the regular school day on September 15.

ISER developed a short benchmark tool to evaluate the training. The instrument asked about general and specific reactions to the training session, and overall conclusions such as best part of the training, suggestions for improvement, major learning; support needed for the project to succeed; and any other comments, questions, or observations. Summaries of the responses follow; the detailed responses to these questionnaires are in the appendix.

### **Romig Middle School**

The Romig training occurred during a staff in-service before the start of the school year. School staff and administrators described the planned project; the faculty watched a video on the Alaska Native experience in Alaska schools; and AFACT staff described the home-visit process. School staff and administrators and AFACT staff discussed project details at length. Teachers had questions about the specific logistics of home visits in the middle school setting, in general, and Romig, in particular. The discussion was at times contentious, and it became clear that no one had yet thought through all of the logistical details of translating a home-visit program developed for an elementary setting into a middle school setting. The educators wanted more specific information on the practical aspects of how the program would work—such as tracking and paying for visits as well as liability issues—and more information and presentation about and by Alaska Natives. Administrators solved some of those issues on the spot, and for others, promised to research the solutions.

Out of 55 respondents to the training at Romig Middle School, about 45% found the training useful, while 14% did not think it was useful; the remainder (almost 40%) were neutral on this question. About 53% said they learned new strategies, while 20% did not feel they had learned something new. About 55% of respondents found the presentation on home visits and the discussion of power worthwhile. A little over 67% marked that they had engaged in productive dialogue about strategies to address difficulties in home visits. However, only 47% felt the training increased their understanding of the benefits of home visits with Native families, and only 44% said they knew what their next steps were with the project, and perhaps most significantly, only 24% felt they had tools to engage successfully with Native parents.

### **Willow Crest Elementary School**

At Willow Crest Elementary School, the training was provided to teachers and support staff in three 90-minute sessions. Teachers were provided substitutes to cover their classes while they attended the training. Twenty-seven respondents completed the evaluation forms at Willow Crest. In general, reactions to the training were positive: almost 78% of respondents found the presentation on home visits worthwhile. Seventy-four percent of respondents felt the training increased their understanding of the benefits of home visits with Native families, and 81% felt they had engaged in productive dialogue about strategies to address difficulties in home visits.

In contrast with Romig, 55% of the staff at Willow Crest felt they had tools to engage successfully with Native parents, but only half (52%) said they knew what their next steps were with the project.

Three educators wanted the school to introduce the visits to the parents before they contacted them, and three also wanted to make sure they had partners for the visits. A couple were interested in obtaining more information about their students' heritage and home communities.

## ***Key Informant Interviews***

ISER researchers interviewed the principals of Willow Crest Elementary (Diane Hoffbauer) and Romig Middle School (Trudy Genet), the assistant principal at Romig (Bobby Jeffs), the Director of Indian Education for the Anchorage School District (Doreen Brown), and the Executive Director of the ASD Department of Curriculum and Instructional Support (Dr. Enid Hunter). Interview topics included their vision of the Alaska Native Pilot Project; the activities that occurred this school year in support of home visits with Alaska Native families; description of the resources from ASD and others used for the pilot project; and additional proposed steps to improve Alaska Native student outcomes.

These interviews brought out the diverse views and perspectives school and district staff members have about this project. Their responses demonstrated a need for more communication and development of a shared vision about how best to serve Native students and families in the district.

The Alaska Native Pilot Project was defined in different ways by the administrators at each of the two schools and within the Anchorage School District. However, all interviewees saw home visits as one piece of a broader effort to make the staff and the schools as a whole more effective in reaching Native students and families.

At both schools, staff development activities, including the training on home visits, were held to help teachers increase their cultural sensitivity and awareness of Alaska Natives, as noted in the introduction. Romig staff also formed a steering committee to develop a continuum of activities—from connecting new students with staff who had lived in or been to the village to displays on different cultures. As the year progressed, the staff began to focus on cultural awareness activities for all students, not just for Native students.

A key event affecting the ANPP at Romig was the loss of the Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC) Program mid-year. The program had provided a comfortable social and emotional environment that supported Alaska Native students and families as well as direct educational support services. CITC staff communicated with Alaska Native parents by email, telephone, and home visits and provided educational support through tutors. Its loss left a significant gap in services, according to Romig administrators.

Willow Crest focused initially on bringing in speakers on Native cultural and educational issues as part of their staff development effort. They also had activities for students and staff such as Native dance troops. In the spring the teachers participated in training at the Alaska Native Heritage Center, and the school also had a visit to the center that included parents and students.

Willow Crest and Romig administrators acted on very different definitions of a home visit. At Romig the teachers and administrators used parent and student conferences as a form of home visits, even though these meetings took place at the school. Romig administrators also described teacher meetings with students and families around disciplinary issues as comparable to home visits. They saw the home visits as the initial activity (impetus) to organize their program of social and emotional learning.

At Willow Crest, staff envisioned home visits as meetings off the school grounds with the family of their students. They were implemented as an activity within the social and



emotional learning plan at Willow Crest. Willow Crest envisioned home visits as one activity of many they had planned for their school-level social and emotional learning plan.

Anchorage School District administrators saw the AFACT initiative as a logical continuation of efforts already underway to make the district more culturally responsive. The district had already developed a culturally responsive continuum which the schools used in a self-assessment process. This continuum is part of a focus on social and emotional learning, which the district is now piloting.

The ASD personnel encouraged the program to develop along different lines in each school. They felt it was good to give the school plenty of autonomy to develop a program that best fit their school situation.

The Anchorage School District committed to paying for teacher stipends for home visits, but otherwise did not commit additional fiscal resources for the Alaska Native Pilot Project. In order to fund staff development and other activities, both Willow Crest and Romig administrators leveraged other funding sources such as Title I funds, district Safe and Drug-Free Schools monies, and support from the district's Social and Emotional Learning initiative.

The principals and district administrators all had different ideas for strengthening the ANPP and improving Native student achievement and parent engagement. Expansion of Indian Education programs was called for by both principals; and ASD administrators focused on more overall structural changes in the school learning environment, like smaller learning communities, the integrating of all resources for the teachers, and the inclusion of community support through the integration and recognition of culturally significant activities.

## **Alaska Native Parent Interviews**

ISER initially planned to conduct focus groups with parents who had received home visits to obtain their perceptions of the outcomes of these visits. Romig Middle School provided the names of 17 parents or guardians who received a teacher home visit, and Willow Crest provided the names of 26 parents or guardians. However, we were not able to convene enough participants for focus groups. Table 4 shows how the 43 contacts resulted in just 4 participants.

Some phone numbers were disconnected, some families had moved, and some children had been taken into protective custody. Several parents we did contact were unable to participate due to job and family commitments. Eight of the Romig parents on our list (60 percent of those we were able to contact) told us they had not received a visit, despite indication by the school that they had. Of these, three said they would like a visit from a teacher, and one met with a teacher to sign papers for their student to transfer. A parent who signed up for a teacher visit at the fall potluck was not contacted.

Initial phone contact with 16 parents who had received visits indicated that most who received a visit had a positive experience and felt the visit was valuable. However, two Willow Crest parents enjoyed the home visit but indicated no change because they were already active in the school; and one Romig parent complained that she had a 15-minute notice before the home visit, and the visit lasted five minutes at the front door. One Willow Crest parent felt the visit was not helpful.

**Table 4. Disposition of Parent Contacts for Home-Visit Focus Groups**

	<b>Willow Crest</b>	<b>Romig</b>
<b>Number of Families Visited/Contacts Provided</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>
Student no longer enrolled or no longer with parent	7	0
Duplicate and non-working phone numbers	6	3
Calls not returned	2	1
<b>Families Contacted, Invited to Focus Group</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
Respondent stated they were not visited	0	8
Respondent did not want to/was unable to participate	8	1
<b>Respondent Agreed to Participate*</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
No shows	1	2
<b>Attendees/Interviews Conducted</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
*Note: one parent needed transportation		

When it became clear that focus groups were not possible, we requested interviews with those parents who were available. We interviewed four parents in total—two from each school. Two of the interviews were in person and two were by phone. We adapted the focus group protocol (included in the appendix) and asked questions in five areas:

- General questions about schools and previous interactions with schools and teachers
- Questions about the teacher visit
- Questions about the school
- Input on improving Alaska Native student success
- An open-ended question regarding anything else they would like to share

***General questions about schools and previous interactions with schools and teachers:*** Two parents were new to the district and two were very familiar with their schools. Three felt their students' needs were being met; one did not. The four shared several common themes: these parents felt that smaller classes were important both at the grade-school level, where English is a second language for many students, and at the middle-school level, where minority students may “get lost in the crowd.” Both set of parents would like more “student-specific” information more often about the educational progress of their children, especially if they are having trouble. They want information “as it is happening,” and don't want to wait for quarterly progress reports which they feel arrive too late to do anything. The parents expect teachers to know all their students well enough to assess strong and weak points and have open communication with the parents.

