HOW ALASKA NATIVES LEARN AND CHANGES TO ALASKA EDUCATION THAT WOULD ENSURE SUCCESS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract

I have examined 47 articles that related to Alaska Native/American Indian education and culturally responsive education. I found problems in K-12 education for Alaska Natives; historical contexts; cultural context; building bridges; and the future for K-12 education for Alaska Natives were common themes throughout my review of the literature. Problems with education was established 200 years ago and Alaska Natives still perform lower that their non-Native counterparts; historical context tells a story of past Native educational and mainstream practices; cultural context can play a positive role in closing the achievement gap through language, culture, and involving the community; building bridges can occur between Native and non-Native systems by using best practices and local ways of knowing in a diverse cultural climate; and looking forward by changing K-12 education for Alaska Natives through involving Native parents, communities, educators, and universities as equal collaborators in education for Alaska Natives.

Introduction

The Problem

As educators we want Alaska Native student to succeed through classrooms and educational programs that will respect their unique language, cultural strengths, and community. The history of Alaska schools for Alaska Native and American Indian students has not been one that reflects this philosophy. By removing students from their homes communities and extended families and placing them in government run schools and orphanages, coupled with the death of generations of tradition bearers by disease and atrocities introduced by Russian and European explorers, eliminated access to traditional parenting models, culture, language, and values. Through the education of the white, dominant culture many Indian youth were assimilated into

the White, American way of thinking through the education system and Federal and State education policies, which continue to impose the demands of mainstream education on Alaska Natives and American Indians.

Depending on the learning styles, learners in any culture can grasp White classroom information (Pewewardy, 2002). However, a majority of Native learners still remain at a great disadvantage with tests score reflecting this disparity in achievement compared to non-Natives, based on a study by the McDowell Group (2006). My research will look into the beliefs and practices of how Alaska Natives learn, and how we can alter our teaching practices to meet the needs of the unique learning styles of Alaska Natives. Then, I will look into how to use language and cultural strength to bridge the learning between home and school.

There are opposing views, that there is no such thing as an American Indian/Alaska Native learning style, and that there is no support for the hypothesis that culturally adapted instruction increases achievement, that they are not necessarily right brain learners, and learning styles research is the "latest fashion" in education (Pewewardy, 2002). But with the history of education for the American Indian/Alaska Natives/Native Hawaiians I find it hard *not* to believe that American Indian/Alaska Natives/Native Hawaiians have unique learning styles and will bring this out through research that supports the concept of learning styles and define what the different learning styles are.

In Native cultures how children were reared was different, but with the introduction of diseases and the death of Tradition bearers, children were orphaned. Parents felt that it was for their own good, or were pressured, to send their children to orphanages. Native women married to White men (and widowed) lost their children when they found that their husband had signed them over to a mission orphanage or school. Also, at that time in history, it was difficult to raise

children without their mothers or extended family members. Early education in Alaska almost wiped out Native languages, cultures, and communities. Storytelling, oral history, and humor were used to pass on values and cultural knowledge within the kinship group. The shame and punishment used by schools were opposite to the use of community terms, like "What would people say—they will laugh at you" or "don't do that again" which carried more weight than the corporal punishment that was used by schools in the past. Traditional education laid the groundwork for every child's passage into adulthood. Present research can link the best thinking on Indian Education with the best practices (leadership, teaching, and learning), employing culturally responsive teaching techniques to overcome "cultural discontinuity" of Native students. How can the teacher become compatible with the cultural values of the students? How can the tribal culture play a role in supporting students' learning and teachers' instructional decisions? How can school reform address students' strengths and differences?

Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools have been developed by Alaska Native educators to provide a way for schools and communities to examine the extent to which they are attending to the educational and cultural well being of the students in their care (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998). These "cultural standards" represent the belief that a firm grounding in the heritage language and culture indigenous to a particular place is a fundamental prerequisite for the development of culturally-healthy students and communities associated with that place, and are an essential ingredient for identifying appropriate qualities and practices associated with culturally responsive educators, curriculum and schools.

Alaska State Standards are expected to be used by educators throughout Alaska. They don't always address some of the special issues that are of critical importance to schools in rural Alaska, particularly those serving Alaska Native communities and students Alaska Native

educators have developed the *Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools* for consideration by educators serving Native students around the state. Though the emphasis is on rural schools serving Native communities, many of the standards are applicable to all students and communities because they focus curricular attention place-based education, while recognizing the unique contribution that indigenous people can make to such study as long-term inhabitants who have accumulated extensive Ways of Knowing (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998).

Standards have been drawn up in five areas, including those for students, educators, curriculum, schools, and communities. These cultural standards provide guidelines or touchstones against which schools and communities can examine what they are doing to attend to the cultural well-being of the young people they are responsible for nurturing to adulthood. The standards included here serve as a complement to, not as a replacement for, those adopted by the State of Alaska. The cultural standards are oriented more toward providing guidance on how to get them there in such a way that they become responsible, capable and whole human beings in the process. The emphasis is on fostering a strong connection between what students experience in school and their lives out of school by providing opportunities for students to engage real world contexts. By shifting the focus in the curriculum from teaching/learning *about* cultural heritage as another subject to teaching/learning *through* the local culture as a foundation for all education, it is intended that all forms of knowledge, ways of knowing and world views be recognized as equally valid, adaptable and complementary to one another in mutually beneficial ways. The cultural standards are not intended to produce standardization, but rather to encourage schools to nurture and build upon the rich and varied cultural traditions that continue to be practiced in communities throughout Alaska (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998)

