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ABSTRACT

As part of a larger study of systemic educational reform in rural Alaska, this case study examines implementation of the Alaska Onward to Excellence (AOTE) process in Koyukuk, a small Athabascan village on the Yukon River in western interior Alaska. The village has a K-10 school with an enrollment of 19-41 students during the study period. A review of AOTE documents, interviews with community members and an investigation of community-school collaborative projects revealed these concerns: importance of language and culture to provide students with traditional values, a sense of place, a solid identity and a feeling of belonging; maintenance of environmental and social balance through conventions of traditional respect and the need for continued holistic learning through demonstrative and cooperative activities. Before AOTE there were people in Koyukuk who were actively initiating changes in school and community, but AOTE provided a vehicle to formally articulate community goals. AOTE seemed to work well as part of a larger community planning process, providing a safe place for community members to discuss lifestyle changes and the importance of maintaining traditional beliefs and values. In addition to strengthening the community-school relationship and facilitating implementation of other programs, AOTE empowered community representatives in their dealings with the district. However, teacher turnover, a change in community dynamics with the departure of two activist families, and insufficient district support undermined the sustainability of reform. This report includes results of a survey of students in grades 6-10. (Contains 15 references.) (SV)

CREATING A *strong, healthy* Community

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CREATING A STRONG, HEALTHY COMMUNITY: ELLA B. VERNETTI SCHOOL, KOYUKUK

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"Meneelghaadze' T'oh bet'oh k'edeezoonee; literally, 'beautiful people [strong/great people, song makers, speech-makers] live at the base of Meneelghaadze.' Koyukuk has been referred to as such as far back as people can remember." (Eliza Jones, personal communication. 1998)

During the first two years of this case study, I traveled to Koyukuk on three different occasions: the first trip in April 1997, the second trip in September 1997, and the final trip in April 1998. On each occasion I took Frontier Airlines out of Fairbanks, flying on a Navajo prop plane, with a short stopover in the regional hub of Galena. High-school students from this region have the option of attending this charter school for their high school education.

The flight out of Galena generally goes to Nulato and Kaltag, larger villages on the Yukon south of Koyukuk, before approaching Koyukuk at the base of Meneelghaadze', the bluff at the mouth of the Koyukuk River. Meneelghaadze' is a Koyukon Athabascan word for this bluff, meaning 'something fluid moves within it,' a reference to the clay gathered by Athabascan people in this area for use in making pots. The traditional Koyukuk place name is Meneelghaadze' T'oh, literally 'at the base of Meneelghaadze'.' This bluff is an important Athabascan landmark for this area, akin to the Navajo sacred mountains or other Native American sacred sites. The cave within the Meneelghaadze' is the subject of traditional narratives. During an AOTE case study training, team member Eliza Jones talked about a specific marking on the bluff:

> There is a white spot on the bluff face that people used to shoot at as they are going past it in boats that are tied together. They ceremonially "unlock the padlock" as they go by in the spring. Whole families came out to the Yukon in the spring from their individual spring camps.

This practice of shooting at the marking may have been a way of requesting safe passage into the Yukon—a wide and fast-flowing river—the navigation of which requires considerable skill and experience.

In summer and fall, as the plane banks over the river towards Koyukuk, the houses and streets of the village fade into the foliage of the alder and birch stands and the dark green of the black spruce. The local Frontier agent meets the morning and afternoon flight, signing for the freight and mail that comes in and ferrying any passengers via a four-wheeler and cart (or snowmachine in the winter) to various destinations within the village. The gravel and dirt road to the village lies parallel to the river, passing houses and the post office, with formal road signs marking each lane; these signs and widened roads were part of a 1997 project and are recent changes to the landscape of the village.

Koyukuk has a population of approximately 131, with 40 single-family residences in use in the village. Other structures include a small church (St. Patrick's) and rectory, the two-story Ella B. Vernetti School, one A-frame single-family school staff residence, one diesel power plant, one washeteria, one structure housing both a clinic and community library, one privately owned store, and one community hall. The village does not have indoor plumbing with the exception of the school, the school staff residence, and community washeteria. A new landfill and access road were recently completed. The airport, just south of the village, is maintained with state funding, and the village is served year-round by three small private airlines.

The majority of Koyukuk residents live a subsistence lifestyle. Jobs that provide supplemental income include fire-fighting for the Bureau of Land Management or state of Alaska, work in coastal canneries, construction work, trapping, and crafts. Two residents hold commercial fishing permits. The 1990 U.S. census indicated there are approximately 27 community jobs and an official unemployment rate of 27%, with 39.2% of residents living below the poverty level.

Site Visits

During site visits I stayed in the school library, a spacious room on the second floor of the building. Throughout the halls, photos of students, present and past community members, and school activities decorate the hallways. Individual color portraits of key village elders adorn the gymnasium walls. Days were spent talking with case study team members, AOTE leadership team members, and school personnel. Most

talked freely about the school and local educational programs as well as other issues of concern to them. First-year case study team members included teacher Heidi Imhof, teacher's aide Sarah Dayton, and Tim Cline, the director of instruction for the district. Case study team members changed after the second team training, and by the final training session of year two, the two team members were community member Eliza Jones and Rita Dayton, the district curriculum coordinator, who is originally from Koyukuk. Eliza Jones is a fluent Koyukon speaker and author of the forthcoming *Koyukon Dictionary*, an extensive collection of linguistic and cultural data on the Koyukon Athabascan people of Alaska. She also holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. During the third year of the case study, district intern Charlies Esmailka was assigned as the only member of the case study team.

Throughout the two-year data gathering period, team members readily furnished a variety of written information about school and district programs and provided a substantial amount of information during case study team trainings and subsequent interviews. During my second site visit, a school-community meeting was held, during which I gave an overview of the case study and the principal, parents, and teachers discussed current school policies. Also during this second visit, the principal approved my request to observe classes. Interviews with principal Karen Glassman and teacher Eric Peterson were audiotaped.

Cultural/Historical Context: A Very Brief Synopsis

It is difficult to summarize in a few paragraphs the rich history of this area and the complex connections among the Koyukon villages. The Koyukon maintained trade routes and traveled extensively within the larger Athabascan region and into the neighboring Inupiaq regions. Athabascan people of this area have a history that extends at least 6,000 years into the past. The Koyukon refer to themselves as *tl'eeyegge hut'aane*, or 'one people.' Within this organization there are three families or clans: *Bedzeyh Te Hut'aane* (Caribou People), *Toneedze Gheltseelne* (Middle of the Stream or Water People), and *Noltseen* (Bear or Copper People). Miranda Wright, a cultural anthropologist originally from Nulato, summarized the functions and complexities of the

clan system in her master's thesis (1995) titled *The Last Great Indian War (Nulato 1851)*. She states: "Through this system, individual statuses and behavioral roles are established. . . . Political strength and spiritual unit, characteristics tightly entwined in Koyukon ideology, reinforced the unit of clan members." In 1996, Ms. Wright participated in an Athabascan language planning conference in Fairbanks, during which she described the different attributes of each clan:

> The Caribou Clan is associated with things above, things of beauty: sunsets, sunrises, northern lights, and sounds that come from above, for example, wind, thunder, and bird songs. The Bear or Copper Clan is associated with things below: dens, copper, minerals, iron, and rock. The Water Clan (Middle of the Stream Clan) is associated with wood . . . in the spring water flows and ice breaks up, eroding river banks. The strength of the water and ice knocks trees down and deposits them in large piles. The water recedes and trees dry up, then the water comes back up and disburses them even to those areas without trees. The strength of the clan is represented by a sweeper tree (a tree embedded in the bottom of the river). (Leonard, 1996, p. 16)

The cultural information provided by indigenous scholars such as Miranda Wright and Eliza Jones is supplemented by anthropological information, including the journals of Jules Jette, a Jesuit priest who spent 30 years among the Koyukon people during the turn of the century. Jette's journals are an extensive source of written information on Koyukon language and culture. As stated previously, much of the information in these journals is being compiled in the *Koyukon Dictionary* by Eliza Jones and the staff of the Alaska Native Language Center (ANLC), University of Alaska Fairbanks. It should be noted that Ms. Jones' knowledge of, and research in, the Koyukon language and culture provide the foundation for this project, and the information provided by Jette's journals is supplemented and often corrected by Ms. Jones.

Russians were the first Europeans to enter the Koyukon area. A Russian trading post was established at Nulato in 1838 and remained until the Alaska Purchase in 1867. In 1898, gold miners entered the region; they found little gold, however, and most left the Koyukuk River area. The village of Koyukuk was established in the late 1800s. The people of Koyukuk are descended from families who once lived in camps along the Koyukuk River.

> Most of the people who settled at Koyukuk came from up the Koyukuk River—up as far as the Dolbi River which is close to Huslia. Even after people made Koyukuk their permanent home, they used to go up the Koyukuk River to their winter camps. . . . People still moved to winter camps, fish camps, and spring camps until fairly recently. In recent times, families started staying in town during the winter because of school and in the summer because of jobs in the villages. (Jones, 1983)

Native people of this area found work in the mining camps, on steamers that traveled rivers, "and in the growing number of trading posts established to serve both Indians and gold-seekers." (Nelson, 1983). Koyukuk Station served as a U.S. Signal Corps telegraph site during World War I. Today, remnants of the original telegraph are visible reminders of past events.

Historical Context of Schooling

European contact brought a wide range of social changes to all areas of Alaska, including the introduction of formal schooling. Before the introduction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools, there were three mission schools established in the area, including the Catholic missions at Nulato (established 1888) and Holy Cross and the Episcopal mission at Anvik. The school at Koyukuk was established in 1908 and was operated by the Board of Education/Bureau of Indian Affairs. School was not in session consistently every year—Ms. Jones remembers "lots of interruptions." From 1953 to 1976, the school was operated by the territory, then the state. In 1976, the Rural Education Attendance Areas were established, and the Koyukuk School is now part of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District (YKSD).

