

ALASKA'S *Education* CHALLENGE

Tribal & Community Ownership Minutes

Wednesday, August 30, 2017

9:00am-12:00pm

Facilitators

- Timi Tullis
- Norm Wooten
- Jerry Covey

DEED Staff Support

- Sarah Emmal
- Erin Hardin
- Courtney Preziosi

Guest Speakers

- Lori
- Andrea
- Pauline Harvey

Committee Members

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Chair Kenny Gallahorn | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Chair John Harmon | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-Chair Jason Toole |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kathy Commack | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jerilyn Kelly | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rachel Roy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Janet Bifelt | <input type="checkbox"/> Tom Begich | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Zach Fansler |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Kopp | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tiffany Jackson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kerry Boyd |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tim Parker | <input type="checkbox"/> Steve Ginnis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hattie (for Melanie Bahnke) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunter Carter | <input type="checkbox"/> Chris Hladick | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valerie Davidson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kathie Wasserman | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deena Mitchell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Medicine Crow |

9:00 – 9:15 Welcome, Overview & Check-In

Timi gave an overview of what will take place in today's meeting – representatives from Inuit Circumpolar Council-Alaska (ICC-Alaska), First Alaskan Institute, AASB, and Commissioner Davidson will speak about Tribal compacting and what that will look like.

9:15 - 9:35 ICC Guest Speakers Presentation and Q&A

Pauline, from ICC Alaska, gave a brief history of her working background and a description of her current work with ICC Alaska. She has traveled all over Alaska presenting the Alaska Inuit Education Improvement Strategy. Strategies are – 1. Promote the indigenization of education frameworks to more clearly align with Inuit ideologies; 2. Suggest, advocate for, and influence policies related to Inuit education; 3. Research, advocate for, and promote the development, implementations, and sharing of culture-based curriculum that focuses on students' identity as Inuit; 4. Promote the Inuit language education; 5. Foster educational leadership capacity among Alaska Inuit; and 6. Revitalize and reclaim traditional Inuit parenting skills. They are nearing the end of the second year of the grant and plan to visit other countries involved in ICC International. Her hope is that the work will continue based on the framework that was developed through the grant.

Timi thanked Pauline for her participation.

Question and Answer Session -

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- Out of all the recommendations that the report put out, what do you think has the most impact?
Pauline – Each one of the four regions had the same desire which was to promote Inuit identity. Continue to focus on Inuit identity. When a student is sure of who they are, they can succeed.
- Are there certain schools doing this very well?
Pauline – A Bethel K-3 Immersion School. These students do better in later school years and create success for themselves. Also North Slope Borough.
- Was just in Kotzebue and met members involved in the development of the framework. Can you talk about the types of barriers you have seen and ways to get around these barriers?
Pauline – There is current curriculum the state mandates and on top of that there is the assessment piece. Having local and regional boards willing to 'step out of the box' and use resources valuable to each region. Students will be more able to succeed.

9:35 – 9:55 Community Conversations Guest Speakers Presentation and Q&A

Andrea is a tribal member from Quinhagak. She is the Director of the Alaska Native Policy. She has done work in Equity of Education, especially in rural areas. Culturally responsive and embedded Social and Emotional Learning. Involves finding out what it is elders and community members envision for the school environment. Reiterated Pauline's mention of cultural identity and its importance.

Lori spoke about AASB and how they are advocates for youth. Through the questions that were designed, there were a lot of themes that arose. Themes were around environment and incorporating values (social emotional learning), encouragement to think about instruction and what is being incorporated, sense of place, and building out instructional practices. In collaboration with First Alaskans Institute and other stakeholders, they developed a survey - Cultural Connectedness Scale.

Question and Answer Session -

- Really appreciate the presentation. Can you tell me the organization you are with?
Lori – I work with AASB. Provide supports for community and family engagement.
- House Bill 102 will make it easier to get Indigenous language teachers. I hope this helps facilitate the 6 strategies that Pauline identified and would help tailor the education to the unique personal needs. When we talk about our Education Policies not reflecting Inuit values and culture, is it possible under self-governance. Do we need a model that gets money to entities that can more personalize the education? This would limit the state testing mandates that drives away the curriculum that is needed.
Timi – We will discuss this after break.

9:55 – 10:10 BREAK

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10:00 Overarching Themes Discussion

Timi and Norm asked if anyone has joined the call.

Norm talked about the work of the committee, readings, and materials. Norm transitioned into the 3 proposed recommendations – Values, Tribal Compacting, and Partnerships.

Values:

The committee took time to discuss their thoughts on this theme.