The Author's Experiences and Beliefs

An elder advisor stressed to a recent gathering of educators, "Start everyday happy" (Association of Interior Native Educators, 2008). That's a good starting point for me, as I research what literature says about how children learn and learn about my teaching practices. I am a Koyukon Athabascan, born and raised in Interior Alaska until I went to Boarding School at the age of fourteen, at a time when my cultural education should have started as an adolescent's passage from childhood. I chose to attend a Southeast Alaska high school operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in Sitka, Alaska. There were no high schools in rural Alaska. You chose a BIA school in Sitka, Alaska; Chilocco, Oklahoma; Salem, Oregon; Santa Fe, New Mexico, or various church-operated high schools, or you and/or your family moved to an urban high school.

Prior to that I was raised in Tanana and travelled with my extended family to fishing, hunting, and winter trapping camps, until I was suddenly in a school. In my memory it was an abrupt switch, from being out in the natural setting of Interior Alaska to being seated at a desk, constrained by four walls, and controlled by a large, white, blond, female teacher with a stern demeanor. I was boarding with an administrator and his family, until my dad came to visit me and I tearfully begged him to take me home. At that time there was a transition from BIA-operated schools to State-operated schools.

We did have to enter school the following year, I was about seven and my brother was about nine. I adjusted to school, but my brother never did. We often travelled the Yukon River to visit my dad's cousins in Rampart. That was the farthest we went even though we had relatives in Stevens Village, the next village up the river from Rampart. This easy lifestyle is no longer there, where you could stop and visit campsites as you travelled for tea, soup, and crackers.

My brother and I were in the same grade until the 6th grade, when his education was interrupted by tuberculosis, and he was sent to the Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC) in Anchorage. That was the year of the big earthquake. His formal schooling ended, and he became a musician and songwriter, performing at community events along the river and in Fairbanks. But alcohol took its toll on him and he died too young. This abrupt change in lifestyle changed my family as well. We had to settle into a community and my father and extended family members had to create a new way of earning money and the male role took a back seat to schools and jobs available mostly to women.

When we moved to Manley Hot Springs we were in the fifth grade. In Manley, we shared the older children status with another family of five, whose mother was Iñupiat and their stepfather who was a gold miner. The other children (several boys and one girl came from a family who had just lost their mother to cancer, and were being raised by their father with the help of their grandmother). The teacher's three children and my cousin rounded out the student body. We later boosted the population of Manley with the eleven children in my family. We added the childhood noise and life that the Senior Citizens of the community needed. One regret, though, about our move to Manley. Had it been a year later, I would have learned to jitterbug at the dances my mother and her friends held for children at the Tanana Community Hall. Oh, well.

In Manley we lived on the road system that connected us with Fairbanks. We went to school in a remodeled, one-room log cabin. Our teacher had to develop the authoritative setting that kept a multi-age, grade 1-8 classroom running smoothly. She pulled local artisans into the school, and art day was my favorite time. She allowed her schedule to change to capitalize on teaching moments. We were always playing around the hot springs property or swimming in the bathhouse. We thrived on the fresh tomatoes and vegetables grown in the greenhouses and in the

opportunity to play and enjoy the long winters, and in our teacher's ability to laugh at us and with us (an endearing trait that has left a lasting impression on all of her students and me). My father was working for the State road system. When I went to my plane, taking me away on the first leg of my journey to boarding school, my dad accompanied me. My mother had sewn, or remodeled some outfits for me. I remember my dad saying, "Just keep going and don't look back." I looked back and saw my dad walking home with his shoulders hunched over.

I remember the first year of high school at Wrangell Institute (grades one to nine), as being miserably homesick. With Mt. Edgecumbe High School being full some of us were sent to Wrangell Institute. You know, we never questioned the system. We just went where we were "tagged" to go. My friends were just as homesick so we helped each other, singing and crying "I Wanna Go Home," which shut down one dance. We had to room with one younger, elementary student who had other sisters. But that was the norm for the boys and girls dorm. I remember our young roommate going into a hysterical tirade. Our mattresses were pulled from the bunk beds and clothes were pulled from the drawers. We didn't know what to do, but the matron on duty did. A threat of a cold bucket of water with ice cubes being dumped on her calmed her down. I often wonder what happened to her and the memory of her still brings sadness down in my gut. Now, I wonder what childhood trauma triggered these hysteric outbursts.

The teachers who really influenced us were genuinely caring people. One African-American business teacher taught us typing and editing a school newspaper at Wrangell Institute. That was a meaningful experience to me. I was a mediocre student the balance of my high school years at Mt. Edgecumbe. I preferred television over reading mandatory high school English and American literature and writing summaries, much to the dismay of my African-American English teacher. Native teachers challenged us and revived and opened up knowledge of our

cultures through a Native Culture Club we formed. It was an avenue for us to share our songs and dances from the different cultural areas in Alaska. Not to take credit, but I believed this activity helped segue into the development of the Sitka Native Education Program.