Some older residents of Koyukuk remember experiences at mission schools. During tuberculosis or influenza epidemics of the early 1900s, Native children were often sent to live at mission schools while other family members recovered. Many Native communities lost up to two-thirds of their population during these outbreaks. In some cases families did not recover, giving birth to what Harold Napolean has called a "generation of orphans" (1991, p. 10). Both the Episcopal and Catholic missions as well as the early territorial and subsequent BIA schools repressed use of Native languages and

community cultural practices. In his biography, Roger Dayton, who was born in 1921, remembers his experiences at the Holy Cross mission:

> When we first got there my brother and I used to talk our language quite a bit, but the missionaries didn't like that. They couldn't understand us and they might think we're talking about them. They made us speak English so'd they'd understand what we're saying. They'd remind us not to speak our language, but we never got punished for that. We got punished for fighting and for being lazy. And for answering back or whatever mischief we'd get into. (pp. 26-27)

It is important to note that many Native people who attended mission, territorial, or BIA schools were punished both physically and emotionally for violating the English-only mandate.

Case study team member Eliza Jones did not attend the mission schools but remembers attending school at Huslia for three years from 1952 to 1955. The territorial government hired a teacher, and children of all ages started first grade together.

> It was hard on the older boys because they were not used to sitting six hours a day. This was not part of their training. This was a different way of learning. At home we learned by trial and error, then we had to get used to a structured day. My mother went to the mission school at Allakaket and taught us how to read and write at home. She died when I was 11 or 12. While I was in school at Huslia, the teacher used to get mad at me because sometimes I would correct his math. We had a new teacher every year. Benedict [Ms. Jones' husband] went to school for a little while before World War II closed the schools. (Jones, 1997)

I asked Ms. Jones about attitudes toward speaking English when she was growing up. She remembers that it was a "cool thing to speak English" and "not too stressful to switch to English." Her father would often have her translate the "Tundra Topics" radio program for him.

Younger Koyukuk residents remember attending the state-operated school and then going to Mt. Edgecumbe, Galena, Tanana, or Fairbanks to complete high school. The AOTE leadership team facilitator, Lawrence Dayton, completed high school at Monroe Catholic, a private school in Fairbanks. It is important to note that some Koyukuk families move to and from other villages or into urban areas such as Fairbanks, perhaps returning to Koyukuk after a certain period of time. For example, the Jones family moved to Fairbanks in 1970 for several years, and two of their children attended

Head Start and started elementary school in Fairbanks. Some of their children graduated from Fairbanks schools.

Regional Issues and Concerns

Current widespread economic, social, and political concerns include the maintenance of subsistence rights—including management of natural resources by federal and/or state agencies—reduced state government assistance to needy families ("welfare to workfare"), and the widespread misconceptions about state-funded rural education that have resulted in a new statewide funding formula that reduces funding for many of Alaska's rural school districts.

During my second site visit I was treated to a boat ride up the Koyukuk River to an Alaska Department of Fish and Game checkpoint for the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area. All hunters are required to stop at this or other cabin checkpoints to assure they have not exceeded the bag limit for nonresidents: "one bull with a spread of at least 50 inches, or with four or more brow tines on one side." Hunters are also required to bring back the first four inches of the lower jaw. In this region there are private Native corporation and allotment lands, as well as state and federally managed areas.

During the fall of 1998, the subsistence silver salmon fishing season was cut short due to a poor salmon run along the Yukon River. Salmon is a large part of the subsistence diet for many Alaska Natives in rural areas and supplements other subsistence foods such as caribou and moose.

Another specific concern of the people of this area is the presence of hazardous waste in their environment: chemical products stored in the area by the military and federal government; the continuing use and disposal of plastics, Styrofoam, batteries, and other solid wastes; and the effects of airborne pollutants. There is also concern over the runoff effects of mining activities. In December 1997, the first Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Protection Summit was held in Galena. Participants included Alaskan and First Nations (Yukon Territory) tribal chiefs and council members from Yukon, Koyukuk, and Innoko river communities. "The goal of the summit was to bring together the Tribes and First Nations along the river to organize, address, discuss, and plan for

environmental stewardship of the Yukon River. . . . Almost all participants had some story about extensive pollution to the Yukon River Watershed" (Wheeler, 1998). Residents of these rivers worry about the increasing number of deaths due to cancer and various anomalies seen when butchering wild meats. The following powerful quotes from the meeting summary indicate that Native people of this area are fully aware of the events that have affected their land and waterways and the consequences of environmental pollutants:

> In 1945 when this place flooded here [Nulato], we sent a bunch of barrels down there. It wasn't the Natives, I grant you that. . . . From here down to the mouth it was polluted with . . . oil barrels that the Air Force brought in. . . . Air Force, military and different governments have left a lot of big messes throughout our territories that's affecting us. (Wheeler, 1998, p. 12)

> We find sores and deformities in our salmon and flukes in them. . . . I've seen moose with growths on them, fist size. And that's what pollution does to the animals we live on. (1998, p. 14)

AOTE case study team member Eliza Jones was part of this summit and talked about the importance and environmental relevance of maintaining and passing on traditional values:

> Respect, respect, respect. Respect for the land, respect for the water, respect for people, respect for *everything*. In the traditional way, when a person is going to cut down a tamarack, you leave a . . . small present there, maybe a piece of something valuable at the base of the tree and say, "I'm cutting you down for a reason. I'm going to make good use of you . . . a lot of these kinds of beliefs and practices, I know we're not passing on to our younger people. (Jones, 1997, p. 17)

Current School Context

Yukon-Koyukuk District Overview

The district's mission statement is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Yukon-Koyukuk Mission Statement

The mission of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District, the educational leader of interior Alaska, is to prepare students to become lifelong learners, problem solvers, and contributing members of their family, community, and society by providing them with relevant, collaborative, and integrated learning experiences that build bridges of knowledge and understanding between the unique traditional values of our region and the changing and increasingly technological world.

Objectives:

- All students will develop employability skills.
- All students will become effective problem solvers and independent learners.
- All students will graduate with the necessary skills to enter postsecondary programs, entry-level job, or self-employment and be independent, productive participants in family, community, and society.

Strategies:

- We will promote student self-esteem.
- We will infuse cultural heritage programs into the curriculum.
- We will promote family and community involvement in our schools.
- We will increase student participation in civic and judicial processes while involving students in site and district planning.

The Yukon-Koyukuk School District (YKSD) covers 10 school sites within the western interior of Alaska, an area of 65,000 square miles. The district office is located in Fairbanks. Geographically, the district is larger than the state of Washington (YKSD, 1995). District communities range in size from Hughes with a population of 80 to Nulato with a population of 400. The total number of students served is approximately 600. The district's strategic plan is shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Yukon-Koyukuk Strategic Plan

Strategic Planning in the Yukon-Koyukuk School District is a continual celebration of accomplishments and a set of challenges defining our course to the future.

Since its beginning in 1992, the Strategic Plan in conjunction with the Regional School Board's goals and support has resulted in many changes for the benefit of students. The most significant of which are:

- peer and cross age tutoring
- student employability assessments
- parenting programs
- cultural heritage curriculum development
- Athabaskan language programs
- Work Experience for Rural Kids (WERK)
- Kids voting
- peer counseling (natural helpers)
- community service
- outdoor education
- teacher talent bank
- technology planning
- community as the classroom
- site-based counselors
- site newsletters
- cooperative learning
- collaborative teaching
- student involvement in schools and communities
- student recognition programs
- student leadership development, and
- on-going site and district assessment and goal setting.

The Strategic Plan affirms the district's commitment to student growth and achievement through the support of caring and informed adults. Through Strategic planning, the Yukon-Koyukuk School District stays appropriately focused on the student.

The process of implementing AOTE within the district clarified and enhanced the mission statement. The AOTE mission statement (Table 3) directly references Native cultural values and promises support of these values within district schools.

Table 3
Yukon-Koyukuk School District—Alaska Onward to Excellence

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Yukon-Koyukuk School District is to prepare all students to become lifelong learners, problem-solvers, and contributing members of their family, community and society.

Values & Beliefs:

1. All Children Can and Will Learn.
2. Traditional Values and Beliefs are Essential to Learning.
3. Personal Responsibility is Important to Learning.
4. Learning Respect for People, Animals, Land and Life.
5. The Involvement of Community and Parents is Essential to Learning.
6. Students Learn Best Through Real-Life Activities.
7. Schools in Partnership with Parents and Community Shall Teach Ethical Conduct (Right and Wrong).

Student Learning Goals:

- Students will:
  - > Know and Value Their Own Culture.
  - > Communicate, Solve Problems, Master Core Skills, and Use Modern Technology.
  - > Be Respectful, Dependable, Persistent, Self Disciplined (including Sober and Drug-Free), and Productive Workers.

Nine of the 10 district schools are located within the Koyukon or Denaakk'e language/cultural area. Denaakk'e is the term preferred by the Athabascan people of this area when referring to their language. Within the Athabascan area but outside the Koyukon area is Minto, which is located within the Lower Tanana language area.

Certified staff at each school include one of four itinerant counselors who rotate among district sites. Information on certified staff was obtained from Charles Esmailka, the YKSD administrative intern, and is shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Certified Staff in Yukon-Koyukuk Schools

Site	Certified Staff	Native Certified Staff	Students K–12
Allakaket	6	3	55
Bettles	2	0	14
Hughes	2	1	21
Huslia	8	4	79
Kaltag	7	2	81
Koyukuk	3	0	19
Manley	3	0	14
Minto	10	2	81
Nulato	12	6	127
Ruby	6	0	61

Between the 1996–97 and 1997–98 school years, there were several personnel changes at the district office, which included the resignations of superintendent Glen Olson and of Tim Cline the director of instruction who had served as a case study district team representative. Information on district curriculum guidelines is in Appendix A.

1996–1997 School Year, Koyukuk

Between 30 and 41 K–10 students attended school in Koyukuk during the 1996–97 school year. Three students left Koyukuk to attend grades 11–12, two at Mt. Edgecumbe and one at Tanana. An itinerant district counselor visits for one week once a month; YKSD has four counselors serving 10 schools. Koyukon cultural and language activities are funded for 120 hours per year or six hours per week for 20 weeks through the Indian Education Program. WERK is a job-shadowing program coordinated through the district office in Fairbanks.