***Questions about the teacher visit:*** Parents were not necessarily aware of the visits as stemming from the Alaska Native Pilot project, especially because both of these schools have multiple programs that promote better home-school communication. The location and structure of the visits varied considerably. One young student invited her teacher to her grandmother's house. One parent was contacted by the teacher and invited her over and served Native foods. Another had weekly calls or e-mails from teachers in the CITC program, which the parent felt was as good as a home visit.

All felt the “personal contact” was important. One mother described it as the “you know me feeling” verses the “face in a space” when you make eye contact with a person. This feeling is important to parent and student. When the visit was in the home, there were the added benefits of seeing what the day-to-day life of the child was like outside of school and exposure to the family's culture. However, even those not visited at home talked about feeling that the teacher they were talking to actually knew their child as an individual. As a result they felt a greater connection with the teacher and the school.

***Questions about the school:*** The two parents from Willow Crest felt welcomed at their school. They felt the school tries to get parents involved, but you often see the same parents at the potlucks and Parent-Teacher Organization meetings. The Romig parents wanted more contact and more information about activities in which they would feel comfortable participating. One parent attended the potluck because she received a personal invitation. The other parent would like to see the return of the CITC program because of its more personalized nature and use of Alaska Native learning materials.

***Input on improving Alaska Native student success:*** All stated in some form that the teacher needs to know how each individual learns “because all kids are different.” All felt that class sizes need to be smaller and one mentioned the need for more use of teacher aides. Two felt the use of culturally relevant material would be helpful, and one noted that Native students are more hands-on learners. Two mentioned the need to understand that some kids will not question or participate because of how they were raised to respect their elders.

They all stated that schools need to be positive and encouraging. Parents need to value education. They need to make sure their kids are fed and rested. They should help their kids at home or get them help if they can’t do it themselves. Parents need to receive more specific information from the teachers about what their child needs and how to get help for them. Home visits are especially important for families who have just moved to Anchorage. It shows that the teacher cares and makes you feel known to the teacher.

***Anything else they would like to share:*** The wrap up question elicited several conversations about the value of education. One parent talked about the village where she grew up. She stated that “Western education did not seem as important in the village.” Her mother went to school through third grade; she went to high school; her daughter is in a gifted Language Arts team at Romig.” Next, they felt that home visits and personal invitations, especially to new families, should be continued. It shows that the teacher cares and makes you feel known to the teacher. Another common topic was the need for parents to know how to help their children. They want specific and timely information about problems and direction on how to help or how to get help for their child. And, finally, these parents also recognized the needs of other minorities in their schools and felt uncomfortable that Alaska Natives were singled out. They felt that all the different cultures could benefit from this program.

This was a very small sample from which to draw conclusions regarding home visits. We do not contend that information gleaned in these interviews is generalizable to all home visits, but rather provides insight into the opinions and experiences of those with whom we talked. These four parents saw the visits as beneficial. They wanted more contact and contact addressing the students’ specific needs. However, teachers face the same difficulties contacting their students’ families that we did, suggesting that simply expecting teachers to initiate more and deeper contact will not likely be successful.

## ***End of School Year Teacher and Staff Program Evaluation***

ISER developed an end of year survey to collect feedback from the teachers and staff. This instrument (included in the appendix, along with the response frequencies) begins with a section adapted from the 2006 *School Climate and Connectedness Staff Survey*.<sup>2</sup> These questions were designed to assess school climate in general, and we changed the wording to focus specifically on Alaska Native students and parents. The second section asks about participation in and effectiveness of activities targeted toward improving relationships with Alaska Native students and families. The last section addresses home visits. The questionnaires were administered at both schools on May 24, 2007 (the day after the last day of class). Copies of the questionnaires and the aggregated response from both of the schools are in the appendix.

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<sup>2</sup> The survey was developed by the Alaska Association of School Boards (AASB) with the assistance of the American Institutes for Research, and is administered annually in schools throughout Alaska.

## Romig Middle School

Of the 30 respondents to this survey at Romig, 24 were classroom teachers, two were certified staff, two were classified staff, and two didn't answer this question. The 24 classroom teachers are about half of Romig's reported 51 teachers in the 2006-2007 school year.<sup>3</sup> Of the 25 respondents who reported their ethnicity, 17 were White, three were Alaska Native, two Black, two Latino, and one Asian. Their median time at Romig was between three and five years; their median time in the district was between six and ten years.

Respondents were generally positive about Romig's school climate. For example, 90% of respondents felt that Romig is a welcoming place for Alaska Native students and their parents; 87% felt that Alaska Native students are treated fairly if they break the rules. However, fewer than half agreed that Alaska Native students are involved in helping to solve school problems and that Alaska Native adults in the community know what happens in the schools. Fully one-third of the answers to these two questions were "neutral," which may indicate that respondents sometimes agree, sometimes disagree, don't know, or are not comfortable answering the question. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed (90 to 97 percent) that Romig staff worked hard to improve the participation of Alaska Native parents and to set high expectations for Alaska Native students. Most of the staff had discussed lesson plans that were particularly successful or unsuccessful for Alaska Native students (71 percent did this at least a few times per year) or shared an Alaska Native student's work with other teachers (86 percent did this at least a few times per year).

The survey asked about how often respondents had participated in a staff meeting that focused on various aspects of learning about and teaching Alaska Native students. We asked about five possible meeting topics: improving communication, best instructional practices, Alaska Native cultures, cross cultural awareness, and rural Alaska. The most common answer—40 to 50 percent of our respondents—was 2 or 3 times during the year. A similar number reported four or more times during the year, and a few said not at all.

We then asked respondents to rate how helpful the various components of the school's ANPP efforts were in improving their understanding of Alaska Native students and their families. At Romig, these components fell into three types: eight readings that were available, six in-service activities, and four "other" programs that didn't necessarily demand any active involvement (for example, cultural bulletin boards and alternative lunch sites). Respondents rated each component as very helpful, somewhat helpful, not helpful, or did not attend. The results show efforts across the school to be disjointed. Every respondent rated at least one component, and all but one had participated in at least one reading or in-service activity. However, each activity drew only a minority of respondents.

Forty percent of our respondents had not done any of the eight readings. Only 4 of the 13 reading and in-service opportunities drew more than one-third of our respondents. Among the readings, *Touching Spirit Bear* drew the highest participation, with 16 of the 30 respondents (54%) rating it as somewhat or very helpful (and no one rating it as not helpful). The other readings drew from 13 to 30 percent of respondents. However, respondents rated almost everything they had read as somewhat or very helpful.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/SchoolLevel/2007SchoolLevelCount.pdf>

Only seven percent of our respondents had missed all six in-service opportunities; 30 percent had attended just one, and an additional 47 percent had attended 2 or 3. However, only one opportunity—training on Alaska Native-focused lesson plans—drew more than half our respondents: 70 percent had attended, and almost all of those who did attend found the training to be helpful. The other five in-service opportunities drew from 17 to 50 percent of respondents, and again, all of those who attended found the activities to be somewhat or very helpful in improving their understanding of Alaska Native students and their families.

The “other” components were more often rated, perhaps because they didn’t necessarily demand active participation. Eighty percent of respondents rated cultural bulletin boards as somewhat or very helpful; two-thirds found the Alaska Native Pilot School committee helpful; and 57 percent found providing alternative lunch sites helpful to improving their understanding. Only one-third found parent-teacher visits outside of school helpful.

We asked about the percent of parents attending spring parent-teacher conferences because this was one of the areas in which we hoped to see improvement. We asked what percent of **all parents** attended each respondent’s conferences; what percent of **Alaska Native parents** attended; and whether this was an improvement over previous years. Estimated parent attendance for both groups varied from 1 percent to 100 percent. Twelve of our respondents and 8 of the 24 classroom teachers left some or all of these questions blank. Eleven reported lower participation by Alaska Native parents than all parents—sometimes just a little lower, and sometimes far lower. Four reported the same participation, and three said a greater share of Alaska Native parents than parents overall came to conference. Three quarters (14 of the 19 answering the question) said that more parents came to conferences this year than in previous years.

We asked about the home visits; however, only four of our respondents had conducted any home visits; together, those four visited eight families. Three of the eight visits took place in the school and five at a variety of other locations. Three shared their thoughts on the outcomes of the visits—in all three cases, they saw improved communication and relationships. Those three said they found the visits valuable, and the fourth described them as “somewhat valuable.” Three of the four recommended continuing to encourage home visits by school faculty.

We asked if the respondents’ ability to teach Alaska Native students had improved over the school year—23 said yes, 5 left the question blank; and two said no. Those two both said that they were already effective with Native students. Among the 16 respondents who gave reasons for improvement, the most commonly cited was having put the time into training and collaboration (6), followed by having learned more about their students’ cultures (5). Two teachers made communicating with and welcoming their Alaska Native students a priority; one cited administrative support for a focus on Alaska Native students; one used the CITC program as a go-between; and the last said she improved through experience.