- Listening to Pauline, the starting point would be the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN). They list the values on their [website](#).
- What we are missing is referring back to our values. A big thing is respect for elders, sharing, and honesty. A lot of times what we see within our communities is we need to remember to give back to our elders. We need to pass on our knowledge and values which is a huge piece in our tradition.
- Practicing values in the school.
- Emphasizing the part about what elders bring to the table in regards to values. There may be individual communities that have slightly different values, it would be beneficial to gather elders' input in the different communities.
- If there were basic values in the schools, it would help with self-identity. This would be a way to explicitly teach this. Currently it's very loose and not prescriptive.
- Ties to Tribal and Community Ownership. Values bring an anchor to our whole society.
- We cannot forget about the overriding issue of the education values in itself.
- Educating our children, strong moral and ethical fabric into our lives. There is a recognition that there is a way to synergize. Alaska is a really unique place, and part of the uniqueness is the indigenous community.
- The comment about equivalences is great.
- There is no such thing as value free education. All education is built on a value system. It is the foundation.
- Promotion of self-identity for children no matter where they are located.

Timi asked if there was anyone that would oppose putting forth the recommendation of values?

- Only concern is it potentially could open a 'can of worms'. Districts going in a different directions could pose an issue.
- I support having values a recommendation. There are so many influences, and one of the challenges that we do face is teachers coming outside of the state who don't understand the way of life.

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Norm said they will put forward a draft for the committee to see.

Tribal Compacting

Commissioner Davidson spoke about the impact of Tribal Health statewide. There is nobody more incentivized than tribes and tribal organization in the communities because they always want the best for their children. They are able to bring other resources to the table. We need to make sure we don't burden them to provide the service without the resources to be successful.

The committee took time to discuss their thoughts on this theme.

Question and Answer Session -

- Concern is for small regions it would have a detrimental impact to our schools.
- The key to compacting is that the tribe or tribal organizations would decide what is best for them.
- If we could do a similar process as to what was done in healthcare it would be revolutionary.
- As far as education, tribes need to determine what their capacity is. Because we are doing this for the first time in our state, we are going to make the very best decisions with the information with have and what we don't have. No matter how well we plan, we will still make mistakes.

Norm asked if there is an agreement to move Tribal Compacting forward as one of our three recommendations.

- 100% behind this.
- If schools were under tribal compacting, would this affect state funding for schools?
- Norm – there is no answer for that right now.
- Davidson – on the child welfare side, the answer to that is yes.
- It is important to reiterate that the states will continue to have their legal obligations to provide education to our children.
- Make sure we are aware of some of the concerns people may have.
- We believe our accountability will improve with this model. We don't know how it will shape up in every area, but we recognize there has to be flexibility.

Timi assured everyone that they will have input into the written document that is put forward.

Partnerships

Erin highlighted comments around Partnerships from last meeting.

The committee took time to discuss their thoughts on this theme.

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- It would be beneficial for all entities involved in education from ages 0 and up to collaborate. This was evident at a conference attended in Hawaii. A synopsis of the conference will be sent in an email to Erin.
- First Alaskans Institute in conjunction with Alaska Pacific University – invited guests from NZ who have been in leadership roles in developing Tribal University. Would like to share the dialogue when time allows.
- I think partnerships are vital. There are so many partnerships have been attempted and some can work better.

Timi asked the committee if they see partnerships as a stand-alone transformative idea?

- I think it is important for us to keep it in the forefront. There may be tribes who choose not to compact but we still value their input. Even if compacting isn't pursued, partnerships are still critical.
- I agree. I think partnerships should be a stand-alone.
- I am feeling challenged myself. We may not know all the details, in thinking about partnerships on its own – what will be transformative about putting partnerships forward? I am not feeling convinced yet that partnerships are transformative.
- I agree. How can we bring in people so there is that ownership so we are serving their needs? Do we want to isolate into a category or change into two so we can establish what is transformative.
- Ontario uses the term 'Deep Collaboration'. Maybe different terminology would determine what is transformative.
- Because partnerships will look different in every community, it works either way as a stand-alone or not.

11:45 What are our next steps?

Timi asked that if there is someone who feels strongly about partnerships being a stand-alone transformative proposal, that they give the department some verbiage to fine tune DEED's recommendations.

Timi encouraged committee members to email Erin by Tuesday 9/4. If no responses are received, it will be determined that partnerships cannot be a stand-alone transformative recommendation. Can we agree to that?

Timi adjourned the meeting. The next meeting is September 19th at 1:00pm.