During the first year of the case study, Richard Baxter, the principal/teacher in Koyukuk, furnished the four-year plan on the school curriculum (shown in Table 5).

Thirty people attended the first meeting held on November 7, 1995 to learn about the purpose and process of AOTE.

Table 5
School Curriculum for Ella B. Vernetti School (4-year plan)

1996/1997	**1998/1999**
Earth Science Native American Literature and Modern Discourse Alaska Studies Physical Education Computer Applications Algebra I WERK Elective Koyukon Athabascan Language	Earth Science British Literature/Communication Skills Health Physical Education Algebra I Computer Applications or Keyboarding I Elective (Koyukon Athabascan Language, WERK)
1997/1998	**1999/2000**
Biology American Lit & Language Skills American History Physical Education Computer Applications Applied Math I WERK Elective (Koyukon Athabascan Language)	Biology World Literature/Communication Skills World Geography Applied Math I Computer Applications or Keyboarding I Elective (Koyukon Athabascan Language, WERK)

Required classes:

4th–6th

Alaska Studies
Science
Language Arts (includes the writing process, grammar, spelling, D'nelian)
Math
PE/Health
Reading
Computer--keyboarding & application
Other--Native Language, art, music

7th–8th

same as 4th–6th except for Math Applications and General Science

High School

Alaska Studies
Earth Science
Algebra I
Native Literature/Speech
PE/First Aid-CPR
WERK-Native Language (one semester of each)
Computer Technology

After the 1997–1998 school year ended, Richard Baxter and his wife, Shirley Baxter, an elementary teacher with a special education endorsement, retired after teaching for six years in Koyukuk. Originally from Oregon where they taught for many years, they had spent the two prior years in Allakaket, an Athabascan village on the Arctic Circle, near the headwaters of the Koyukuk River. The principal/teacher's day was generally allocated between teaching and administrative duties; approximately two-thirds of his time was spent in the 3rd–5th grade homeroom teaching reading, writing, and math. He also taught junior-high math and high-school Alaska studies courses. Additional duties included serving on the AOTE 11-member village leadership team and attending AOTE facilitator training beginning in the fall of 1995. He attended all AOTE village meetings and wrote up the minutes for each meeting. Mrs. Baxter taught in the K–2 homeroom and also taught prekindergarten classes two to three times a week.

Heidi Imhof, the secondary teacher, taught for five years in Koyukuk before taking a one-year leave of absence beginning in the fall of 1998. She was a member of the AOTE village leadership team and the case study team; before teaching in Koyukuk she worked for Yukon-Koyukuk School District in an administrative capacity. During her years in Koyukuk, Ms. Imhof played a major role in helping to implement proposed projects and programs described in this report. As indicated in the subsequent Koyukuk "map" of school reform, many projects originated with the women's sewing group and Community-School Committee. Ms. Imhof established and maintained a close relationship with many community members through her participation in both school and community activities. In her absence, she maintains existing ties by corresponding with several community members.

During the first year of the case study, there were indirect references to "problems" at the district level. People were reluctant to talk specifically about existing tensions; however, principal Richard Baxter (now-retired) did furnish a letter he had written to the district board and superintendent, about the cancellation of a district board meeting in Koyukuk. The following are short excerpts from this letter:

> The people of Koyukuk looked forward to meeting with you in Koyukuk. We have had only two board meetings there in the past six years. . . . We were shocked to get a fax at 10:26 on Friday morning officially DIRECTING us to cancel the meeting here. . . . Congratulations; with the next two meetings

scheduled in Fairbanks, you have completely dodged the downriver villages and their concerns. These villages represent close to 50% of your student population. They certainly aren't receiving 50% of your support. . . . Ella B. Vernetti School takes pride in the accomplishment of staff, community and students. We exemplify the AOTE process. We have excellent turnout at AOTE meetings and at our monthly community planning luncheons. . . . Looking into the future, our enrollment is down. . . . This will be my last principal's report to the board as Shirley and I are retiring at the end of this school year. We have enjoyed our eight years in Alaska, two at Allakaket and six in Koyukuk. Thanks for the opportunity to work in such beautiful places and with such wonderful people. My head is so full of fantastic memories and stories that I am not going to take one negative thought or memory to Oregon with me. Please for the sake of the kids in all our communities, come together as a board and remember that everyone in this room should be doing what is good for kids and nothing else. Thank you, and come see us on the lake. (Baxter, 1997)

1997–1998 School Year, Koyukuk Table

Table 6 shows school goals.

Table 6
*Ella B. Vernetti School Goals (*1997/1998)

1. Students will arrive at school on time and will use appropriate behavior at school.
2. Students will practice personal respect, respect for all people and respect for property.
3. Students will enhance their pride and respect in cultural heritage and will develop proficiency in Native language.
4. Students will focus on activities and projects that will enhance respect for elders.
5. Students will develop responsibility for completing coursework, for being involved in community service activities, and being held accountable for their actions.

To be revised and approved by Ella B. Vernetti staff in the fall of 1997 and presented to the CSC on 9/3/97.

Koyukuk had two new (both non-Native) teachers for the 1997–98 school year: principal/teacher Karen Glassman and one teacher with a special education endorsement, Eric Peterson, who transferred in from Minto. For the first time a community-school committee (CSC) member from Koyukuk went to the Anchorage job fair to interview and help select the principal/teacher for this school year. Before this, members of the CSC

were not able to participate in the teacher selection process for the local site. During the 1997–98 school year, there were three certified staff on site, a reduction of one staff member from the previous year. The schedule in Table 7 provides some insight into the variety of subjects and activities teachers are responsible for throughout the day.

Table 7
Teacher Schedule

Heidi Imhof	
8:00-9:00	Teacher Prep [before school]
9:00-10:30	grades 7-10 Reading/American Literature/Language Arts
10:30-11:15	grades 6-10 Pre-Algebra/Applied Math
11:15-12:00	grades 6-10 Life Science
	(alternate weeks with Pre-Algebra/Applied Math)
1:00-1:45	grades 6-10 American History/Social Studies
1:45-2:30	grades 7-10 WERK/Athabascan
2:30-3:15	grades K-6 Writing Process/Computer
3:15-4:00	grades 7-10 Writing Process/Computer
Eric Peterson	
8:00-9:00	Teacher Prep [before school]
9:00-10:30	grades 4-6 Language Arts
10:30-11:15	grades K-5 Math
11:15-12:00	grades K-5 Social Studies/Science
1:00-1:45	grades 6-10 American History/Social Studies
1:45-2:30	grades K-6 physical education
2:30-3:15	grades 7-10 physical education
3:15-4:00	Special Education
Karen Glassman	
8:00-9:00	Teacher Prep [before school]
9:00-10:30	grades K-3 Language Arts
10:30-11:15	Principal Time
11:15-12:00	Principal Time
1:00-1:45	Battle of the Books/Music/Art
1:45-2:30	grades K-6 physical education
2:30-3:15	grades 7-10 physical education
3:15-4:00	Principal Time

1998–1999 School Year, Koyukuk

School began on Monday, August 24. The new YKSD superintendent opened the school and substituted for returning principal/teacher Karen Glassman until her return in late September. Due to a reduction in student population to 19 students total, there are only two teachers this year. The student roster (August 1998 draft) lists the following numbers of students:

Kindergarten	3 students
1st grade	3 students
2nd grade	0 students
3rd grade	0 students
4th grade	3 students
5th grade	3 students
6th grade	2 students
7th grade	2 students
8th grade	4 students
9th grade	0 students
10th grade	0 students

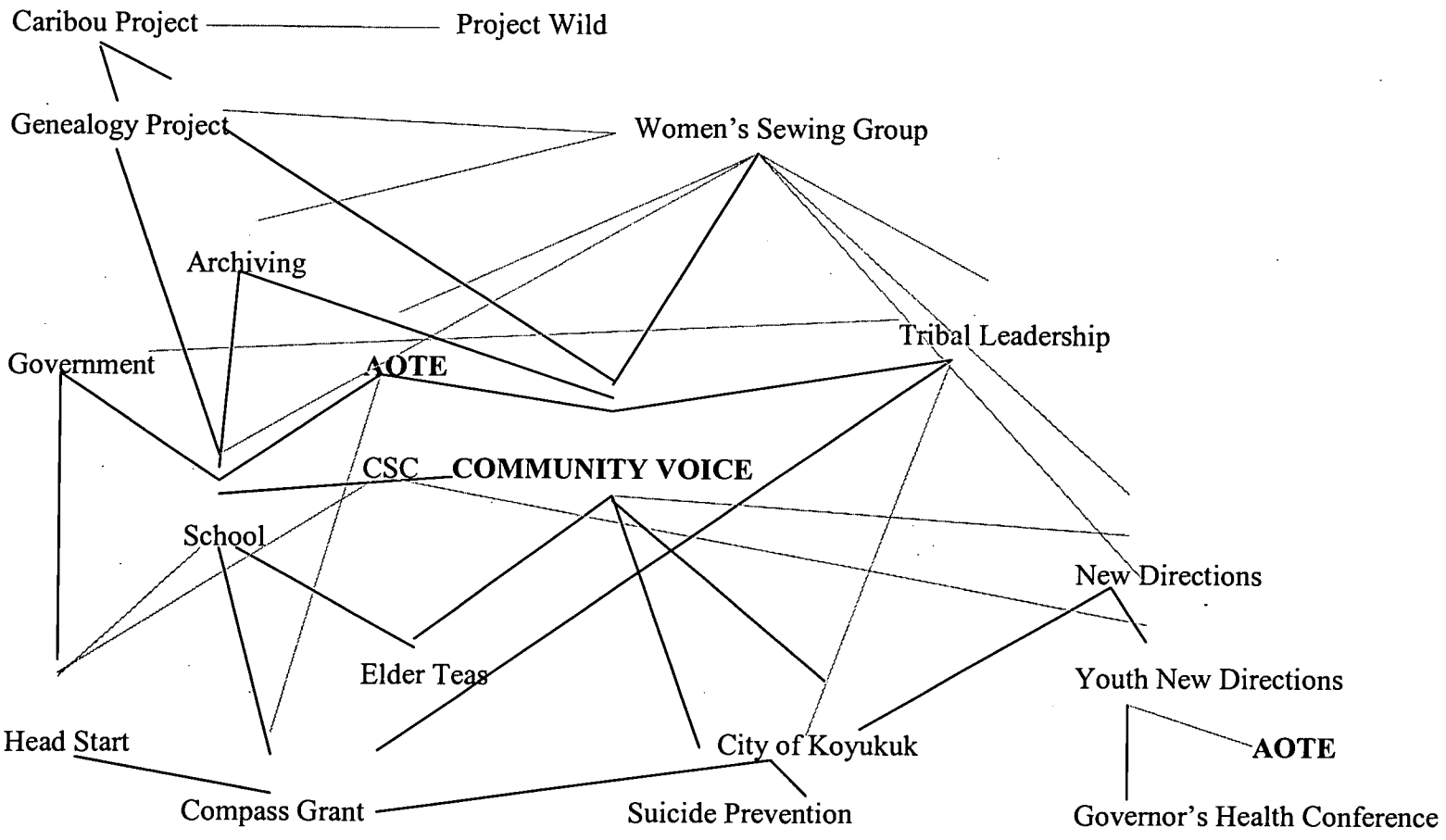
Without a minimum of 21 students enrolled through October 1998, the school site will lose approximately $56,000 in funding. The district office will provide a special education teacher who will visit Koyukuk twice a month to work with teachers and students.