We figured out how to skip out of classes. Once, we sneaked off to the "Causeway," off-limits to us, a place which housed old army bunkers. It was much later that we found out that bodies were placed there. These people had died of tuberculosis and other natural causes. We just wanted to enjoy the sun and play among the waves washing in from the Pacific Ocean. Grades were not important to me. There were no thoughts about life after high school, not even when a recruiter came from the army, or to recruit students for training in Seattle, Washington or Oakland, California. A lot of students went and were trained as electricians, secretaries, nurses, dental assistants, and for other entry level positions that would offer gainful employment. Or they went to Vietnam. I often think I may have been a member of the American Indian Movement (AIM) if my path had taken me to trade school and relocation. When I returned home after graduating from high school, I migrated back to Sheldon Jackson College in Sitka, with no idea about finances. My financial aide officer assured me, through my tears, that I would be okay. Throughout my college years I received financial aide and child-care. Indian Student programs were being established as part of the college curricula to provide support to American Indians/Alaska Natives on American campuses. When I entered college I was married with a new baby and I had a third child at mid-term, my senior year at the University of Washington. .

What influenced my husband was his family's belief in higher education and a hard work ethic. His father was a progressive leader in Angoon, and leader of the Dog Salmon Clan, fluent Tlingit speaker, took the city into the 21st century. His mother, a Mexican, came to Alaska as a

young bride. In later years, she provided her family with as much, or more, subsistence food as anyone in Angoon.

Opportunities came my way and I took advantage of what came my way believing in "Divine Intervention," strongly influenced by my inner spiritual strength. I found family in Sitka, so I was checked out on weekends. I never thought about quitting, I would just take a different course of study if I failed in one area, one was nursing. I didn't have a strong math background, and didn't achieve in math until the third quarter of my senior year in college, when I was motivated to pass a statistics class to receive my under-graduate degree. Again, through much prayer and *Divine Intervention,* a teaching assistant assessed my math knowledge and found I needed a bonehead math course. I didn't have a clue about what to do to choose a major and graduate from college. But I remember passing statistics (my major requirement), my math class, and a sociology class with a 3.0 average the third quarter of my senior year. I couldn't believe it. I had to keep looking at my grade sheet for reassurance.

My husband had high academic standards. He graduated from law school the next year, by then we had three children. He still does a lot of recreational reading. I will read several novels at once and eventually finish one, but most of my reading is for information. I enjoy learning, but processing information takes me a little longer than most. After we graduated we moved back to Angoon, Alaska to raise our children and help our community. We were strongly determined to raise our children. It has been our philosophy that if you are a teacher in a community, then it is wrong to send your child away to another school. If the school is not good enough for your child then you should not be teaching there. Furthermore, if systems aren't good enough then we have to work to make them better.

The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act passed in 1971 when we were attending Alaska Methodist University (presently, Alaska Pacific University). We were a part of history, listening to President Richard Nixon on the intercom as he addressed the National Congress of American Indians, assembled at Alaska Methodist University, as he signed ANCSA. My husband became a member of the Sealaska Board in 1976, a year before we moved back to Alaska.

You would not believe how tough Indian politics is. An elder matriarch, of the Teik̲weidí (Brown Bear Clan) told my husband that growing up his name would carry him, but one day he would carry his name. Now he is Chairman of the Board of Sealaska Corporation, Co-Chair of the Alaska Federation of Natives, a board member of First Alaskans, an Alaska State Senator, Member of the Alaska Native Brotherhood-Grand Camp, by virtue of being their Grand Secretary (several terms) and Grand President. All along the way he listened and learned from his elders through on-the-job-training. He is a member of the Teik̲weidí (Brown Bear Clan), his name is Kashaan. I am an adopted member of the L'eineidí (Dog Salmon) Clan, Aanx̲'aakhittaan (People of the Center of the Village House), my name is Kheintlaa' (Soboleff, 1994).

With the development of Distance Education for Rural Alaska, through the Rural Educators Preparation Program (REPP) I became a certified elementary teacher and presently I am a student in the Masters of Education in Special Education-University of Alaska-Southeast. My motivation is to find out what can be done to help our students achieve "success" in the climate of mandatory state testing, federal and state education policies of No Child Left Behind, declining resources, economic decline, and social problems that interfere with learning.

My life experiences influences my teaching and my approach to children. Creating an environment that is safe, clean, and free of clutter. An environment that is open and learning is

hands-on and constructive. I have to search for meaningful learning activities for my students, to create learning experiences that will expand their schema, knowledge base. I like the natural rhythm of living in rural Alaska and wonder how we can use this to create a learning environment for our children to pass state mandated exams. I believe that everyone is entitled to the basics of life, and beyond that they have to be motivated and nurtured by mentors who help them achieve to the best of their ability, to see beyond the day-to-day existence of K-12 education.

I am a multi-age elementary teacher in Angoon, Alaska. I have been teaching for more than ten years. My experience in teaching has been at the middle school level, intermediate level, and for the last three years I have been a primary teacher. My present assignment is a multi-age third and fourth grade class, and teaching social studies and science K-6.