We asked what respondents felt the school could do to improve Alaska Native student performance in the coming year. The most common response (10) was to leave the question blank; six expected the return of the CITC program to help; five called for continued and increased parent contact; three recommended focusing on attendance; two called for continued cultural training; one recommended smaller classes and one more aides; one recommended

Alaska Native luncheons; and one recommended the school involve those students in decision-making.

### **Willow Crest Elementary**

Forty-one staff members responded to the survey—fifteen classroom teachers, twelve other (non-classroom teaching) certified staff, nine classified staff, and five others. The 27 certified staff who replied are about 80 percent of the school’s 33 certified staff teachers.<sup>4</sup> For all 41 respondents, the median years of experience in the school was fewer than two, and median years experience in the district was five or six. Twenty-eight of the 39 reporting their ethnicity were white; five were Alaska Native; and three were Asian. Five checked more than one ethnicity.

The Willow Crest staff was very positive about the school’s climate for Alaska Natives—over 90 percent felt that Alaska Native students and teachers get along well and treat each other with respect. Over 80 percent reported that the school involves Native parents in most schools activities and that when Alaska Native students break rules, they are treated fairly. Seventy-eight percent felt the school is a welcoming place for Alaska Native students; however, 17 percent felt that it is not. There is less agreement about some areas—although over half of the respondents reported that it is not difficult to overcome cultural barriers at the school, 25 percent felt that it is, and 10 percent checked “neutral,” indicating at least some ambivalence. And while 56 percent felt that Alaska Native students are involved in helping to solve school problems, 29 percent were neutral on the question. Finally, only 40 percent of respondents felt that Alaska Native adults in the community know what goes on in the school; 43 percent replied “neutral” to this question. Almost all respondents agreed that Willow Crest staff had worked hard during the year to involve Alaska Native parents and to set high standards for Alaska Native students.

Between 90 and 100 percent of respondents agreed that Willow Crest staff worked hard during the year to increase Alaska Native parent involvement and set high standards for Alaska Native students. However, Willow Crest staff was less likely than Romig staff to discuss with other teachers particularly effective or ineffective lessons for Alaska Native students (43% never discussed this) or to share Alaska Native student work (34% never did this over the course of the year).

The survey asked about how often respondents had participated in a staff meeting that focused on various aspects of learning about and teaching Alaska Native students. We asked about five possible meeting topics: improving communication, best instructional practices, Alaska Native cultures, cross cultural awareness, and rural Alaska. Over half the staff had met about each of the topics four or more times in the year, and only a handful had not attended any meetings on these topics. The exception was staff meetings devoted to best practices for teaching Alaska Native students—12 percent had not met on this topic, and only 34 percent had met four or more times in the year.

At Willow Crest, the activities for the Alaska Native Pilot Project included one reading, six in-service trainings, five staff meetings, and two other activities—home visits and teacher training available through the Rose Urban-Rural exchange program. The staff shared many of these experiences over the year. Five of the six possible in-service activities drew 80 percent or

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<sup>4</sup> As reported to Alaska EED in the certified staff accounting database in fall 2006

more of our respondents, and almost all of those who attended found the activities somewhat or very helpful in improving their understanding of Alaska Native students and their families. The Effective Home Visits training only drew 60 percent of respondents, but, again, most of those who attended found the training helpful. Staff meetings had 90 percent of greater attendance and were also almost always rated as somewhat or very helpful. Only 73 percent of survey respondents had read *Another Culture/Another World*, and all of them found it somewhat or very helpful. About 90 percent of our respondents attended 4 or more of the 5 available in-service trainings and 4 or 5 of the relevant staff meetings.

Willow Crest has excellent attendance at parent-teacher conferences. Of the 24 respondents who told us about what percent of all their students' parents and of their Alaska Native students' parents who attended conferences, half said that all of their parents came to conferences, and three-quarters said that all of their Alaska Native students' parents came to conferences. Nor does this appear to be a new achievement—seven of our respondents who cited 90 percent or better attendance in both parent groups also said that this was not an improvement over previous years. The lowest level of attendance was 50 percent, cited by two teachers.

Fourteen of our respondents conducted at least one home visit, meeting with a total of 48 families. The majority of these visits took place in the students' homes, although a few occurred at a shelter, a restaurant, or at the school. Ten of the 14 staff conducting visits said that the visit improved their relationship and/or communication with the family. One said the visit made the parents uncomfortable; one said the outcome was the same as conferences. Ten found the visits valuable, and four did not. Three respondents found parent resistance to or discomfort with home visits to be a problem.

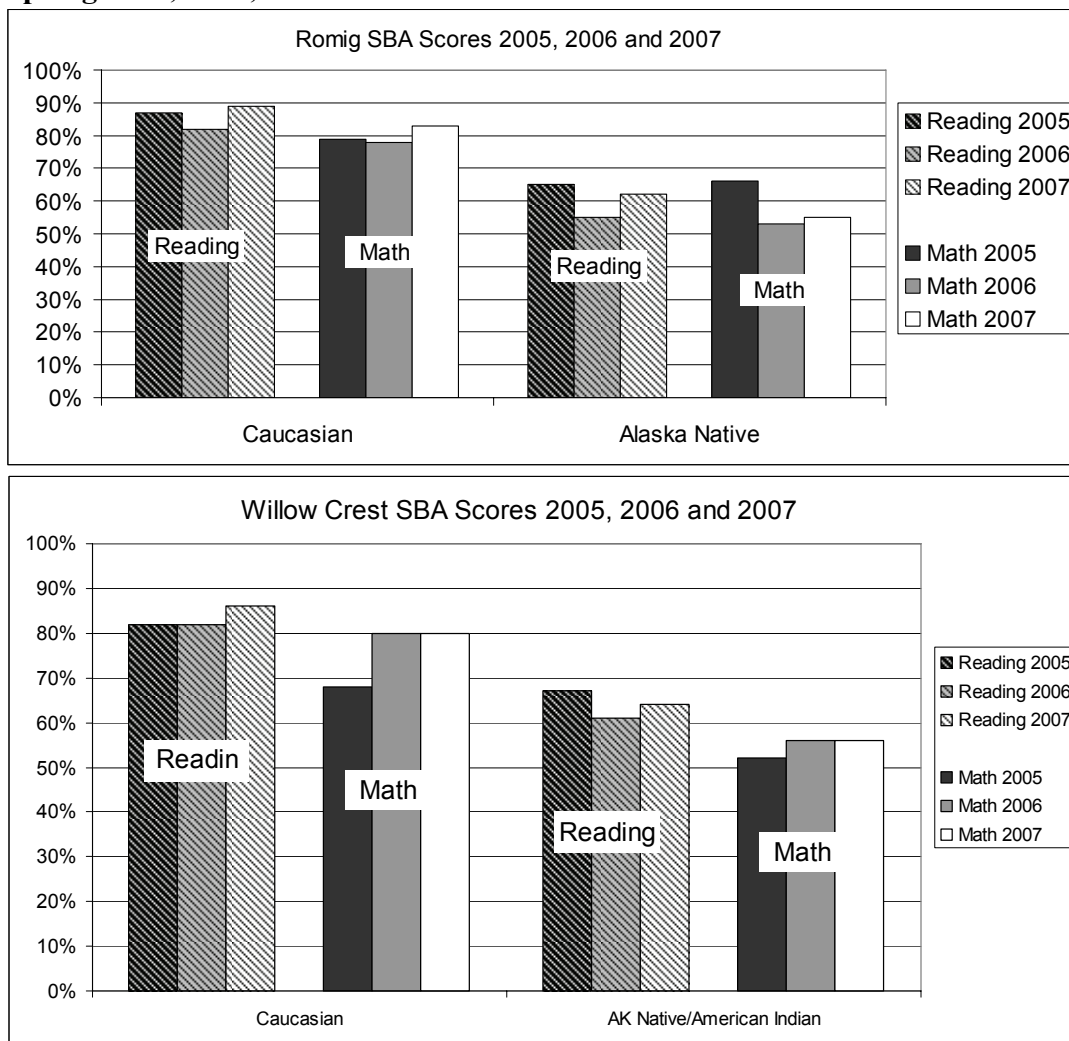
We asked if respondents felt that their ability to teach Alaska Native students increased this year. Twenty-three said they improved; 8 said they had not improved; and 10 did not answer. Among the 23 who had improved, 15 gave reasons. The most common reason (9 respondents) was an increased awareness of Alaska Native cultures and, along with this, improved ability to communicate. Four said they improved as a result of the training they'd received this year; one said that improvement came as a result of working with Alaska Native students and teachers, and one said that Alaska Native parents were more open. Of the eight who felt they had not improved, five said that they already were able to teach Alaska Native students effectively, and 3 gave no reason.