The new superintendent also designed an after-school program to help students who are unable to complete their assignments during class time or need help in specific subjects. This program will be implemented at the beginning of this school year and is also aimed at helping students prepare for the high-school competency exam recently initiated in Alaska. The program is separate from any after-school detention program.

Figure 1

AOTE Case Study Team Training, January 16-17, 1997

Mapping School Reform
Koyukuk, Alaska—compiled by Sarah Dayton and Heidi Imhof



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The preceding "map" (Figure 1) of school reform was drafted during the first case study team training by team members Sarah Dayton and Heidi Imhof. This map provided an initial key to significant community organizations and projects. Dark lines represent direct connections between leadership organizations and projects. Lighter lines represent less direct connections, although any degree of "indirectness" is difficult to determine due to the relatively small site of Koyukuk, and the number of people with connections to some or all community organizations.

- ". . . allowed people more opportunities to be involved in school—more students also."
- "[since AOTE began] more people are involved in community decisions."
- "Before this I was not comfortable coming to the school."

Specific community concerns, and the importance of the traditional value of respect, are accentuated in Koyukuk's AOTE Action Plan, Community Improvement Plan, and the COMPASS Vision Statement, all of which are included in subsequent pages.

The AOTE process in Koyukuk began in 1995 with facilitator training of one community member, Lawrence Dayton, and Richard Baxter, the principal/teacher, through collaboration between the Yukon-Koyukuk School District, Northwest Educational Laboratories, and the Alaska Staff Development Network. Thirty people attended the first village AOTE meeting on November 7, 1995 to learn about the purpose and process of AOTE. Attendees broke into groups to discuss past and ongoing lifestyle changes and the importance of maintaining traditional beliefs and values. Different members of the leadership team facilitated various activities within these meetings. Table 8 shows some of the questions and responses.

Table 8
Community Input at November 1995 AOTE Meeting

What was life like when you were a child?	Parents and grandparents were teachers; life was good; [there was] respect for elders; no jobs. Families moved from camp to camp in the subsistence lifestyle; families helping elders and relatives; no modern conveniences; more respect.
What was school like?	Teachers were really strict; only one or two teachers per school; students would visit teachers; ambitious with students competing; no electricity—first one there had to made fire; emphasis on reading and writing—basic education.
How has life changed?	More technology; parents more involved; less trapping and subsistence; easy money, bigger troubles, more things (sno gos, trucks, TV, electricity); more bored kids; lost our cultural ways.
How have schools changed?	Less discipline; more student and staff travel; more computers and other technology; more parent involvement; more staff; kids focus more on future; more violence; better education program; no 9:00 a.m. school bell.
What important values and beliefs from our past should we keep in the future?	Listen to elders; respect others; respect for property; respect community, cultural activities and history; language; family responsibility and roles; ties to physical environment; religious beliefs.
What important values and beliefs do we have about children and learning?	Actively involved in learning; hands-on activities; learning by seeing; competition; teach what is right and wrong; family roles in teaching, uncles teaching nephews; student involvement in cultural activities; learn from respecting; learn by example; trust; from seeing the modeling of appropriate values and beliefs; many ways of learning; parent shows interest in child's development.

Meetings two and three were held within two weeks of the first meeting. Again, attendees broke into groups to designate goals for students:

- All students should be involved in learning Native language and culture.
- All students should learn self respect and respect for others.
- All students should be involved in activities that promote sobriety, good mental health, and physical health.
- All students should develop a balance between Native traditions and the technological world.
- All students should learn to be problem solvers and develop their education to their highest potential.

- All students should develop self discipline and be able to make a smooth transition to the next step in their lives.

During the fourth meeting held in February 1996, the 18 attendees were "nearly unanimous" in deciding the goals for the 1996–1997 school year: "Students will be respectful, persistent, self disciplined (including sobriety and drug free) and productive workers."

These fundamental AOTE decisions and processes continued through a series of eight meetings, the last of which was held in October 1996. It should be noted that Koyukuk was the first site in the Yukon-Koyukuk School District to complete these planning meetings. Forty-two community members attended the last meeting to develop an AOTE Action Plan and Community Improvement Plan (shown in Table 9) to address drug and alcohol abuse and get specific commitments from each of the attendees.

Table 9
Alaska Onward to Excellence—Community Improvement Plan

TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE:
What the school staff will do:

- Communicate with Yukon-Koyukuk [School District] mental health, the Village Public Safety Officer, Tribal Family and Youth Services, and the suicide prevention coordinator at least once a month to plan and coordinate activities;
- Sponsor events for elders;
- Host New Directions training for students;
- Include more drug and alcohol information in the curriculum, and hold drug and alcohol-related assemblies with the assistance of the VPSO, the Yukon-Koyukuk counselor, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and local health aides;
- Use Project Adventure activities for evening programs;
- Volunteer for activities such as snowshoe or snow-go trips, picnics, hikes, etc.; and
- Coordinate with students to make gifts and holiday decorations for elders.

What students will do:

- Plan and organize dances, sleepovers, games against adults and lock-ins;
- Work at setting up a recreation center;
- Start a Native dance group;
- Develop a plan for helping elders;
- Do drug and alcohol reports for the school and the community newsletter;
- Plan and organize nature walks and outdoor activities;

- Set up and find chaperones for Friday night and Saturday daytime gym activities;
- Set up a peer helpers program;
- Plan and organize kids carnival events for the Spring Carnival;
- Participate in school and community talking circles; and
- Be involved in church and catechism.

What parents/community will do:

- Set up an arcade at the [community] hall;
- Volunteer for school and community activities;
- Make arrangements for kids to be supervised when parents leave or when a community activity is going on;
- Plan and organize alcohol and drug free activities such as cake walks, volleyball games, Indian games, kickball and football;
- Plan and organize alcohol and drug free Native activities;
- Plan and organize outdoor activities such as survival camp, sledding, hikes, junior carnival, and dog mushing;
- Organize and implement a teen center;
- Be sober, responsible role models;
- Help in reporting adults who provide young people with alcohol or drugs; and
- Help in student fund raising activities.

School Reform and Community-School Partnerships

"I felt like I belonged in the school." (Eliza Jones, personal communication. 1997)

The Koyukuk school was renamed the Ella B. Vernetti School in 1992; the name honors Ella Vernetti, the first Native teacher to teach in Koyukuk. She "provided a founding vision for the school." Although Ms. Vernetti gave up her teaching job when she married, she remained a major activist in the community. Ms. Vernetti established the women's sewing group; currently, the sewing group continues to be a major voice in community decision-making and project development. In a 1988 interview for the district newsletter, case study team member Rita Dayton summarizes the positive influence Ms. Vernetti had in the community.

> She was always having something going on . . . like 4-H Club or a sewing club. All the kids got positive feelings from being with her. Just having her work with me make everything seem like it was possible. . . . She would teach us how to sew dresses and skirts, and then have a fashion show with the things we made. Just being around her made a big difference in my life. (Paris 1988)

The renaming of the school was initiated in part by Eliza Jones after her return to Koyukuk. She and her family spent several years in Fairbanks where she began work on the *Koyukon Dictionary* and taught Koyukon classes at the University of Alaska. After her return to Koyukuk, she began going to the school to help with language and culture programs. Gradually more community members began to actively participate in school programs and policy setting. Recent examples of community-school partnerships include programs designed to enhance elder participation, cultural activities, and family wellness, as shown in the AOTE action plan dated October 1996 (Table 10).

Table 10
Ella B. Vernetti School AOTE Action Plan—Oct. 23, 1996

Action steps	Responsibility	Timeline	Resources
New Direction Training for grades 6–12	Tribal Council, TFYS, Suicide Prevention, EBV School.	Nov. 11–15, 1996	School will pay for substitute for Heidi Imhof and $2,000 towards expenses of presenters.
Plan for involving elders in the school, monthly activity hosted by each home room on an alternate basis	Ella B. Vernetti School, parents, community members	Monthly beginning in November	Donations from the community/parents and Ella B.Vernetti student fund
Cultural activities, including beading/skin sewing, a dance group, and a variety of outdoor activities	Suicide Prevention, Tribal Family/Youth Services, Ella B.Vernetti School, parent/community volunteers	On a regular basis beginning in November, and some activities as snow and weather permit	Suicide Prevention, Indian Education funds, student body funds
Youth activities on a regular basis, including regular gym activities, sleepovers, a lock in, youth dances	Suicide Prevention, Ella B. Vernetti School, parents/community	Weekly beginning in November	Suicide Prevention, student body funds, parent/community contributions

Cultural Activities

Once a month, the Koyukuk students host an "Elder Tea" at the school for all village elders. Elders are invited to the school by the students, served tea, and talk with students about traditional life or tell stories. Students also prepare gifts for each elder. These luncheons provide community members the opportunity to review the school activity calendar and coordinate related community activities. In a past project, older students interviewed elders about burial sites and burial practices within the region. Koyukon cultural anthropologist Miranda Wright (Nulato/Fairbanks) also collaborated with the district and contributed to this project.