Angoon is the only permanent settlement on Admiralty Island, located on the southwest coast at Kootznahoo Inlet. Angoon is 55 miles southwest of Juneau and 41 miles northeast of Sitka. Admiralty Island has been the home of the Kootznoowoo Tlingit tribe. Kootznoowoo means "fortress of the bears." From the 1700s to the mid-1800s, fur trading was the major money-making activity in the area. In 1878, the Northwest Trading Company established a trading post and whaling station on nearby Killisnoo Island and villagers were employed to hunt whales. Whaling, a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school, and a Russian Orthodox Church attracted many Tlingit to Killisnoo. In 1882, a whaling vessel's harpoon change charge accidentally misfired and exploded, killing a Native crewmember – a Tlingit shaman, or medicine man. Villagers demanded payment of 200 blankets for the man's family, as was customary. The Northwest Trading Company felt threatened and sought assistance from the U.S. Navy at Sitka. The village and a summer camp were subsequently shelled and destroyed by the

Navy Cutter U.S.S Corwin. Native accounts of the attack claim six children died by smoke inhalation. In 1973, Angoon won a $90,000 out-of-court settlement from the federal government for the1882 bombardment. Whaling did not last long, and the company switched to herring processing. During this time, many Tlingits moved to Killisnoo for employment at the plant. In 1928, Killisnoo was destroyed by fire, and many Tlingit returned to Angoon. The Angoon post office was established in 1928. A city was formed in 1963. Many summer homes, by non-residents, have been developed on Killisnoo Island (Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, 2008).

A federally-recognized tribe is located in the community—the Angoon Community Association. The population of the community consists of 86.4 % Alaska Native or part Native. Angoon is a Tlingit village with a commercial fishing and subsistence lifestyle. Possession of alcohol is banned in the community. During the 2000 U.S. Census, total housing units numbered 221, and vacant housing units numbered 37. Vacant housing units used only seasonally number 25. The U.S. Census data for the year 2000 showed 197 residents employed. The unemployment rate at that time was 12.95 %, although 50 % of all adults were not in the work force. The median household income was $29,861, per capita income was $11,357 and 27.92 % of residents were living below the poverty level (Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, 2008).

Water is treated and piped throughout the community. Angoon has had piped water since 1977, which is located approximately two miles from Angoon. Piped sewage is processed at a secondary treatment plant and flows to an ocean outfall. Electricity is provided by Inside Passage Electric Cooperative which operates diesel-fueled generators in Angoon. The City of Angoon collects refuse and hauls it to the landfill, located approximately two miles from Angoon. There

is an elementary and high school in the community housed in two separate building, teacher and administrative housing is provided. Health care is provided by primary health practitioners and itinerant physician assistants (mid-level practitioners), and medical evacuations are provided by Southeast Alaska Health Consortium (SEARHC) and the U.S. Coast Guard, headquartered in Sitka. Angoon is classified as an isolated village. Emergency services have limited highway, marine, floatplane, and helicopter access (Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, 2008).

The Purpose of the Review of the Literature

I teach in an Alaska Native community. As an educator, I want my Alaska Native students to succeed. I want to create a classroom environment that will promote success and respect for their unique languages (English and Tlingit), cultural strengths, and community. The review of the literature will be to identify articles that address the learning styles of Alaska Native students. Second, what does research say about how we can alter our educational programs and teaching practices to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native students? Finally, how can we use the languages and cultural strengths of our students and their families to bridge the learning between home and school?

Methods

Selection Criteria

The journal articles I will include in this review of the literature will answer the following questions:

1. What does research say about the learning styles of Alaska Native students?
2. How can we alter our educational programs and teaching practices to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native students?

3. How can we use the languages and cultural strengths of our students and their families to bridge the learning between home and school?

To answer these questions, I identified journal articles that examined issues related to Alaska Natives learning styles. I also searched for articles that described culturally responsive education programs for Alaska Natives to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native students. I also identified articles that addressed bridging learning between home and school using the languages and cultural strengths of our students and families. I classified these articles according to publication type, research design, and emergent themes.

Search Procedures

I have searched databases for articles in this review of the literature. I have found 47 articles that meet my selection criteria.

I have searched four databases for peer reviewed articles, published in educational journals that contain research on the learning styles of Alaska Native students, that address educational programs and teaching practices to meet the unique needs of Alaska Native students, and which promote use of languages and cultural strengths of our students and their families to bridge the learning between home and school. The four databases I searched are: (a) the Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) (Ebscohost); (b) Education Journals (ProQuest); (c) the Professional Development Collection (Ebscohost); and (d) Education Abstracts (OCLC Firstsearch). I used the following keyword combinations to search each database:

ERIC

"Culturally relevant education" AND "Alaska Natives" and my search produced 29 articles. Thirteen met my selection criteria, limited to K-12 education, and will be included in

this review of literature (Barnhardt, 2001; Barnhardt, 2000; Brown, 1991; Fiedler et al, 2008; Gaquin, 2006; Hochstrasser Fickel, 2005; Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001; Prins & Willson Toso, 2008; Reyhner & Jacobs, 2002; Samway & Taylor, 1993; Sternberg, 2006; Thompson & Hare, 2006; Webster & Yanez, 2007).

Education Journals

su "Native Education" AND su "Native North American" which produced 38 articles. I selected five from this search. A second search "Culturally Responsive" OR "Culturally Relevant" (subject) OR "Native Education" (Citation & Abstract) with 709 results. I went through this list and found eight additional articles and two book reviews. Twelve articles met my selection criteria and will be included in this review of literature (Hermes, 2005; Kanonhsionni/Hill & Stairs, 2002; Lambe, 2003; Morgan, 2005; Orr, San Salom/Paul, & Kelusilew/Paul, 2002; Pearce, Crow, Letendre, Letendre, & Baydala, 2005; Powers, 2005; Rice, 2003; Starnes, 2006; Traoré, 2008; Waabginojii/Anderson, 2002; and Zehr, 2007).