## Data on Student Achievement and Discipline

Schools undertook the professional development and community-building activities in order to change student behavior and learning. We looked for changes to be reflected in measures that the schools already collect—standardized test scores and data on suspensions. Before considering the data, we briefly review the schools’ assumptions and theories about why the project activities might result in the desired changes, and what these mechanisms might say about the timing and size of hoped-for improvements. While we did not expect to see large changes in behavioral or achievement data from the Alaska Native Pilot Project, we did look to see if there were any improvements in Alaska Native achievement on standardized tests in the past year. The data show little change. Given student turnover and other vagaries of standardized testing, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from the data, other than that Alaska Native students continue to score at lower levels than non-Native students across reading and mathematics in both schools.

**Chart 1. Standardized Test Scores by Ethnicity and School, Spring 2005, 2006, and 2007**



Tables 4 and 5 show suspension data for 2006 and 2007. Table 4 shows that Willow Crest has a higher suspension rate than Anchorage elementary schools overall (in 2007, 22% compared to 5%), but that among Willow Crest students, Alaska Natives are not likely to be suspended disproportionately (in 2007, 15% for Alaska Native students compared to 22% for all Willow Crest Students). Among all elementary school students, the Alaska Native suspension rate is slightly higher than that for all students (7% compared to 5% in both years).

Suspensions increase dramatically during the middle school years. Unlike Willow Crest, Romig does not have a higher suspension rate than middle schools district-wide. Both in Romig and district-wide, Alaska Native students have a higher suspension rates than the total student population.

**Table 4. Suspensions for Willow Crest and Anchorage Elementary Schools**

Alaska Native Students	2005/06		2006/07	
	Willow Crest	All Elementary	Willow Crest	All Elementary
Enrollment	96	3,470	117	3,519
Suspensions	10	240	18	253
Suspension Rate	10%	7%	15%	7%
All Students	Willow Crest	All Elementary	Willow Crest	All Elementary
Enrollment	373	25,644	404	25,409
Suspensions	36	1,286	89	1,299
Suspension Rate	10%	5%	22%	5%

**Table 5. Suspensions for Romig and Anchorage Middle Schools**

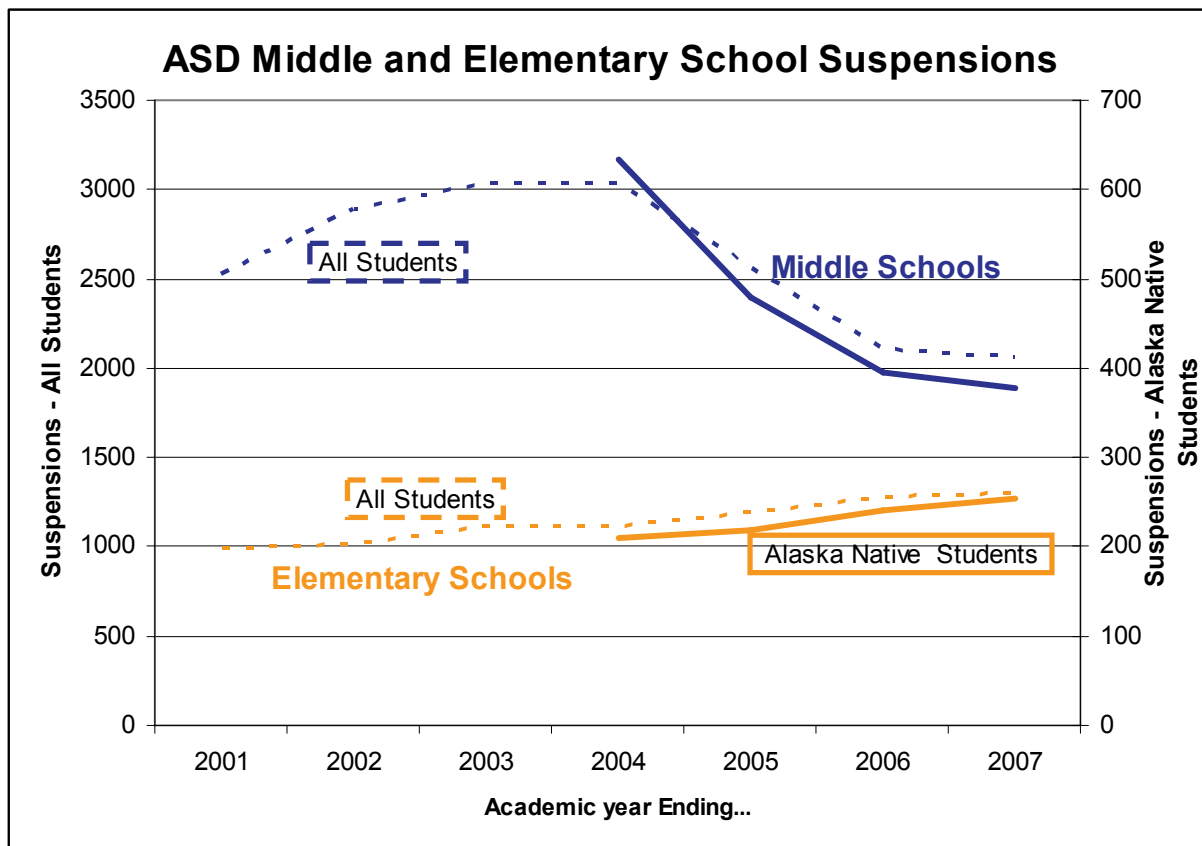
Alaska Native Students	2005/06		2006/07	
	Romig	All Middle	Romig	All Middle
Enrollment	137	1,096	117	1,059
Suspensions	40	396	49	378
Suspension Rate	29%	36%	42%	36%
All Students	Romig	All Middle	Romig	All Middle
Enrollment	825	8,140	795	7,886
Suspensions	173	2,109	205	2,064
Suspension Rate	21%	26%	26%	26%

Enrollment figures for elementary and middle schools from [www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/DistrictEthnicity/2006\\_District\\_Ethnicity\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/DistrictEthnicity/2006_District_Ethnicity_Report.pdf) and [/2007\\_District\\_Ethnicity\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eed.state.ak.us/stats/DistrictEthnicity/2007_District_Ethnicity_Report.pdf), for grades K-6 and 7-8, respectively, adjusted by subtracting 6<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment in Mirror Lake school from elementary totals and adding it to middle school totals. Suspensions are from ASD Memoranda, "Fourth quarter and end of [year] school year suspension/weapons/expulsion report" for the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 school years. Rates are approximations only as they do not account for repeat suspensions for the same student. Repeater make up at least 20% of middle school students suspended and a much lower proportion of elementary students suspended.

Chart 2 puts the recent suspension numbers in a seven-year context. The chart shows the numbers (not rates) of suspension for all middle-school students and Alaska Native middle-school students, and for all elementary-school students and Alaska Native elementary-school students. Since Anchorage School District enrollment hardly changed from the 2000/01 school year to the present, we graphed the numbers of suspensions each year for all elementary- and middle-school students (the dotted lines and the scale on the left) and for Alaska Native elementary- and middle-school students (the solid lines and the scale on the right). The chart shows that while middle-school suspensions have dropped sharply in the last 4 years, elementary suspensions have climbed.

These trends are reflected in the Alaska Native population. The parallel lines don't indicate that the rates of suspension are the same for Alaska Native students and students overall. Rather, they indicate that the rates have changed in step with each other—the degree to which an Alaska Native student is more likely to be suspended than a non-Native student has not changed.

**Chart 2. Selected ASD Suspension Numbers, 2001–2007**



## CONCLUSIONS

A lot has happened since the AFACT meeting in September 2005. Both Willow Crest Elementary and Romig Middle School engaged activities intended to improve teacher understandings of Native students and relationships with Native parents, with the broader goal of improving Native student outcomes. To improve student behavior and learning outcomes, the district also embarked on a social and emotional learning initiative in concert with the culturally responsive education standards. However, the efforts at the school and district level do not appear to us to be part of a larger plan for supporting and engaging Native students and parents. Indeed, while it appears there is a strong shared commitment to improving educators' understandings of and relationships with Native students and parents, we did not see evidence of a broadly shared vision for how to achieve this across the schools and the district as a whole. There are several strategies the district could employ to make their efforts more effective.

Anchorage School District teachers, administrators, and parents need to make time for continued frank conversations about what is working and not working for Native students and families. Superintendent Comeau herself acknowledged during the first meeting with AFACT families that these conversations can be uncomfortable but are necessary.