Other cultural activities include beading, skin sewing, outdoor activities, and dance group. General youth activities include sports, sleepovers, and dances. These programs are generally funded through the Indian Education program and student funds, in cooperation with the local suicide prevention program and community donations. Community members donate both their time and money to help support these programs.

New Directions Training

New Directions training focuses on community health through helping people make healthy life choices. This process, designed for both adults and children, integrates Native ways of knowing and provides a Native perspective on community wellness. The program was begun by the Alkali Lake community in Canada. Through this program the Alkali Lake community attained 96% sobriety in 10 years. One five-day training session was held for students in grades 7–12 in November 1996. Attendees included 13 students from Koyukuk, three students from Huslia, and two from Nulato. This program was funded through Suicide Prevention, the Koyukuk Tribal Council, and the Ella B. Vernetti student fund. Community members completed assessments after the training which were included in an evaluation summary and report. The following is a comment from one of the adult participants:

> My involvement with this training has been so intense; the sharing with the youth was an experience I will never forget. I want to acknowledge the youth and especially this class that they are the only ones to complete a training in the entire

state of Alaska! Congratulations to them all. The emotions I experienced with everyone were sad, frustrating, happy. I think about every emotion that you could think of was experienced; it was devastating. I enjoyed everyone's participation. I learned that there was a tremendous difference between the youth and adults. We must be perfectly honest and humble with a lot of patience with the youth. I highly recommend this training for the young and old alike. (1996).

Throughout the school year, students in Koyukuk continued to correspond with students in the Alkali Lake community.

COMPASS

COMPASS, Community Partnerships for Access, Solutions, and Success, systems reform is designed to promote partnerships between state government and communities. The development of specific goals and action and community improvement plans through the AOTE process facilitated a COMPASS proposal, and in 1997 the Koyukuk Tribal Council was awarded funding. Koyukuk received both Phase I and II COMPASS grant awards, which complement other community wellness processes; a total of five proposals were funded statewide.

The COMPASS application listed successes, which included New Directions training, Head Start, AOTE, school sports, housing rehabilitation, and youth activities such as "lock-ins" and arts and crafts gatherings; and barriers to success, which included having only "one core of committed individuals, isolation, itinerant health and mental health care, no indoor plumbing, and limited access to Internet resources." The AOTE meeting process facilitated the following vision statement which is part of the COMPASS project. It is evident that this vision statement (see Table 11) integrated and expanded on previous community action plan resolutions and responsibilities.

Table 11
AOTE Vision Statement

VISION STATEMENT: Koyukuk will have a community where families are healthy, all children succeed in school, Athabascan culture is strong, and 100% community involvement.
Families Are Healthy

What Our Community Will Look Like When We Succeed:

- When we achieve our results, there will be less referrals to Division of Family and Youth services.
- There will be an increase in healthy parent/child activities in the community.
- There will be an increase in healthy family activities at home.
- The percentage of reported offenses will be decreased by 50% in FY98.

Where We Are Now:

- There are no statistics on how many referrals are made to Division of Family and Youth Services.
- There is no support system for single parents.
- No day care or reliable baby sitters make it hard for parents to be involved.
- There is a high rate of minor consuming.
- People prefer their freedom instead of attempting to work.
- Teenagers and young children are out after curfew.
- Head Start home visits are only done with mothers.
- High rate of adult contribution to minors.
- No parenting skills workshops in the community.
- High rate of alcohol/drug abuse by adults.

Priority Goal: Our number one priority is to change the community attitudes/policies toward alcohol/substance abuse. With this goal, we can achieve our other visions.

Strategies:

- Monthly information meeting on community awareness on alcohol/drug abuse.
- Develop a task force (community caring team) against alcohol/drug abuse.
- Invite Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) health and safety staff to offer information and assistance to task force.
- Provide information on prison life.
- Develop stronger law enforcement at local and state level.
- Invite state troopers to community meeting to begin a dialogue.
- Other strategies to promote healthy families are: parent talking circles, experienced parents teach parenting, parenting skills classes, family activity idea list, all male sober-positive socialization, family game nights, separate men and women sleepovers, requesting support from mental health, school, and local health providers to develop a plan for family support. Family journal project will involve a collaboration between Dr. Eliza Jones and

University of Alaska and Dr. Caroline Clark of Y-K Mental Health Center. Journals will include history, family trees, and ancestry documentation.

All Children Will Succeed in School

What Our Community Will Look Like When We Succeed:

- Improve attendance and tardiness by 50%.
- The number of student referrals will decrease by 50% for each year.
- By 3rd or 4th grade, all students will know how to read.
- Community-School Committee (CSC) is successful in influencing the hiring [of] teachers that meet the needs of Koyukuk.

Where We Are Now:

- Attendance decreased from last year.
- Absenteeism and tardiness every Monday.
- There have been 40 referrals this year.
- 6th grade who do not read at standard reading level.
- No parent on teacher/principal hire.
- New teachers coming in for school year 1997-98.
- CSC is requesting involvement in hire process.

Strategies:

- Get a written agreement with the YKSD to participate in the new teacher hire process.
- Promoting healthy families by reducing drug and alcohol abuse will decrease the tardiness and absentees on Monday mornings.
- Adapt and adopt a curriculum to teach social competence.
- Arrange for students to get credit for traditional activities such as camping, trapping, fishing, and hunting.
- Sponsor family activities that include childcare.
- Develop ways to ensure that school staff recognize and honor the strengths of all children.

A Culturally Strong Community

What Our Community Will Look Like When We Succeed:

- By 10th grade, our students will know their extended family history for three generations.
- By a set date, Koyukuk will have a Native singing and dance group with no less than 15 members.

Where We Are Now:

- Lack of knowledge of our traditional beliefs.
- No local song/dance group.
- Most tribal members from ages 0 to 50 years do not speak Koyukon language.
- We recognize that our community still has a lot of traditional knowledge.
- Still hold memorial potlatches.
- Practice traditional wakes.
- Participate in a lot of traditional activities.
- High school students receive three hours of language instruction per week.

Strategies:

- Start a Native song/dance group.
- Teach fiddle/guitar lessons.
- Document family histories and genealogy.
- Elders need to continually teach language, history, and culture.

100% Community Involvement

What Our Community Will Look Like When We Succeed:

- More men will be involved in community and school activities.
- Everybody will contribute according to his or her skills.
- More people will volunteer to community and school activities.

Where We Are Now:

- Core group does everything.
- No song/dance group.
- No support follow-up for people who go through rehabilitation programs.
- Few men are involved.
- A lot of negative peer pressure.
- Active Alaska Onward to Excellence Team.
- Have been more sober community events.
- There is more interaction between agencies to community involved.
- Outdoor camp/dog mushers: consciously volunteer for these two groups.
- Women sewing nights.
- More elder recognition.
- Head Start parents have been very active in the community.
- Very active tribal council.

Strategies:

- Community members self-identify at least one way they can/will contribute/get involved in community.
- Our community will give support to single parents by providing childcare.
- Have a Big Brother/Big Sister "buddy system" to encourage participation in community activities.
- Consider incentive plans like door prizes or food.

The COMPASS funding provides "research and training information on family journaling, sharing and self-esteem . . . documenting family history and stories, sharing Athabascan language and cultural information, accessing expert system health care information, researching questions together," providing ways to promote "self-healing and strengthening community circle." The AOTE leadership team and COMPASS committee merged during 1997, since most of the same individuals were involved in both projects.

Additional activities enhanced by AOTE include youth activities, specifically sleepovers and lock-ins. School and community also collaborated to bring in a dance group from Galena to teach Athabascan singing and dancing.

Other collaborative projects which began before to AOTE and continue to develop include "The Caribou Project" and Head Start activities.

The Caribou Project

Another recent ongoing school-community partnership project is "Bedzeyh Meets Science—The Caribou Project," which began in 1993, before the AOTE planning process. This project is well known within the Yukon-Koyukuk District and was presented to the state Bilingual Multicultural Education Equity Conference in 1994. The Caribou Project was done in collaboration with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and involved elders from Koyukuk and Allakaket and teachers and students at the Koyukuk school. Alaska Fish and Game had been taking young caribou in the area to research why a specific caribou herd was declining and agreed to collaborate with school personnel by furnishing a freshly killed caribou for dissection. The project integrated knowledge of the Western science system with traditional knowledge of the biology and behavior of the caribou and drew heavily on technical Athabascan labels and terminology. Weeks before the event, students researched various topics in preparation for the caribou butchering. A fascinating example of their research includes the explanation behind the Koyukon name for the caribou leader: *bekk'ul k'eyeggeze,* literally 'that whose ruff is rubbed (and worn out)':

> The caribou leader sometime teases the other caribou by acting like there is danger and starts running. When all the caribou take off it stops and starts grazing or whatever. Then the other caribou realize they've been tricked. Then they go and gang up on the leader and rub its neck. Its fur gets worn out around the neck.

This and other Koyukon animal names carefully researched by the students reflect the depth of Koyukon knowledge about animals in general and specific animal behavior. Richard Nelson in his ethnography of the Koyukon people, *Make Prayers to the Raven*, also notes these qualities and the facilitating world-view:

Koyukon people watch animals with a fascination and with empathy based on their understanding that animals and humans are much the same order of being. When they are not hunting, they watch animals as an end in itself, born of curiosity and a desire to understand the community of natural things.