Professional Development Collection

"Culturally relevant" OR "culturally responsive" (AB abstract) "American Indian" OR "Native American" OR "Alaska Native" (AB abstract) which yielded 13 articles and met my selection criteria. Thirteen articles will be included in this review of literature (Barnhardt & Angayuqaq/Kawagley, 2005; Davison & Miller, 1998; Dinero, 2004; Franklin, Waukechon, Larney, Timmer, & Pennecamp, 1995; Gilliard & Moore, 2007; Hammond, Dupoux, & Ingalls, 2004; Ingalls, Hammond, Dupoux, & Baeza, 2006; Jones & Ontooguk, 2002; Kauffman, Conroy, Gardner, & Oswald, 2008; Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006; McCollin, O'Shea,& Algozzine, 2005; Ponessa, 1997; and Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008).

Education Abstracts

Culturally responsive education (no quotations) (keyword) AND "Native American" (subject phrase) which resulted in eight articles. Eight have met my criteria and will be included in this review of literature (Angayuqaq/Kawagley, 1999; Beaulieu, 2008; Charleston, 1994; Deyhle & McCarty, 2007; James, 2001; Latham, 1997; Locke & Lindley, 2007; and Saunders & Hill, 2007.

Ancestral Searches

An *ancestral searc*h resulted in one article on the cultural affects of learning on Alaska Natives and American Indians (Pewewardy, 2002).

Coding Procedures

My coding system will categorize information in each of the 47 articles based on (a) publication types; (b) research design; and (c) emergent themes. Even though there are many books published as guides to culturally responsive education, I will focus on peer review articles which have been published in education journals, most being within the past ten years.

Publication Types

I evaluated and classified each article according to *publication type* (Duke & McCarthy, 2007) which are explained as: *Empirical studies* which describe the methods used to gather and analyze quantitative and/or qualitative data; *Descriptive articles* describe experience or phenomena, but do not describe the methods to gather and analyze data; *Position papers* explain and advocate for a particular policy, positions, philosophical perspectives, theoretical frameworks, and/or educational models; and *Guides* recommend strategies and/or explain how educators might implement curricula, programs, or models.

Examples of the publications types included in this review of the literature represented those described above. An article by Hochstrasser Fickel (2005) had the characteristics of an *empirical study* describing the methods used to gather and analyze *qualitative data* of a four-year case study of teachers, which took place in a rural Alaska Native village where the participants worked with Native elders and engaged in Native ways of knowing. The findings of this case study increased the educators understanding of history and culture by using culturally based ways of knowing and learning and for developing culturally responsive social studies pedagogy. Another example using *qualitative data* was Kushman and Barnhardt (2001). Prins and Willson Toso (2008) is an example of *mixed methods research* used to study Parent Education Profile (PEP) as an instrument used to rate parents' support for children's literacy development. An example of a *descriptive article* was presented by Carol Barnhardt (2001) when she documented events and trends of significant and historical importance to the understanding of Native education and policies and practices in Alaska that impacted the schooling of Alaska Native people through an overview of federal policies, an analysis of schools for Alaska Native people, an explanation of the dual federal/territorial and present dual federal/state systems of schools and reform efforts, with a brief descriptions of current status of schools in Alaska. An example of a *guide* is represented in Brown (1991) in a review of the literature to address strategic plans for reading and language arts curricula for Native students, with an overview of theories in first and second language acquisition and stages of language development, and learning environment. He goes on to describe instruction for second language learners and theories behind comprehension and reader's interaction with text with emphasis on Native students. An example of a *position paper* was presented by Barnhardt (2000) on educational renewal in rural Alaska through the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI).

Research Design

I classified each study according to its research design (i.e., quantitative research, qualitative research, and mixed methods research). *Quantitative* research uses numerical data of collection and analysis. *Qualitative* research generates and analyses data through expressive language. *Mixed methods* research is the combined collection and analysis of data that is quantitative and qualitative.

Data Analysis/Emergent Themes

The Stevick-Collaizi-Keen method is a highly reductive method of data analysis used by researchers using the phenomenological study method of qualitative inquiry to identify essential concepts, issues and themes from text, in my case, articles. I located 47 articles that met my selection criteria. I then used a modified Stevick-Collaizi-Keen method, which was employed by Brown and Duke (2005) and McCarthy and Duke (2007) to analyze 47 articles included in this review. I first identified "significant statements" within each article. "Significant statements" are any statement that explicitly described issues relevant to how Alaska Natives learn. I then developed word tables of lists of non-repetitive, non-overlapping (verbatim) "significant statements" with (non-verbatim) "formulated meanings." These "formulated meanings" represented my interpretation of each "significant statement." I will group the "formulated meanings" from all 47 articles into collective "theme clusters" (or emergent themes"). These "emergent themes" represent the "essence" (or content) of the entire body of literature.

Results

I located 47 articles that met my selection criteria. The publication type and research design of each is delineated in Table 1.