The district should continue the efforts begun during the Alaska Native Pilot Project with a sustained, systemic, district-wide commitment. The individual schools did a great deal without additional resources, but in order to make a difference for Native students in these schools and across the district, there need to be more resources and, perhaps more importantly, leadership from the district guiding a coordinated and continuous effort. The loss of the CITC program at Romig appeared to be a significant setback, and that is troubling. One program alone should not bear the responsibility for providing support and services to Native students and families; it must be a shared responsibility across the schools and district. We understand that there are different challenges facing the elementary and middle schools in this sort of initiative, so context-specific approaches need to be developed. For example, home visits were embraced more at Willow Crest than at Romig. Teachers were naturally nervous about this new approach, which was exacerbated by not having answers to many of the good questions they raised in initial training. Many who might have taken the plunge with more support, instead opted not to. Moreover, we suspect that the reluctance at the middle school may have been due in part to the different roles that elementary- and middle-school teachers take *vis-à-vis* their students and parents; elementary teachers are generally more used to interacting with parents on a regular basis. If this is the reason, then district and school administrators need to develop a different kind of parent engagement at the middle-school level.

There needs to be a discussion about what indicators or metrics the district should be using to judge the success of efforts to reach Alaska Native students and families. The schools and the district need to track data that will serve as hard measures of progress. We should expect to see changes in disciplinary data, attendance, and eventually improvements in grades and test data if this work is worthwhile. However, we struggled to find data that would allow us to assess the success of the initiative independent of individuals' subjective opinions of the effort. District and school leaders need to be willing to take a look at hard and difficult numbers and ask the hard questions about what they are doing. We don't expect that the district will see instant results, especially in terms of student achievement; but we would expect changes in attendance, homework achievement, discipline, and parent involvement with the school, whether it is attendance at back-to-school night or simply more contact with classroom

teachers. However, these indicators need to be tracked in order for us to assess whether this is indeed the case.

Finally, the most important piece is an unwavering commitment to the idea that all teachers and students can be successful; that teachers can reach students regardless of the challenges of their home lives; and that it is possible to reach and engage parents in multiple and meaningful ways that support school efforts. If this commitment is supported fully at all levels of the district—from classroom aides to the school board and administration—we believe that Native students and, indeed, all students will succeed in our schools.

## Appendix



## Specific Reactions to Today

### 1. Please check those topics/activities that you found worthwhile in this training:

- 21 Presentation on home visits
- 14 Discussion of power and relationships
- 15 Home visit role play

### 2. Check those outcomes which you felt were achieved:

- 20\_ The training increased my understanding of the benefits of home visits with Native families
- 22\_ We engaged in a productive dialogue about strategies to address difficulties in home visits
- 15\_ I now have a sufficient tools to successfully engage with Native parents
- 14\_ I know my next steps as part of this project

## Overall Conclusions

Look at the five-point scales and check INSIDE the parentheses that most closely represents your judgment.

1. ( 13 ) ( 7 ) ( 5 ) ( 2 ) ( 0 )  
overall, I am very satisfied with this training I am very dissatisfied

### 2. The best part of the training for me was:

- Overall picture of statistics—create the need; love the values chart for the differing groups.
- The handout which listed the traditional values of Alaska.
- The effort to address Native Alaskan education.
- Knowing the background for which culture needs to be looked at.
- Understanding more Alaska Natives; hearing others about their positive home visit.
- Presentation or home visits and home visit role play
- Role playing a visit to a home
- The idea to bring a project the student completed to the home to break the ice
- Home visit information
- Role-play informational worksheet/questionnaire
- Video
- It was interactive
- I enjoyed all of the presentation, but especially the insights into how Native parents feel about education.
- Information about what is achieved through conducting home visits
- Discussions
- Getting a better understanding of the role of the home visit
- Role playing
- Hard to say—maybe the why
- Discussion and dialogues about +/- of home visits
- The open discussions about concerns and procedures
- Hearing that the program was a “go” and how to explain it to non-Natives
- Listening to my colleagues



Knowing that the relationship with parents is to reach more—to them

### **3. My suggestions for improving the training:**

It is important to remember that some teachers may find this uncomfortable. They should feel respected just like we want the families to be.

Look for ways to train more Native Alaskan teachers, administrators, and support staff.

Pictures of houses or living society/animals, etc.

Maybe a presentation of role play before we practice

Minor complaint: reading the slides that we can read ourselves. Maybe you can have us read them ourselves, then go into discussion.

The training was okay, but they were preaching to the choir.

I didn't care for the role playing.

More discussion time

Longer

I thought it was well-done. The presenter was well-spoken. I think power points are a good way to present. We were able to input and ask questions. Length was good—not too long or too short.

Can't think of much—a little more time, maybe?

A little more time to see the video

Combine it with talking about how we are going to make this happen

It would be nice to actually have a Native family here to help us practice or to tell us what they want or don't want to talk about.

I would have liked to have seen the video presentation during the training. I was in the right frame of mind—does that make sense?

Copies of the information and maybe information on the various Native groups and how they interact with others.

Show slides

### **4. My major learnings today have been:**

To see how reluctant my co-workers are; I understand . . . but

Establish or deepen relationships

To be concerned about Native Alaskans' performance in their education

Doing a home visit

The traditional values handout

The training was okay, but they were preaching to the choir [same as previous].

Questions for home visits

Societal values/differences

Rationale for home visits

Cultural awareness suggestions

Just getting more information about the home-visit project

How parent involvement in the school experience provides something that children and parents can share in common—something positive—and how this can create an opportunity for dialogue not only between home and school but, more importantly, within the home.

No one correct way to visit

Getting a better picture of why I need to closely communicate with Alaska Native parents

Importance of building relationships

Hearing the point-of-view of our Alaska Natives and how they feel

Better understanding of power and relationships

The reason behind the home visit and that my concerns were shared by other teachers as well  
Positive

**5. What kind of support do you feel you need to succeed in this project?**

I would like to know what region/tribe/village each of my students is from.

Time and understanding to get used to this new idea.

I would like the school to contact the parents first and tell the parents that teachers are being asked to do home visits, and get an okay from the teacher to contact the parents.

If they need me, I will be there for them—both parents and teachers

Everybody's

Sending a newsletter informing parents of an upcoming home visit

Feedback after a few visits; get together and discuss

Addendums

Time for the visits

To co-complete a home visit

More information; release time (lots of it)

Coming up with times to do all students by end of year. It would be nice to have you back after some home visits are done to address any issues, **not** after all visits are done.

As a teacher assistant, I would like to be included in home visits.

Principal, Native groups, good parent response

If the things promised materialize, should be fine

We need to organize ourselves as a staff to coordinate family visits with staff and to “lay the groundwork” to let parents know the intent of the visits. Thus, it won't sound like it was just an individual commitment, but a school commitment.

A partner willing to do home visits with me

Some background information on the different cultures of the families' Native heritage.

Teamwork and support

Way more time than is possible

Organization and communication

Invite parents more to school

**6. Any other comments, questions or observations?**

How can we honestly raise our concerns without feeling like a “bad” teacher?

I think this is a good way to increase communication between races.

None; thanks! It was great!

I think the handout with the questions will be helpful.

I was offended by the “assumptions” piece. I don't believe teachers would assume such things.

Great energy and spirit from presenters

I truly enjoyed this.

Very helpful; thanks.

This is great. I look forward to starting my visits.

The presenter was great!

Nice training!

I am very uncomfortable targeting a specific culture of students. If we did home visits to all the lowest-performing students, I would be more accepting of the idea.

**AFACT/Anchorage School District Alaska Native Pilot Project Teacher Training**  
 Romig Middle School August 18, 2006 - RESULTS

**General Reactions to This Morning**

Look at the five-point scales and check INSIDE the parentheses that most closely represents your judgment.

1. ( 11 ) ( 32 ) ( 12 ) ( 1 ) ( 0 )  
 well organized poorly organized
2. ( 0 ) ( 4 ) ( 34 ) ( 15 ) ( 3 )  
 moved too fast just right moved too slowly
3. ( 6 ) ( 19 ) ( 23 ) ( 7 ) ( 1 )  
 very useful to me useless to me
4. ( 17 ) ( 18 ) ( 17 ) ( 4 ) ( 0 )  
 opportunity for quality no opportunity for  
 sharing always present sharing ever available
5. ( 8 ) ( 16 ) ( 23 ) ( 8 ) ( 1 )  
 methods used today methodology very weak  
 were excellent
6. ( 5 ) ( 13 ) ( 24 ) ( 11 ) ( 2 )  
 excellent resources no new resources  
 made available (like protocols) made available
7. ( 16 ) ( 27 ) ( 8 ) ( 3 ) ( 1 )  
 the presenters were extremely they were not at all knowledgeable  
 knowledgeable
8. ( 8 ) ( 21 ) ( 15 ) ( 9 ) ( 2 )  
 I learned some new I did not learn anything useful today  
 strategies today

**Specific Reactions to Today**

The number of respondents (out of 55) who checked each topic

2. Please check those topics/activities that you found worthwhile in this training:

- 31   Presentation on home visits
- 30   Discussion of power and relationships
- 15   Home visit role play

3. Check those outcomes which you felt were achieved:

- 26   The training increased my understanding of the benefits of home visits with Native families
- 37   We engaged in a productive dialogue about strategies to address difficulties in home visits
- 13   I now have a sufficient tools to successfully engage with Native parents
- 24   I know my next steps as part of this project

## Overall Conclusions

Look at the five-point scales and check INSIDE the parentheses that most closely represents your judgment.