During the Bedzeyh project, elders showed students how to skin the caribou, identify the organs, and butcher the animal. During the actual dissection, the Fish and Game biologist—more familiar with the insides of cattle, not caribou—was slow to identify organs that were easily identified by the elders. After the caribou was butchered, students prepared the meat using a variety of methods, including drying and cooking over a campfire, concluding with a student-sponsored potlatch for the community.

An adapted Project Wild (a hands-on wildlife curriculum that uses an interdisciplinary approach) was developed using information from the Caribou Project. Athabascan regional coordinator Amy Vanhatten (Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative) collaborated with Koyukuk to support and incorporate elders into the project. These elders then helped develop regional adaptations.

Head Start Activities

Another example of this holistic, demonstrative approach to learning was illustrated during my second site visit when I was invited to go with the Head Start group on a field trip to check the beaver snares of a village elder. Koyukuk's Head Start coordinator, Celia Jones, is responsible for organizing activities for the home-based program at least twice weekly. We left the village, traveling in a caravan of snowmachines, toward the frozen slough that runs in back of the village. At the first snare site, with the beaver den in the background, the elder demonstrated how to chip away the ice and reset the snare if empty. The children were invited to ask questions and learned the Koyukon word for beaver: *noya'a*. The second site yielded a large beaver, which was pulled from the water and inspected by the elder. He pointed out how short the whiskers were, which indicated another beaver in the den since "they will trim each other's whiskers." The elder was also able to judge the number of beaver the den held by its size.

After our return to the village, the children were invited to watch the skinning and butchering process the following day. There are special procedures that are followed, including where the carcass is stored, which organs and bones are left intact during butchering, and how bones are disposed of. Variations on these intricate policies of respect are followed in the handling of all animal remains. A model of perpetual learning is evident in the way elders teach and assist within the community.

Student Voices

In January 1998, a modified Quality of School Life Survey was administered to students by Eliza Jones. I drafted the modified survey based on case study team member comments, and the final draft was prepared with input from the Koyukuk leadership team. Students in grades 1 through 5 were given multiple choice/yes-no surveys addressing school activities, disciplinary policies, personnel changes, specific classes, and the Koyukon language and culture program. In an open question format administered to grades 6 through 10, students were asked to comment on the same topics. Results are shown in Table 12 and Table 13. See Appendix B for the complete table of survey responses.

Table 12
Ella B. Vernetti Quality of School Life Student Results (Grades 1–5)

	YES	*NO*	*DON'T KNOW*
1. In most classes, I often count the minutes until class ends.	**12**	**5**	**1**
2. I hope I have the same teachers next year.	**8**	**8**	**2**
3. Most of the time I do not want to go to school.	**11**	**6**	**1**
4. I am very happy when I am at school.	**12**	**4**	**2**
5. My teachers really listen to what I have to say.	**14**	**3**	**1**
6. I daydream a lot in most of my classes.	**5**	**12**	**1**
7. I like school very much.	**9**	**6**	**3**
8. My teachers do no[t] like it if I ask a lot of questions during a lesson.	**9**	**9**	**0**
9. My teachers encourage me to ask a lot of questions.	**13**	**4**	**1**
10. I feel that most of the things I learn in school will help me succeed when I am out of school.	**16**	**2**	**0**

In the following questions, check the answer that is most true for the way you feel.

11. In most of my classes I get so interested in an assignment or project that I don't want to stop work.

a. Never	2
b. Hardly ever	3
c. Quite often	3
d. Every day	8
Answer Unclear	2

12. This school year I am eager to get to . . .

a. all my classes.	9
b. most of my classes.	0
c. about half my classes.	4
d. one or two classes.	2
e. none of my classes	1
Answer Unclear	2

13. The work I do in most classes is . . .

a. not important to me at all.	0
b. not too important.	2
c. pretty important to me.	3
d. very important to me.	10
Answer Unclear	3

14. I enjoy the work I do in class:

a. Always	9	b. Often	0	c. Sometimes	6	d. Seldom	0	e. Never	1	Answer Unclear	2

15. I feel I can go to my teacher with the things that are on my mind:

a. Always	6	b. Often	2	c. Sometimes	4	d. Seldom	2	e. Never	2	Answer Unclear	2

16. School work is dull and boring for me:

a. Always	0	b. Often	1	c. Sometimes	6	d. Seldom	0	e. Never	9	Answer Unclear	2

Table 13
Student Responses to Additional Questions

School Activities	*YES*	*NO*
1. *Circle yes or no:* I enjoy starting the day with activities in the gym:	**17**	**1**

2. I participate in Friday activities:

Almost always	**16**	twice a month	**0**	once a month	**0**	almost never	**2**

	YES	*NO RESPONSE*
3. *Circle yes or no:* Morning and Friday activities are a fun and positive experience:	**17**	**1**

School Policies

4. The school detention policy is:

a. fair to everyone	**5**
b. pretty fair but needs some changes	**5**
c. less than fair	**0**
d. not fair at all	**7**
Answer Unclear	**1**

5. The school time-out policy is:

a. fair to everyone	**7**
b. pretty fair but needs some changes	**2**
c. less than fair	**1**
d. not fair at all	**7**
Answer Unclear	**1**

6. The school tardy policy is:

a. fair to everyone	**11**
b. pretty fair but needs some changes	**2**
c. less than fair	**2**
d. not fair at all	**2**
Answer Unclear	**1**

Comments by students in grades 6 through10 focused on discipline, specifically tardy, detention, and time-out policies, which had changed considerably from the year

before. The previous principal had set disciplinary rules but had not strictly abided by them. The new principal, in consultation with the community-school committee, the local advisory board, set more rigorous rules that were enforced more uniformly during the 1997–1998 school year. Some student comments support the current policies:

- "I think it [detention] is a good idea because students learn their lesson."
- "Some kids [who] talk in the middle of classes and goof off should go there [time-outs]."
- "I like the time-outs because kids who tease and bother you should go to time-out."
- "I think tardys get you on time for school."

Other students offer more resistance:

- "It is stupid and dumb because you have to just sit there and work when you have things to do."
- "I don't like detention because when I'm late three times then I don't get to go to morning and Friday activities. I'm mostly late because I live a long way from school."

Community members continue to emphasize the traditional value of respect, which is incorporated into behavioral policies and statements. When asked how the school is doing on respect issues, most students responded that the school was doing "okay" or "good." Some students qualified their remarks with "better than the beginning of the year," or "It [the school] is doing well, but not that well." Most students felt that they respected the teachers and school and that the school and teachers respected them. They also gave their own definitions of respect:

- "Be nice to others. Not saying mean things to them. Making others feel like they have friends all around them."
- "To treat people good and to be kind to others."
- "Not answering back."
- "Respect is to be kind to others and don't bother stuff that ain't yours."
- "Don't talk back to teachers. Keep four on the floor."

- "My definition of respect is respect your elders and everyone else."

When asked specifically about changes between the 1996–97 and 1997–98 school years, some students stated that there were more rules and that policies were more demanding:

- There are more rules, more policies, and you can't get away with the things I got away with last year.
- This year it is stupid because there is too much rules and last year's rules are nothing to this year.
- They are stricter but that is how a school should be.

The most popular classes among students were gym/physical educatoin and Koyukon language and culture; the least popular were math and reading. During conversations with teachers, some have mentioned the legacy of insufficient math and reading instruction during the primary grades, which has resulted in basic skills having to be reintroduced at the intermediate and middle-school levels.

Some students had other responses when asked about favorite/least favorite classes:

- "I like downstairs classes because there is mean kids upstairs."
- "Upstairs because the kids are always mean, and teasing me. Making me feel like I'm a total stranger."

All students had positive comments about learning the Koyukon language and the importance of participating in cultural activities:

- "We're supposed to know it because it's our own language."
- "We need to learn our language."
- "Yes I think it is [important] because when we get older we will be talking our language instead of the old people."

The majority of primary and intermediate students seemed to enjoy school, although they were split on whether they would want the same teachers back again during

the 1998–99 school year. There were several students at these levels who did not think the detention and time-out policies were fair.

Other comments included:

- "They could open the doors a little early. We could play funner games in the gym. Do less exercises."
- "I like sleepovers."
- "Get racing skis."

In response to a specific question about feeling safe and secure in the building, three students had the following responses:

[When I walk through the halls, I feel]:

- "Like I have friends all around me (downstairs). And upstairs I feel like I'm in detention or something, and everyone's going to burst out laughing or something."
- "Like I'm walking to a place I've never been before and I feel kind of shy."
- "Like I am being watched."

Teacher Voices

I formally interviewed the principal and the intermediate teacher during the second site visit, which took place in September 1997. Both teachers were relatively new to Alaska, although the intermediate teacher had spent one year teaching in Minto before coming to Koyukuk. Each talked about their own educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, and philosophies of teaching. Both had concerns about discipline—its effect on academic learning—and emphasized the importance of consistent disciplinary policies in both home and school settings:

> I think people are recognizing that before you can really focus on academic excellence, you have to have a good solid foundation of pre-learning behavior, pre-academic behaviors, like being able to come in the school and respect each other and the teaching staff so that you can learn. . . . I do have some support in the community, some real good support in the community. . . . They're glad to see that we're really trying to work on the discipline and behavior."

Specific concerns included setting new standards for students' written work:

> These kids are used to turning anything in and getting a good report on it whether it's horrible or whether it's wonderful. They're just used to at least if they turn something in they get praised for it. So that's been reinforced and then they get really angry when someone tells them they need to try and do it over.

General concerns included the challenges of dealing with multiple grade levels in one classroom:

> Not only do you have the different age levels, the different grade levels, the different learning styles, but you also have the different motivation factors that you're trying to take into account, all in one classroom. It's extremely diverse and it's hard to facilitate such different levels and different learning styles. What I do also have happen in the classroom is like, let's say one of them finishes early, I'll usually have that student go and help the kindergarten kids—so that they're kind of partnering up and helping somebody else and that does help. So the first month also is just a lot of assessment and me figuring out where all the kids are. . . . We have 4th grade kids that are still in 2nd grade level so we have blended a lot of it. We have K–5 science and K–5 social studies and math too but they also have an aide so we do try and break it up into small groups as best as we possibly can.