Table 1

Author(s) & Year of Publication	Publication Type	Research Design
Angayuqaq/Kawagley, 1999	Guide	Not Applicable
Barnhardt, 2001	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Barnhardt, 2000	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Barnhardt & Angayuqaq/Kawagley, 2005	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Beaulieu, 2008	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Brown, 1991	Guide	Not Applicable
Charleston, 1994	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Davidson & Miller, 1998	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Deyhle & McCarty, 2007	Guide	Not Applicable
Dinero, 2004	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Fiedler, Chiang, Van Haren, Jorgensen, Halberg, & Boreson, 2008	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Franklin, Waukechon, Larney, Timmer, & Pennekamp, 1995	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Gaquin, 2006	Guide	Not Applicable
Gilliard & Moore, 2007	Empirical Study	Phenomenological, Ethnography
Hammond, Dupoux, & Ingalls, 2004	Empirical Study	Descriptive Research, Ethnography
Hermes, 2005	Empirical Study	Case Study, Ethnography
Hochstrasser Fickel, 2005	Empirical Study	Case Study, Ethnography
Ingalls, Hammond, Dupoux, Bacza, 2006	Empirical Study	Descriptive Research, Ethnography
James, 2001	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Jones & Ongtooguk, 2002	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Kanonhsionni/Hill & Stairs , 2002	Position Paper	Not Applicable

Author(s) & Year of Publication	Publication Type	Research Design
Kauffman, Conroy, Gardner III & Oswald, 2008	Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Kushman & Barnhardt, 2001	Empirical Study	Case Study, Ethnography, Mixed Methods
Lambe, 2003	Guide	Not Applicable
Latham, 1997	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Locke & Lindley, 2007	Empirical Study	Case Study, Ethnography
Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006	Position Paper	Not Applicable
McCollin, O'Shea, & Algozzine, 2005	Guide	Not Applicable
Morgan, 2005	Guide	Not Applicable
Orr, San Salom/Paul & Kelusilew/Paul	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Pearce, Crowe, Letendre, Letendre & Baydala, 2005	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Pewewardy, 2002	Position Paper, Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Ponessa, 1997	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Powers, 2005	Empirical Study	Descriptive Research
Prins & Willson Toso, 2008	Empirical Study	Mixed Methods Research
Reyhner & Jacobs, 2002	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Rice, 2003	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Samway & Taylor, 1993	Guide	Not Applicable
Saunders & Hill, 2007	Guide, Descriptive Article	Not Applicable
Starnes, 2006	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Sternberg, 2006	Empirical Study	Descriptive Research
Thompson & Hare, 2006	Position Paper	Not Applicable
Traoré, 2008	Position Paper	Not Applicable

Author(s) & Year of Publication	Publication Type	Research Design
Trent, Kea & Oh, 2008	Empirical Study	Mixed Methods
Waabginojii/Anderson, 2002	Guide	Not Applicable
Webster & Yanez, 2007	Empirical Study	Ethnography
Zehr, 2008	Position Paper	Not Applicable

Publication Types

Seventeen (36%) of the 47 articles were position papers. Twelve (26 %) of the 47 articles were empirical studies. Nine (19 %) of the 47articles were guides. Eight (17 %) of the 47 articles were descriptive articles. One (2 %) of the 47 articles was both a guide and descriptive article.

Research Design.

Twelve (36 %) of the 47 articles were empirical studies which had specific sections related to the research methods used to gather and analyze data, such as quantitative data, surveys and questionnaires. Six of the articles were qualitative studies, including case studies, ethnography, and phenomenological research. Three of the articles were descriptive research studies. Three of the articles were mixed methods research studies, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect and analyze data.

Emergent Themes

Using a phenomenological method of data analysis to develop "theme clusters" (or "theme clusters") representing the "essence" (or content) of this review of literature through the Stevick-Collaizi-Keen method (Duke & Ward, in press). Five broad themes from my analysis of the 47 articles included in this review emerged. These "emergent themes" include: (a) problems with K-12 education for Alaska Natives; (b) historical context; (c) cultural context; (d) building

bridges; and (e) future of K-12 education for Alaska Natives. These five "theme clusters" and their associated "formulated meanings" are delineated in Table 2.

Table 2

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
Problems with K-12 Education for Alaska Natives	• Students must negotiate unfamiliar discipline, instruction and evaluation methods, interpersonal relationships, and curricula that are different from their family, tribe, and community. • There are issues of inequity for Alaska Natives (AN) through the quality of education, underfunding of schools in rural villages, and run-down facilities. • Transient teachers, teaching out of their field, live apart from the Native community and do not adapt well to a small rural school setting, leave after two to three years, and are not able to build relationships that AN students need. • School failure is acquired rather than an attribute at the onset of schooling. • Policy makers implementing high-stakes exit exam which represents the dominant culture and is meant to bridge the gap of success and failure, but are sorting and classifying schools into categories: distinguished, proficient, deficient, and in-crisis. • Students leave without proper preparation for college and have to take remedial classes instead of preparing for employment in technical fields. • White students outperform Native students by 30-40 percent in reading, writing, and mathematics • Failure to pass the test leads to increased dropouts, retention, higher special education referrals, teaching to the test, and a drill-and-practice pedagogy. • Without confronting the past education system of assimilation and the multiculturalism of Alaska Natives our efforts to educate in a "one-size-fits all" system are counterproductive, because of issues of communication styles, learned social and behavior skills, and diverse cultures coupled with different geographical regions. • Exit exams were put in place without improving classroom experiences for Alaska Natives and continue to decrease success • Mainstream society blames minority communities for societal ills and American Indians and Alaska Natives as in need of "fixing a deficit."