3.   ( 4 )     ( 21 )     ( 23 )     ( 5 )     ( 1 )    
 overall, I am very satisfied with this training I am very dissatisfied

**4. The best part of the training for me was:**

Most often cited – the discussion, chance to air concerns, ask questions (12 responses) and the video at the beginning (10 responses)

**Individual responses:**

Discussion with the teachers(2)	video - info on how program works
Addressing peoples' concerns and issues head-on	video and powerpoint presentation
An opportunity to air concerns	Video at beginning was good
Being able to ask questions	A better understanding of AFACT goals.
being able to talk	Going over expectations
questions and discussion	Learning about presenter
the discussion	Personal stories of success/experience with family visits
group discussion/raising concerns	overall of Alaska Native culture
content of discussion; video	Ron B., humor, personal stories of trainer
good discussion; beginning film very good - effective and motivating	This is a repeat of last spring. Nothing new - new info could have been given in an e-mail or team meeting
The video and discussion	Talking about the benefits of home visits
Powerpoint presentation and movie	The info on the success of this type of program
The film where this culture was referred to as "intelligent". Respect for a culture that is different than my own yet addressed as equal.	This home visit approach will open doors to an excellent communication tool between school and home.
The film!	role playing
the video Kristine showed	

### 3. My suggestions for improving the training:

Most often cited – need for more specific answers on various practical aspects of how the program will work (6 responses) and more information/presentation about/by Alaska Natives (6 responses)

Individual responses:

Answer specifics on liabilities	Organize better - get us excited about successes first, then explain the process
more time and detailed information on what I need to do	Make presentation first, then field questions- you wouldn't have had to combat nearly as many comments on reservations about visits if you pitch first!
More answers from ASD to present to teachers	Explain how we are going to make visits
safety- barriers	demonstrate role playing
no role play	time for more role-playing
Take out the interrogations on sample questions - too elementary	This and the previous training seemed to assume that we want to do home visits and just need strategies. I think the staff is feeling very pressured, and is therefore more resistant.
Spend more time explaining expectations	Discussion of Native culture by a Native presenter
Have Alaska Native co-presenter, recipients of visits share their views.	CITC member should come and speak to home visits
Don't do it - or invite only interested teachers	Make it mandatory to all teachers to take credit class.
give more background on native alaskan history - why parents are afraid of school. Some faculty seemed lost.	I want to hear more about the ? From the "authentic voices" of the 300 who met to request the program. Is it working as they saw it?
Could be done in teams. One hour - clear and to the point	More discussion/dialogue on some of the differences in cultures that are very relevant.
A little shorter	limit time

### 4. My major learnings today have been:

Most often cited: learning about how the program will work (8 responses)

we can do home visits

Communication is what this is about; relationships, having parents be our partners.

How to better communicate

To be quiet

The number of students that are native and dropping out.

I thought about some of the kids that stayed after school to talk and how good it would have been to visit their home!

I learned who is involved - CITC - Southcentral - churches - and why this started

The basic outline of the home visit

home visits

Having open discussion helped to paint the picture on expectations

dialogue

Details

Clearer expectations on how to start.  
background info

about the program itself

About compensations

Approach of visit

Better understanding of AFACT

We all have a lot to learn

Staff not enthusiastic about program

how negatively this was received and how far we have to go!

I will not be doing home visits

**7. What kind of support do you feel you need to succeed in this project?**

Most often cited: support in the practical aspects (11 responses)

We need to know how we are going to complete home visits	A tracking, organized forms for the process to share and some communication
Person or file to see when/who has already done visits	liability/legal concerns need to be addressed
no duplication of effort	Detailed plan - pay, liability, etc
need a school coordinator to assign students to teachers	-more info on how to fit this into my life - more \$ for this commitment
clear discussion on how to plan visits, easy way to communicate between staff about visits.	more training and time to do visits with some already trained
a list of students who have been seen	Clear expectations, options
More success stories sharing.	more Native participants
just a little experience	Follow-up
good support	Lots!
staff buying into program	School-wide communication
The admin staff support, team support - student and parent support, Alaska Native community support	more resources that are readily available to teachers to use in the classroom
Other options for similar goal.	none -I won't be doing it

**8. Any other comments, questions or observations?**

Staff needs an information packet form ASD
safety - gas - cultural differences
way of tracking who visited; a point person to help with paperwork in school
liability for parent meeting at a neutral location
Looking forward to trying it!
this could be very powerful
Romig is very fortunate to pilot this project! Go for it Romig!
Presentation assumes teachers do not do much or anything to connect with parents, and that they will be idiots in interacting. We don't mind suggestions, but of course we care about our kids.
Suggestions to meet at school - students may provide bridge.
Language from all needs to be culturally sensitive using "Alaska Native and American Indian" instead of just American Indian
If we are meeting as equals, shouldn't the family have the opportunity to be reporting to the school - how they think the communication is working.
I think we need more info about cultural/social practices so that we are better equipped not to offend the people we are visiting with.
I think we have a certain measure of social skills and will be able to learn by experience doing home visits
Emphasize no yes/no questions when conversing with parents. They are conversation stoppers.
The idea of home visits is a poor plan being badly executed. Teachers should have been included in the planning BEFORE being told to do them.
thank you.
Thanks!
thank you

AFACT/ALASKA NATIVE PILOT PROGRAM ASD  
DISCUSSION GUIDE  
2-6-07

[TARGET SEGMENTS: Alaska Native Parents of students at Romig Middle School or Willow Crest Elementary.]

I. INTRODUCTION: The Alaska Native Pilot Project is trying to improve Native student achievement in your school. You are a group of individuals representing parents who participated in a visit from your child's teacher outside of school. I would appreciate learning about your visit. I would like your opinion regarding the visit as well as any changes you may have made because of your teacher visit. I would also like to ask you if you noticed any changes in your child's school that makes it more welcoming to you as a parent.

II. WARM-UP: General Discussion of your experiences in the Anchorage School District. Please give me some general comments about yourself and your school.

1. What is your name and how long have you had children at this school and have they attended any other schools.
2. What are some general thoughts that you may have about your child's school...is your child receiving what they need from their school?
3. In the past have you had much contact with you child's teachers and what have those been like?
4. In your opinion what should the parent and teacher relationship be like?

III. IN-DEPTH: Let's talk about your teacher visit.

1. How were you approached regarding participation in a teacher visit, how was it explained to you and how did it make you feel?
2. In your opinion what would a good home visit be like and what was your home visit like?
3. Would you look forward to another visit by this teacher or next years teacher and why or why not?
- 4 .Have you seen your child's teacher since your home visit-  
more then normally  
less then normally  
about the same  
Why do you think that is?

Has the teacher changed any since the visit and in what way?

5. Have you been in your child's school since your home visit  
more than normally  
less than normally  
about the same

and why or why not.

Has the school changed any and in what way?

IV. IN-DEPTH: Lets talk about your school.

1. Describe for me a school that would make you feel welcome.
2. What welcoming things can you tell me about you child's school?
3. Have you seen any changes in your child's school that have made you go there more often this year?
4. What would it take to get you into your child's school more often?
5. What changes have you made in how you work with your child this year on school related activities?

V. IN-DEPTH: Improving school success for Alaska Native Students

1. What is one important thing the school can do to help your child succeed in school?
2. What is one important thing you as a parent can do to help your child succeed at school?
3. What is the biggest problem you see that keeps Alaska Native Students from succeeding in school?
4. Have the teacher home visits helped your child be more successful and in what way?
5. Have you noticed any other changes in you child's school this year and has it helped them be more successful and in what way?

VI. WRAP-UP

If there is a question I have not asked that you feel is important to understanding your child's success in their school please feel free to share that with me now.