When asked what they enjoyed most about teaching they responded:

> Working with the kids—I enjoy all facets of it. When I moved from Colorado I was heartbroken about the fact that I was going to have to get out of teaching and move into just straight administration until I was in Alaska for a couple of months and found out there were all of these opportunities to be principal along with teacher, and I love having the best of both worlds. I like working on the budget; I like making sure kids have a safe environment and want to be here. I think the hardest thing is working with personnel that are community members but also friends and that you have to be with these people at all times.

> First of all there's only three teachers here, so there are no cliques or anything like that and new teachers can jump right in. You don't have to wait your turn to be part of this—to be able to coach cross-country, or you don't have to jump and say ok, how's discipline been handled and what I would like to see done—without upsetting the balance of power in the school. Here, it's two new teachers and one old hand who has been ready for a change, so it's really exciting because we're effecting new things and [the principal] really has high expectations for the behavior of the kids. And to have her as an example for me has really helped me have high expectations for the behavior of the kids. I like working with elementary—it's just so fun to work with that age group because there's still a lot of enthusiasm for learning and stuff like that—that sometimes when you reach adolescence it becomes clouded. It's just fun to work with that age group.

The principal, although she was in her first year of teaching in Alaska and unfamiliar with previous programs and policies, was very supportive of AOTE and the goals the community had set:

> I think that the goals that have been set for the AOTE are wonderful, I think they are very positive, and I think if they can be implemented and really worked with that we're going to start seeing some really neat changes in the school. Because unless we get past these goals that are set with AOTE we're not going to get the learning environment that we need. And so I see it as real positive environment within the school. And I think that it also helps that it's with the community.

Community Voices

Topics raised at the community-school meeting held during my second site visit reveal continuing concerns about education, including the need to maintain cultural values and knowledge both in and out of school:

- Children haven't learned how hard it was to survive. . . . haven't learned the language and culture. We were never bored—bored is not being responsible for your own happiness. When elders tell stories it gives me a sense of pride of being an Athabascan. I don't think children have that pride. In Head Start [the teacher is] really working to teach them words. . . . In school they have been working on the language for years and years. There's a gap somewhere.
- [Students] shouldn't be punished for not having self-respect because maybe they can't help it.
- Appropriate language needs to be worked on by the whole community.

And the intense commitments that come with being community activists and having to deal with continuing teacher turnover:

- [We] pulled out of AOTE [this past winter]—too many responsibilities. AOTE activities stalled this winter. We need to start getting involved again. Some things are getting out of hand.
- It takes time to educate new teachers.

Limitations of the Case Study

In the body of this case study, I have attempted to use as much of the original (non-paraphrased) data from personal interviews, meetings, and community documents as possible. As stated previously, I have made three site visits of three to four days each to Koyukuk. I had hoped that case study team members from the community would be able to take a more active role in the research process; however, the majority of their available time was already filled with other duties and responsibilities (i.e., as teachers, classroom aides, other community jobs). The following summary points are my own tentative conclusions based on short-term observation.

If additional research is conducted, a stable community research team needs to be established with the direct knowledge and support of the local community-school committee and district. During the course of this case study, team members changed several times. This is understandable, considering the number of activities taking place at both the district and community level. During the first case study meeting, the community was represented by teacher Heidi Imhof and classroom aide Sarah Dayton, but there was no district representation. No district or community case study team members were present at the second case study meeting due to a conflict with YKSD's academic decathlon. These team members did request leave to attend the meeting; however, the principal declined their request citing lack of available personnel at the school site. Team members for the third meeting did include district representative Tim Cline and both Ms. Imhof and Ms. Dayton. Participants at the fourth meeting were Eliza Jones and district representative Rita Dayton, neither of whom had attended any of the prior case study meetings. The fifth meeting again differed in that newly appointed district intern Charles Esmailka attended. Mr. Esmailka was familiar with the AOTE process, having been in Koyukuk during the leadership team meetings, but was unfamiliar with the case study. Often, the core groups of individuals at the community level become overloaded with responsibilities—projects to sustain and meetings to attend—both in and outside the village. In the future, any case study process needs to begin at the community level with at least initial involvement of all members of a leadership team.

Assessment data has not been included in this case study. This information could be included in follow-up studies of the AOTE process at this site or in this district. I did not feel standardized assessment data contributed to the present case study, considering the limited time period since implementation of AOTE and subsequent activities. Other considerations in this decision include the high rate of teacher turnover since the study began. Rural schools in Alaska, especially in those in Alaska Native communities, have come under increasing criticism for poor performance, with an emphasis on standardized test score performance. In 1996, Glen Olson (former YKSD superintendent), in an editorial contribution to the local Fairbanks newspaper, pointed out the following trends that provide additional context to this debate:

- The standardized test scores of students in the Yukon-Koyukuk School District rise an average of two percentile points per year. If the same phenomenon occurred in urban schools, the majority of students would graduate in the 98th percentile.
- Twelve years ago, the reading and math scores of our graduating seniors were at the sixth percentile, their language arts scores at the 12th percentile. Today, graduating seniors score at the 59th percentile in reading, the 68th percentile in math, and the 48th percentile in language arts.
- In the eight years that the Yukon-Koyukuk School District has competed in the statewide Academic Decathlon, its students have never finished out of the top 10 and have placed as high as second, behind West Valley High School [Fairbanks] (Olson, 1996).

Other larger trends for future study should include the influence of Native teachers and Native aides within the district. Currently, Koyukuk is one of four sites in this district without any Native teachers, although they have a previous history of Native teachers and strong, competent Native teacher's aides (who are also community activists and involved in women's sewing group). One of the past Native teacher's aides is in the process of becoming a certified teacher through the elementary education program at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

For further information about student experiences and learning, the modified QSL or similar survey should be administered more than once. The survey results referenced in

this study give only a brief glimpse into what students thought about school programs and new personnel at the beginning of the 1997–1998 school year.

Summary

Before AOTE, there were people in the community initiating changes in the school and community. AOTE seems to provide a formal vehicle with which to facilitate reform efforts locally, as well as empowering community representatives in their dealings with district personnel. In some instances, the prior district administration may not have fully appreciated this empowerment process (e.g. the principal's letter protesting the district cancellation of the board meeting in Koyukuk). The AOTE process also seems to have increased overall community involvement in local school decision and policy-making processes by providing structure and guidelines that allowed everyone to contribute.

The local facilitators provided a safe and supportive setting for community members to discuss current issues and concerns in the process of community goal setting. The AOTE meeting minutes and the resulting Koyukuk Community Improvement Plan and Vision Statement provide a detailed look at their planning process. Achievement of the community wellness and cultural maintenance goals will obviously take time. The core group of committed individuals must maintain their participation, and hopefully pull in new members to help shoulder activist responsibilities. This will be difficult, since two participating families have left the community for jobs in Galena.

Koyukuk remains committed to language and cultural maintenance. Eliza Jones and others will continue to teach language and cultural programs in the school with the support of the current principal. In 1997, the Koyukuk Traditional Council agreed to participate (through a supporting council resolution) in an Athabascan language apprenticeship program coordinated through Tanana Chiefs Conference, the Athabascan tribal consortium for Interior villages. This program is modeled after the California Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program. The goal of the program is to develop younger speakers of Athabascan who will then be able to help initiate other language maintenance programs within the Koyukon region.

The community continues to experience teacher turnover and the effects of changing disciplinary and academic standards that come with new personnel. There are no Native teachers in the Koyukuk school now. During the 1995–1997 school years there was one Native teacher from the region; however, he transferred out after the end of this school year. Two Native women have been employed as classroom aides for several years. They are consistent, strong Native aides in the school and are credited with much of the success of Koyukuk's school programs.

There have been a number of personnel changes at the district office. As mentioned previously, there is a new superintendent who formerly taught in Manley Hot Springs. Rita Dayton, the former coordinator for career and cultural education, a Native teacher/administrator originally from Koyukuk, is now the director of instruction for the district, a position previously held by a non-Native. Charles Esmailka, the district administrative intern, is a Native teacher who taught in Minto and Koyukuk. The current YKSD superintendent intends to resign at the end of this school year, so all schools in the district will again experience changes that come with new administration.

Existing community-school partnerships will continue to evolve and change with new personnel at both the local and district levels. New personnel will need to respect, support, and help strengthen these relationships, recognizing the commitment of the community members to community and school reform. Community members emphasize that although "mission statements, action plans and vision statements look good on paper," there needs to be a strong commitment by all members of the community to follow through on goals and objectives, with consistent support from the district office in Fairbanks.

Lessons Learned About Systemic Reform

1. The AOTE process in Koyukuk seemed to work very well as part of a larger community planning process. The AOTE planning meetings helped community members formally articulate their objectives for achieving a strong, healthy community. Members of the leadership team were directly involved with tribal and city council affairs as well as school projects.

2. In the small community of Koyukuk, activist families are involved in a variety of community projects. Activists in a small community realize that long term success and sustainability requires broad involvement by many other people.
3. During the case study, additional district involvement and support was needed to carry on the AOTE process in Koyukuk. Several planned activities did take place; however, consistent support from the district office is needed to sustain reforms.
4. Educating new teachers takes time. Teacher turnover makes it more difficult to progress with implementation of a reform agenda. Incoming personnel, especially those from outside Alaska, initially experience a steep and time-consuming learning curve in order to become familiar with the community culture, students, and district and community expectations for the local school.
5. Teachers and administrators currently have a variety of concerns and accountability issues which can refocus efforts away from deeper reform; i.e. budget considerations stemming from Senate Bill 36 and student preparation for the high school exit exam.
6. The AOTE leadership team should be commended for its role in the community planning process. Koyukuk facilitators adapted the AOTE process to fit the community and successfully facilitated community meetings.