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• Curriculum is textbook driven with mainstream knowledge • Elementary social studies content has centered on the transmission of knowledge legitimizing mainstream institutions, social behaviors, and beliefs. • Literacy in white culture is a solitary process based on text, through the word, and culturally ill suited to Alaska Natives. • Legislation has not changed the poor academic, social, and postsecondary outcome for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. • Past education oppressed and marginalized AI/AN, recent history has become sensitive but the socio-economic status has changed little. • Nearly all of the 245 communities (40%) in Alaska would be classified as rural, ranging in size from 25-5000, are small and isolated, and geographically diverse in languages and cultures. • High expectations are viewed in terms of test scores and Native students would be better served by formative ways to assess learning like performance-based measurements versus the one-right answer syndrome and may not stand a legal test to determine retention, graduation, or college admission.
Historical Context	• Formal education of Alaska Natives began with missionaries in the 19th century. • Russian and American clergy understood their role to convert and "civilize" Alaska Natives. • Social Darwinist concept that native subsistence communities were less evolved than white society (deficit) • Worked on teaching Natives manners, dress, hygiene, beliefs and values to become more like the new arrivals through assimilation • Literacy was limited to reading the holy books, training for a trade and working with Russians and priests. Education was seen as eliminating native culture and primarily to prepare laborers for the workforce. • The 1819 Civilization Fund Act appropriated annual "civilizing" funds to religious groups to operate schools for American Indian children and then later Alaska. • 1884 the Organic Act established the first civil government in Alaska and responsibility for education and continued into the 1970s. . • Alaska's first General Agent of Education in 1885 was Sheldon Jackson originated a system of schools for Alaska Natives which were

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	segregated, eliminated Alaska Native languages, and deliberately taught Christian "morals." • An 1887 report by J.D.C. Atkins, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, called Native customs and manners hereditary stumbling blocks and in the course of bringing a new lifestyle to Native people they were subjected to extreme ethnocentrism and superior attitudes. • Assimilationist policies, *either/or. Either* give up your identity as Native, speak English (only), and become a success, *or* you "remain an Indian" and become a failure • Day schools were established in Alaska villages, some vocational boarding schools (Eklutna, Mt. Edgecumbe), curriculum was 3 "Rs", industrial skills, patriotic citizenship, and an "English-Only" policy. • The 1905 Nelson Act established schools outside incorporated towns to the Territory of Alaska, but were segregated. • In 1928, the Institute of Government Research (now the Brookings Institute) issued a report titled "The Problem of Indian Administration" now commonly known as the *Meriam Report* which highlighted the need for bicultural education, develop reading material out of the life around them that emphasizes community, culture, and tradition reflect in theoretical statements but there is still a gap between policy and actual practice today as it was in then. • Segregated schools outlawed in Alaska in 1929 • Dual system, Federal/State continued into the 1970s with Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and Alaska "public schools." • By 1931 federal services were expanded to provide social welfare and medical services to rural Alaska. • Alaska Natives students from villages were sent to boarding schools and high schools and were not taught the same content or to the same standards as white students. • With court cases, education for Alaska Native has become more consistent with the education provided for whites, decentralized, with K-12 schools provided in rural village • Schools are held accountable for test results meant to lead to better college and job opportunities. • The 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) provided self-government and economic self-determination and tribes organized and incorporated providing economic recovery to rural Alaska, but were based on Lower 48 standards for a geographically and culturally diverse state.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• 1934 Johnson O'Malley (JOM) Act funds provided incentive to public schools to accept Indian students which Alaska didn't contract until 1952. • Improvement efforts halted in the 1950s with 93 BIA day schools, 3 boarding schools and 30-40 communities with 1800 children without any facilities. • Alaska concentrated on achieving statehood in the mid 1950s. • The Indian Education: A National Tragedy, known as the Kennedy Report (1969) documented the disparities in education for AI/AN students. *Forty years has gone by.* • 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act gave AI/AN a *sense* of control. • 1970s there was an increased interest in AI/AN gained support during the Civil Rights and Women's Movement 1968 and "The Great Society" programs impacted AI/AN education programs and policies. • 1971 Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAAs) were established but with a disparity in funding for local rural high schools. • American Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318) provides funding for special programs for reservation and urban students, but are funneled through state and federal bureaucracies with a percentage going to local schools and tribes. • 1975 the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act was intended to increase local control to contract directly from BIA to hire/fire teachers and develop curriculum, but an 1986 assessment called it an "illusion of control." • 1974 Molly Hootch case was filed charging discrimination for not providing high school to Native communities when the state did so for non-Native communities. • 1976 Tobeluk v. Lind, because Molly had graduated, was signed out of court providing high schools in every community in Alaska. • Indian Nations at Risk Task Force (INARTF) a 1991 Unpublished Draft, was a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education which found similar conditions to the Meriam and Kennedy Report. The third draft of the report resurfaced at the 1994 annual conference of Association of American Indian and Alaska Native Professors who recognized the findings and visions of the task force, translating rhetoric into future educational policy statements. Although, the perception was that the paper would be too harsh and offend the educational status quo, in actuality it was a culmination of listening to the testimony of