**ALASKA NATIVE PILOT PROJECT 2006/2007 PROGRAM EVALUATION  
ROMIG MIDDLE SCHOOL (N=30)**

**1. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? When you answer think about the way the school is *most of the time*.**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
At this school Alaska Native students and teachers get along really well.	6	17	6	1	0
This school fails to involve Alaska Native parents in most school events or activities	0	3	6	16	5
Teachers and Alaska Native students treat each other with respect in this school.	9	15	6	0	0
At this school, it is difficult to overcome the cultural barriers between teachers and Alaska Native parents.	0	3	4	19	4
The school is a welcoming and inviting place for Alaska Native parents.	9	18	3	0	0
Alaska Native students are involved in helping to solve school problems.	2	9	11	7	0
Alaska Native adults in the community know what goes on inside schools.	1	11	11	5	1
When Alaska Native students break rules, they are treated fairly.	4	22	3	1	0
Some of my students have backgrounds that make it difficult for them to achieve.	5	13	8	1	2

<b>2. Our staff has worked hard this year to...</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
improve the participation of Alaska Native parents in parent and teacher conferences.	12	17	1	0	0
improve the involvement of Alaska Native parents in their child's education.	9	18	2	0	0
set high standards for Alaska Native student learning.	9	18	3	0	0

<b>3. How frequently do you do each of the following with other teachers in your school?</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once a year</b>	<b>A few times a year</b>	<b>Once or twice a month</b>	<b>Once or more a week</b>
Discuss particular lessons that were or were not very successful with Alaska Native students.	6	2	15	2	3
Share and discuss an Alaska Native student's work in your content area with other teachers.	2	2	13	7	4

<b>4. How many times this year have you participated in a department, team, or other staff meeting when the goal was. . .</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>1 time</b>	<b>2 to 3 times</b>	<b>4 to 6 times</b>	<b>More than 6 times</b>
improving communication with Alaska Native students and their parents.	3	0	13	7	7
learning about Alaska Native culture.	3	3	13	7	4
learning about rural Alaska.	5	5	13	3	4
increasing cross cultural awareness.		3	12	7	8
learning best practices for teaching Alaska Native students.	1	5	14	6	5

**5. How helpful were each of the following activities in improving your understanding of Alaska Native students and their families:**

	<b>Very helpful</b>	<b>Some-what helpful</b>	<b>Not helpful</b>	<b>Did not attend</b>
<b>Read</b>				
<i>Another Culture/Another World</i> - book	3	3	0	15
<i>Strong Man – A Tlingit Story</i> - anime book	1	3	0	16
<i>Growing Up Native</i> – curriculum	2	4	1	14
<i>Touching Spirit Bear</i> - book and model	8	8	0	12
Life Skills readings with Alaska Native cultural strengths	3	1	0	16
<i>Voices from the Middle: Building Cultural Understanding through Literature</i> - article	1	8	0	14
<i>“Coming of Age” Titles of Alaska Native and American Indian Interest</i> - handout	2	6	0	14
<i>Indigenous Knowledge Systems/Alaska Native Ways of Knowing</i> -article	1	6	0	15
<b>Attending in-service training(s)</b>				
Presentation entitled <i>Public Hearing Title VII Indian Education</i> on March 16, 2006	3	7	0	15
New Frontiers in Mentoring Training, March 2006	3	7	0	16
Kerry Lyons and/or Rose Tee training on Alaska Native focused lesson plans	8	12	1	8
National Indian Education Association Annual Convention in Anchorage - October 2006	3	2	0	20
Tour of Alaska Native Heritage Center	10	5	0	11
Effective Home Visits	3	10	0	12
<b>Other Programs</b>				
Cultural bulletin boards - hallway display cases	14	8	2	3
Alaska Native Pilot School Committee at Romig	10	9	1	5
Parent teacher visits outside of school	3	7	0	15
Alternative lunch sites- open classroom at lunch time for AK Native students	9	8	0	6
<b>Please list anything we missed:</b>				
Thematic Unit on Native Cultures		1		

**We would like to know more about parent-teacher visits this year:**

**6. About what percent of all your students' parents came to parent teacher conferences this spring?**

100% (1), 97% (1), 95% (1), 90% (3), 85% (1), 74% (1), 70% (2), 50% (3), 38% (1), 35% (2), 30% (2), 5% (1), 1% (1)

**7. About what percent of your Alaska Native students' parents came to parent-teacher conferences this spring?**

100% (3), 95%(1), 90% (1), 80% (2), 60% (1), 56% (1), 40% (2), 20% (1), 10% (1), 5% (1), 2% (2), 1% (2)

**8. Is this an improvement from what you have experienced in previous years?**

Yes (14) No (5)

**9. This school year, did you meet with any parents of your Alaska Native students outside of school?**

Yes (3) (Please continue with Question 10)

No (20) (Skip to Question 15, page 4)

**10. If yes, with how many different families did you meet?**

1 family (1), 2 families (2), 3 families (1)

**11. Where did you meet with these parents? (e.g., home, café, library, etc.)**

- Home Ec/Science Room
- Carr's Deli Area
- Outside Parent Conferences
- My home
- My room at school
- Carr's
- Bookstore
- Memorial Service

**12. What do you think were the outcomes of these visits?**

- Better teacher/parent relationships increased student cooperation in one case.
- Open communication and friendship.
- The surviving parent was very helpful for school support.

**13. Did you find the visits valuable? Why or why not?**

- Somewhat. To be able to understand the family dynamics a bit better.
- Yes. It gave some insight as to why the student was having trouble in my class.
- Yes. We could identify areas of mutual concern and support.
- Yes, I felt the closeness of the family and the respect the family and friends shared.

**14. Would you recommend continuing to encourage teachers to meet with parents of Alaska Native students outside of school? Why or why not?**

- Yes. For many reasons, but most of all it provides a united front for the student – both parent and teacher work together to benefit student.
- Yes. For better home and school partnership to educate their children.
- Yes, neutral place.
- Meeting Alaska Native parents should always be an on-going goal.

**Thinking about everything you did this year, please answer the next two questions:**

**15. Did your ability to teach Alaska Native students improve this year?**

Yes (23) No (1)

**Why or why not?**

- Team meetings, collaborating.
- The students I've met this year have had a certain pride of their heritage that I tried to foster in various writing and art projects.
- As a team we worked to increase community with our Alaska Native families and I worked to get to know my students. However, some of my students improved and some did not.
- Yes, but I used CITC as the go-between before they left Romig.
- I had more kids come at it different times. I made it a priority to make them feel welcome.
- More in-service and classes offered during the school year.
- Administrative support, native pilot program focuses personal interest.
- I've always worked with AK Native student so hopefully. I have always improved year by year.
- It didn't improve as I've always addressed our Native student's cultural needs.
- I only had one Alaska Native student in my class. I felt that I was able to teach him academically.
  
- I learned a lot about cultural cues – eyebrows and eye contact.
- Yes. Because I was made more aware of their culture and needs.
- Becoming more aware of cultural distinctions.
  
- Experience – I knew more of what to expect from past year.
  
- I took Father Oleksa's class last summer and I learned a great deal, used concepts in my own classrooms.
- Beginning of year training.
- Becoming more aware of cultural distinctions.

16. Next year, what can your school do to improve the success of Alaska Native students?

- Cook Inlet will help.
- Bringing back Cook Inlet program will be great. I saw a real difference in my student when the program left.
- Get CITC back here. It was extremely effective.
- Not get rid of a program mid-year!
- Bring back CITC program – it was a great program to have in school.
- Bring back the CITC program.
- I'm glad to hear that CITC is coming back to Romig. I feel it is a successful program and its presence here helps the kids.
  
- Continue home visits.
- Meet with parents prior to school year.
- More parent contact.
- Stress more home visits.
  
- Work on increasing student attendance. I had quite a few Alaska Native student who were absent at least 25% of the year.
- Encourage attendance and participation in all classes.
- Student attendance
  
- Continue to move in the direction of school-wide cultural awareness and pride. More school programs highlighting difference cultures, bulletin boards, clubs, activities, etc.
- Have Alaska Native luncheons.
- Continue the awareness training to be successful with these students.
  
- Involve them in the school decision making.
- More aides.
- Smaller classes.



**ALASKA NATIVE PILOT PROJECT 2006/2007 PROGRAM EVALUATION  
WILLOW CREST (n=41)**

1. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? When you answer think about the way the school is *most of the time*.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
At this school Alaska Native students and teachers get along really well.	19	20	2	0	0
This school fails to involve Alaska Native parents in most school events or activities.	1	3	3	13	20
Teachers and Alaska Native students treat each other with respect in this school.	17	22	2	0	0
At this school, it is difficult to overcome the cultural barriers between teachers and Alaska Native parents.	2	9	4	17	9
The school is a welcoming and inviting place for Alaska Native parents.	23	9	2	4	3
Alaska Native students are involved in helping to solve school problems.	9	14	12	5	1
Alaska Native adults in the community know what goes on inside schools.	5	11	17	7	0
When Alaska Native students break rules, they are treated fairly.	18	18	5	0	0
Some of my students have backgrounds that make it difficult for them to achieve.	10	18	9	3	1

Comment: We try to involve parents, but parents don't try. Again (referring to Alaska Native adults in community) we try but they don't try to be involved.

<b>2. Our staff has worked hard this year to...</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
improve the participation of Alaska Native parents in parent and teacher conferences.	19	20	0	0	0
improve the involvement of Alaska Native parents in their child's education.	17	18	2	2	0
set high standards for Alaska Native student learning.	17	19	3	0	0

Comment: I was unable to answer many questions because of my limited time @ Willow Crest this year. However, I saw and heard abundant reports of the various activities/efforts connected to this project. One participant chose not to fill in responses for this section.