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APPENDIX

STUDENT—SCHOOL ACTIVITIES——————————SCHOOL POLICIES——————————

	How do you feel about starting the day with activities in the gym (morning activities)?	How often do you participate in Friday activities?	Are these activities a fun and positive experience for you?	How do you feel about the detention policy?	How do you feel about time-outs?	How do you feel about the tardy policy?	What is your definition of respect?	How do you think the school is doing on respect issues?	Do you have any suggestions for changing or improving school discipline policies?
1	I would like to have it again.	I've only been out of Friday activities two times before in my life.	Yes! They are the funnest time in school.	I've only been in detention one time before in my life.	I don't know. I've never been to it before in my life.	I don't know. I think its okay! I've missed two Friday activities because I was tardy three times.	Be nice to others. Not saying mean things to them. Making others feel like they have friends all around them.	Teachers do, but the students, not to well. And we need to work on it a little.	We need sewing class and more time in gym—more recess, activities.
2	I feel fine with morning activities.	At the beginning of the year I wasn't there much but now that it is almost over I'm in there lots.	Yes they are fun.	I don't go there much I really don't know. And I do think some kids should go there.	Some kids [who] talk in the middle of classes and goof off should go there. Time-out is okay for me.	Have tardy is fine because if someone is late they shouldn't get away with it.	Respect should be in every school and I like respect.	I think we are doing okay with respect—better than the beginning of the year.	No.
3	I feel that morning activity is a good idea.	Not very often—I am always in the "dungeon."	No – they're always the same activities.	I think that it is a good idea because students learn their lesson.	The same way I feel about detention.	I feel that it is a good idea because the students realize that they need to be in the school on time.	To treat people good and be kind to others.	I think they are doing a good job.	No.
4	Sometime it is good but when we play some other games it is not too good.	Like every week—it's cool I guess.	They're all right sometimes.	It is stupid and dumb because you have to just sit there and work when you have things to do.	They really suck because you have to write 60 sentences about respect—take them away.	Those are normal but if you come to [school] without a pencil they give you a tardy.	Not answering back.	Not too good.	Take away time outs, detention and all that other stuff.
5	I feel that we should have morning activities, so we could get energized and ready for class.	I participate all the time.	I usually go to gym because I like to play games. I don't like the movies they watch.	I think it is stupid.	I don't go to time out. I never did.	The tardy policy ain't fair.	Respect is to be kind to others and don't bother stuff that ain't yours.	It is doing well but not that well.	They should be able to get at least four or less tardies, to go to activity hour.

STUDENT—SCHOOL ACTIVITIES—SCHOOL POLICIES

	How do you feel about starting the day with activities in the gym (morning activities)?	How often do you participate in Friday activities?	Are these activities a fun and positive experience for you?	How do you feel about the detention policy?	How do you feel about time-outs?	How do you feel about the tardy policy?	What is your definition of respect?	How do you think the school is doing on respect issues?	Do you have any suggestions for changing or improving school discipline policies?
6	I think we should start off with morning activities.	Not all the time.	Kind of.	I do not like detention.	Don't like those either.	It's ok I guess.	Don't talk back to teachers—keep four on the floor.	Good.	Don't have detention and time out.
7	I like it.	Every Friday—I like it.	Yes.	I don't like detention.	I don't like time out.	Okay.	I love people—I like myself.	The school does a good job.	
8	I don't like it because we have to play little kid games.	About two times a month.	No I don't like it because it is boring.	They make us stay in there too long.	I don't like time-outs.	I don't like the tardy policy.	My definition of respect is respect your elders and everyone else.	The school is doing good on respect.	No.
9	I feel good about having it in the morning.	I participate in every Friday activity hour.	Yes—these games and other activities are fun.	I don't know—I've never been there before.	I don't know—I've never been there either.	I don't like it how they do whatever they do with the tardys.	My own words of respect is to respect my classmates, teachers, and friends. How we are going to get along.	I don't think any of my classmates respect one of each other—they like to be mean.	Yes by not have to walk up and down the stairs, and hallways by a teacher.
10	I like morning activities because games are my best hobby.	I participate in Friday activities every Friday because it's fun.	Yes they are.	I don't like detention, because when I'm late three times then I don't get to go to morning and Friday activities. I'm mostly late because I live a long way from school.	I like the time-outs because kids who tease and bother you should go to time-out.	I don't like the tardy policy because I live a long way from school.	Respect is someone treating you right.	Good because they teach us not to do things bad to people.	It's fair because I never go in detention or time-out before.
11	I feel good about morning activities.	I participate in Friday activities most of the time.	Yes—these activities are fun.	I think detention is good.	I think time-out gets us behind in school.	I think tardys get you on time for school	My respect to others is good	I think the school is doing good on school respect.	Outdoor activities like play football or go for a walk.
12	It is good.	All—most all the time.	NO.	Stupid.	Stupid.	It [is] all right.	It is good.	It is good.	Get a bigger gym.

OVERALL SCHOOL

	A new principal and a new teacher have come to teach in your school. There probably have been some changes from last year. How are things different from last year?	**When I walk through the halls I feel . . .**	**When I sit in class I feel . . .**
1	We never had morning activities but we had sewing and gym and no time-outs or detention. But some people go [to] the principal and lose some of their privilege[s].	Like I'm walking to a place I've never been before and I feel kind of shy.	Like I have friends all around me [downstairs]. And upstairs I feel like I'm in detention or something, like I did something, and everyone's going to burst out laughing or something.
2	There were more students, and different kind of work.	I feel different than last year because there were more students.	I feel fine rested and I have my friends.
3	There are more rules, more policies, and you can't get away with the things I got away with last year.	Like I am being watched.	More comfortable because I know that if a student says something mean they won't get away with it!
4	This year it is stupid because there is too much rules and last year's rules are nothing to this year.	Nothing but myself walking down the halls.	I don't feel nothing.
5	They are stricter but that is how a school should be.	The same as last year but with less older kids.	The same as last year.
6	More strict than last year.	Good.	Good.
7	I like the new principal. She's good to me. I like this year's school because I do more activities.	I feel safe.	Good.
8	The principal is more meaner and we couldn't do all the stuff we did last year.	I don't feel nothing.	I don't feel nothing.
9	More rules that we always follow and they give us more rules to follow—mean principal.	Like a little being walked up and down the hallways.	Uncomfortable the way we have to sit in class—we need to change that.
10	I was in a different school last year. In the other school I was in it is different from here because [in] the other school I have friends that don't tease or ignore me.	Good because it's bright.	Good because it's just good.
11	Things are still the same.	The same as last year.	The same as last year.
12	More strict.	I feel good.	I feel good.

SPECIFIC CLASSES & PROGRAMS

	Which classes do you like the most? Why?	Which classes are the least enjoyable to you? Why?	In general, do you enjoy the Koyukon language and culture programs and activities?	Do you think it is important to learn the Koyukon language? Why or why not?	Do you think it is important to participate in cultural activities? Why or why not?	Which activities do you enjoy most?	Any other comments you would like to make?
1	I like downstairs classes because there is mean kids upstairs.	Upstairs, because the kids are always mean, and teasing me—making me feel like I'm a total stranger.	Yes.	Yes! because it is supposed to know it. We're supposed to know it because its our own language.	I do, because it is our culture.	I enjoy being in Athabaskan language class and sewing class and language arts class.	We need sewing. We need to work on respect.
2	Gym, Indian language, and beading because they are fun.	I like all my classes.	I like them all.	Yes I think it is important. Because we need to learn our language.	Yes I like it because sometime we get to get out in the fresh air.	Indian language and beading.	No.
3	Science because it is interesting. Culture because I learn Athabascan ways.	Math because it is hard and it is not interesting and I would like to be in Geometry instead of Applied Math.	Yes.	Yes because we need to know our language.	Yes—because we need to learn.	Beading—we only have beading and language	
4	P.E. because that is the closest we get to basketball.	Math because I have a hard time with it.	Yes I do.	It is good because we can keep our culture.	It is so you can learn the old ways.	The stories.	This school sucks.
5	I like P.E./Home Economics and Computer class because I like to play games and work on computer.	I don't really know but most of them are pretty fun. I don't like the math we are doing.	Yes. I like the programs.	Yes. Because I think we should know some of our language.	Yes. Because you could like learn how to bead good.	I like to bead.	Yes. They should go outside more.
6	Gym.	Reading.	Yes.	Because to learn to speak like our ancestors.	Yes.	Gym and language arts.	To play more basketball in gym—go snow shoeing.
7	I like Heidi's class because I like the activities.	The language class because it's hard.	I love doing beadwork.		I love doing cultural activities.	Sewing.	
8	I like P.E. and math the most.	Mostly all of them because they are all boring.	Yes I like them because it gives you a chance to learn the language.	I think it is going to be important because in the future it is not going to be around.	Yes.	We need to have hunting and trapping and all the other cultural activities.	NO.

	Which classes do you like the most? Why?	Which classes are the least enjoyable to you? Why?	In general, do you enjoy the Koyukon language and culture programs and activities?	Do you think it is important to learn the Koyukon language? Why or why not?	Do you think it is important to participate in cultural activities? Why or why not?	Which activities do you enjoy most?	Any other comments you would like to make?
9	I like P.E. class. I like computer class. I like sewing class.	I don't like the way we sit in class! UNCOMFORTABLE!	Yes I do because I want to talk in my language when I get older.	Yes I think it is because when we get older we will be talking our language instead of the old people.	Yes I think it should be fun if we all participate in the games.	We need to learn how to snow-shoe outside—have P.E. outside—get outside for awhile.	I would like to have more activities outside—we got to get outside more.
10	I like my morning class because I got a teacher I can understand.	_____'s class is because he acts like a king to other kids, probably because he's white.	Yes I do because I want to learn to speak Athabaskan language.	Yes because some grandparents want their grandkids to speak Athabaskan.	Yes because it's our culture.	The Athabaskan words because I know how to bead now.	The school should have lunch-ins because my house is too far from the school. I like to bring snack to school. I like morning and Friday activities.
11	I like gym class. I like it the most because we can play basketball.	Gym so we can jump around lots.	I enjoy school in Koyukon language culture and activities.	Yes I do.	Yes it is important to participate in cultural activities.	Story class.	No.
12	I don't like none of the classes because it is boring.	All of the classes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	All.	NO.

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