<b>3. How frequently do you do each of the following with other teachers in your school?</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Once a year</b>	<b>A few times a year</b>	<b>Once or twice a month</b>	<b>Once or more a week</b>
Discuss particular lessons that were or were not very successful with Alaska Native students.	15	6	9	4	1
Share and discuss an Alaska Native student's work in your content area with other teachers.	12	2	12	6	3

Comment: I was unable to answer many questions because of my limited time @ Willow Crest this year. However, I saw and heard abundant reports of the various activities/efforts connected to this project. Three participants chose not to fill in responses for this section



<b>4. How many times this year have you participated in a department, team, or other staff meeting when the goal was. . .</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>1 time</b>	<b>2 to 3 times</b>	<b>4 to 6 times</b>	<b>More than 6 times</b>
improving communication with Alaska Native students and their parents.	4	3	15	12	26
learning about Alaska Native culture.	0	2	11	20	7
learning about rural Alaska.	0	3	15	18	5
increasing cross cultural awareness.	1	6	10	18	6
learning best practices for teaching Alaska Native students.	5	9	13	10	4

**5. How helpful were each of the following activities in improving your understanding of Alaska Native students and their families:**

	<b>Very Helpful</b>	<b>Some what helpful</b>	<b>Not helpful</b>	<b>Did not attend</b>
<b>Read</b>				
<i>Another Culture/Another World</i> book	10	20	0	11
<b>Attending in-service training(s)/</b>				
Father Oleksa in September	9	23	3	6
Effective Home Visits	10	12	3	18
Chevak Dancers	13	21	2	5
Alaska Native Heritage Museum assembly on Native Youth Olympics	20	12	2	8
Alaska Native Heritage Center in service training	20	18	0	3
Staff, student and teacher two hour tour of Alaska Native Heritage Center	21	16	0	4
<b>Staff meetings</b>				
Doreen Brown, Indian Education, ASD staff discussions on race	10	23	4	4
Diane Hirshberg staff discussion on the history of education for Alaska Native in Alaska	16	21	2	2
Trefon Angasan and Nelson Angaouk discussion on AFN and Alaska land settlement issues	14	18	6	3
Edith Vorderstrass presentation on growing up Inupiat	19	15	3	4
Gwen Angasan presentation on growing up Yupik	18	15	2	4
<b>Other Programs</b>				
Teacher Training through the Alaska Humanities Forum Rose Urban Rural Exchange Program	1	9	1	29
Parent teacher visits outside of school	6	10	4	21
<b>Please list anything we missed:</b>				
Alaska Studies Class	1			
Visit Elderly w/ no children in school	1			

**We would like to know more about parent-teacher visits this year:**

**6. About what percent of all your students' parents came to parent teacher conferences this spring?**

100% (12), 98% (1), 95% (6), 90% (3), 50% (2)

**7. About what percent of your Alaska Native students' parents came to parent-teacher conferences this spring?**

100% (18), 95% (1), 80% (2), 75% (1), 50% (1)

**8. Is this an improvement from what you have experienced in previous years?**

Yes (9) No (9)

**9. This school year, did you meet with any parents of your Alaska Native students outside of school?** Yes (14) (Please continue with Question 10)

No (12) (Skip to Question 15, page 4)

Comment: I tried to do home visits, but parents were not interested. The two I did schedule cancelled at the last minute.

**10. If yes, with how many different families did you meet?**

1 family (5), 2 families (3), 4 families (1), 5 families (1), 6 families (3),  
10 families (1)

**11. Where did you meet with these parents? (e.g., home, café, library, etc.)**

-Home = 13  
-Restaurant  
-McDonalds  
-Café Europa  
-Home/school  
-Shelter

## **12. What do you think were the outcomes of these visits?**

- Positive inter-communication
- It helped created open communication with his family.
- Parents were comfortable communication regularly and honestly.
- Increased communication.
  
- Made the families feel comfortable and in good relations with the teacher.
- Students, parents and teacher's felt "connected" in the educational process.
- Very positive – we were able to talk about them as a family – not just the child.
- Very insightful! I enjoyed getting to know my parents on a more personal level.
- Increased awareness of where students are coming from.
- Increased feeling of being on same team.
- Very beneficial for the parents to know what is available for their child.
- Closer relationship that is continuing, even after students have moved.
- Wanted to know when I would come back.
  
- Parents were uncomfortable and so were many teachers.
- Same as if attending conferences.

## **13. Did you find the visits valuable? Why or why not?**

- Yes, increased communications
- Yes. Builds trust, communication.
- Yes.
- Yes – parents were more than happy to share their culture.
- Yes. Very relaxing exchange of information.
- Yes. It was a great time to learn more about each family and for families to become more comfortable with me.
- Yes, open the channels of communication.
- Yes. It opened up home to school communication.
- Extremely valuable. I learned so much from each family. They were very open and sharing with me.
- Yes
  
- No
- No. I meet with all my parents each year.
- Not really sure if we learned anything new we couldn't have learned at school.

**14. Would you recommend continuing to encourage teachers to meet with parents of Alaska Native students outside of school? Why or why not?**

-Yes.

-Yes. Although I plan to try and meet with all families outside of school.

-Yes. It was a great experience as it gave me an insight to the students and their lives outside of school.

-Yes. Greater appreciation for the culture.

-Yes. It seemed to open the doors of communication between teachers and parents.

-Yes. Knowing what I do about Alaska, Native parents and people, it takes more than one visit, sometimes many to establish trust.

-Yes. It opens up more valuable lines of communication.

-Yes, to build up rapport. This will be a good step to understand and help our students. I would like to be involved strongly.

-Yes. Improves communication.

-Yes. They need to see what happens in their surroundings and where they come from.

-Yes, but I would not push it or make it mandatory. To demand it is not respectful to their families.

-Yes. It would help to understand more about the Alaska Native culture.

-No. Many parents I spoke with declined for me to visit, citing it as intrusive and an invasion of privacy.

-No. Parents were not receptive to the idea.

-No. All students need to have their parents met with, not just AK native students.

-If natural and not a forced issue.

**Thinking about everything you did this year, please answer the next two questions:**

**15. Did your ability to teach Alaska Native students improve this year?**

Yes (21) No (10)

**Why or why not?**

- Time increased awareness of AK Native needs and cultures.
- A better understanding of culture.
- The parents of the Alaska Native children were more open.
- Yes, showed an old video clip of a village of one of my students. He narrated and it built his self-confidence.
- Deeper understanding of different cultures and their way of doing things.
- I had a better understanding of culture and background.
- Expanding my understanding helps me be more open to student struggles.
- I understand them better.
- I was more knowledgeable regarding processing time for students.
- Because a method for cross-cultural understanding and communication dawned on me. Actually, it is something I've thought about a lot but not had articulated it's application in school settings until this year.
- My children have improved in most all areas and speaking to other Native children they showed an improvement in their skills.
  
- Information from the trainings helped with my perspective and strategies.
- I have received a lot of training this past year. I completed my 6 credits of Alaska History/Communication in addition to training at school.
- I took Father Michael's class and all of the extra information.
- I took communicating across cultures and came to a better understanding about how Native people feel about school and some cultural differences.
  
- About the same.
- Neutral. First time with this type of student.
  
- I have always had a good ability to reach all families and students whatever their ethnicity is.
- I have always strived to meet the needs of all students – not based on cultural background.
  
- Through experience working with Alaska Native Students and teacher development.
- Have taught in Kwethluk. Only had one AK Native student in my classroom.
- Prior "bush" experience had made me aware of their special needs.
- I've taught native students for 25 years.

## **16. Next year, what can your school do to improve the success of Alaska Native students?**

- Hire more Native Alaskan staff.
- If you start by having a teacher committee, guiding star and then do not continue the process, please give respect to those involved, motivated teachers now.
- Continue home visits and other programs similar to this year because we will have many new teachers.
- Smaller class size and more Indian Education and Title I support.
  
- Open up an after school program for enrichment activities for native students.
- Have an Alaskan Native weeklong celebration
- Alaska Celebration Family Night.
- I'm not sure if it is possible to convey this readily, but: there are many kinds of literacy. There is the type we teach in school and then there is another form that enables us to not only appreciate but to keep it in mind more than one point of view at a time. This is essential to multi-cultural perspectives that are neither "fluffy" nor "hybridization".
- Learn more about student's background.
  
  
- Continue including parents and getting students to school.
- Continue visits, keep incorporating cultural activities.
- Continuing to work at involving all families in their child's education.
- Continue with talk s from Native Staff and others
- More teacher development
- Involve parents in more specific roles in the classroom.
- We already have an effective program. Just continue doing what we've been doing.
- Continue with the in-services
- More parent involvement
- To have more success they need a review the next day or a few days after the assignment. Show some examples to follow and make sure they can follow and understand for the student and the parent. Paid materials for some!
- Continued training.
- Keep going, what was successful.
- Keep doing what you are doing.
- Reinforce things that were done this year.
- Learn more about student's background.