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	hundreds of tribal officials, Indian educators, parents, students, and school personnel who stated their frustrations with the lack of progress suggested by numerous studies and reports. The focus was on action and offered solutions with an expression of urgency in the voices of parents who didn't have the voice or confidence to challenge the educational system. • National Indian organizations and Native educators have taken the charge of INART forward with research to emphasize the relationship of research to effective practices and the language and cultural needs of NA students. • A committee of external experts on Indian education and representative of OIE, BIA, NIEA, and NISBA were established to determine issues and ideas related to the reauthorization of ESEA and Goals 2000 as they affect the education of American Indian, specifically Title IX of the Indian Education Act, charged with the purpose finding what will increase academic performance. Findings for success were: (a) challenging early childhood environments and activity; (b) language development; (c) physical, social, and cultural environment influence who they are and become; (d) exposure to violence, poor health, substance abuse, disruptive family environments, and a lack of stable home relationships can retard emotional and intellectual development and cause major physiological problems among children; and (e) children need a safe and culturally rich environment to mature properly. • Even though No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (NCLB) and Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) were designed to protect the rights of culturally and linguistically diverse learners and focus on equity, this population still continues to fail at higher rates than White students. • Culturally and linguistically diverse learners after placement into special education were spending more time in pull-out and residential special education programs than their White counterparts. • Educator's attitude, attribute Indian student school dropout rates to low self-image, lack of motivation, and believed Indian students were racially and academically limited. • Failures of Native students can be attributed to a schooling process which has no relevance to the Native student • Parents and grandparents, who were exposed to an education system which assimilated them into the mainstream culture and language, accepted assimilation because they did not want their children to have a "hard time" learning English in school. • Pressure to align everything to state standards and specific skills with

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	more workbook-style instruction and fewer projects. • Schools are separate from the community. • Majority of teachers are white and from mainstream society • AN/AI children were educated in schools that reflected the cultural values and norms of middleclass European-American society. • AN/AI remain the least of all ethnic groups to be successful and benefit from the education system. • Education of pre-service teachers replicated and reproduced dominant cultural values and knowledge of the university and was insensitive to American Indian history, values, and pedagogy. • Institutional influences are perpetuated through racial stereotypes depicting the jobs and attributes of the "good" little Indians. • Adopting "zero tolerance" policies give schools new ways to justify expulsion, exclusion, shaming and labeling students who need professional help more than punishment. • Choices in medium of instruction determine who has access to resources, power, and control and who does not. • Literacy in white culture is solitary, based on text, through the word, and culturally ill suited to Alaska Natives who need peers to learn. • Educators address problems linearly without accounting for the social context of activity when humans are dealing with complex challenges. • Living in the community for a sustained period of time increased an understanding of history and culture, ways of knowing and learning, and increased the bifocal view of culturally responsive pedagogy. • History not in the books: 1832, Loachapoka, Alabama was the site of the Creeks' last council fire before they were forcibly removed to Oklahoma; Creeks were skilled farmers long before Columbus got lost and found "the new world." Even after assimilation, owning productive plantations, educated at the best white schools, developing a writing language with a 90% literacy rate, but in the end "manifest destiny" pushed them off their land. • Through it all we never stopped praying, never stopped beating our drums, dancing and singing songs to the Creator. Native Americans/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiians found the courage and strength in the *school of life* to endure disease, starvation, forced religious conversion, mass murder, abuse, being lied to, robbed, raped, mistreated, and whatever else the worst life could throw at them. A common attribute, resilience, versus deficit thinking is a factor in school

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	success. • Teaching styles common in American schools ignore the heritage and needs of students, de-contextualized from personal experiences and organized in chunks to fit prescribed time, spaces, and places of learning.
Cultural Context	• A study in Alaska and Kenya showed that cultural knowledge is neglected in mainstream education which tends to favor memory and analytical abilities versus creative and natural strengths of cultural minorities. • The translations of Native languages into religious items was an important means by which many Native Americans, under the guise of Christianization, were able to retain their indigenous languages and develop literacy. • AN/AI influenced by language, culture, and heritage and have learning styles that are different not deficient, further learning modalities and cognitive styles are indicators for ways educators can provide compatible instruction/learning opportunities for their learning styles. • Grandparent often serves as the major disciplinarian who teaches character education, noninterference, or self-reliance as well as desired standards of moral behavior. • Culture shapes instruction in early childhood, child care, and education programs. • Teaching through the Indigenous language (immersion) supports cultural and language revitalization may promote academic and cultural competencies. • Stories of Aboriginals brought into the school through pedagogy by relating stories that their teachers and students construct and re-construct for their cultural practical knowledge. • Stories read or heard are models that address the minds, spirits, and physical needs of indigenous children through a charter school. • Learning barriers associated with public schooling for Alaska Natives are connected to cultural differences because children come to school socialized to language in culture-specific ways, the discourse structure and communication styles used by many children from culturally and linguistically diverse population is incongruent with that of the teacher's style of interaction and can have a negative impact on academic achievement. • Quality of education for Alaska Natives is still criticized because of the de-emphasis and lack of concern on protecting Native cultures and

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	lifestyles. • Mainstream educators need to understand historical and cultural contexts that led to achievement gap. • Native youth sent to boarding and residential schools were denied the anchor of their cultural identities • Loachapoka, Alabama elementary school sits a mile from a historic site of the Creeks with a banner calling for Indian Pride-the Indian their mascot, a mural designed to reflect and honor Loachapoka's strong Native American influence, with Indians in tipis, happy children in feathered headbands. Unfortunately, Creek did not live in tipis, wear such headdresses. The mural depicts stereotypical Plains Indians and symbolizes a deep issue that we as educators seldom consider and fail to recognize. • Parent want their children to prosper and succeed without giving up being an Alaska Native • Alaska Native parents' public schooling has not been committed to helping them raise their children within their own culture. Public schools counteract, dilute, or subtract their Nativeness. • Fix the test so it is fair and unbiased and should be used to leverage better instruction and diminish the achievement gap instead of punishing low achieving schools. Tests should also measure their cultural and language skills. • Curriculum is based on tradition Western canon and the English language not the heritage and home languages of Alaska Native students • The Native teacher's voice is important because Alaska Natives are more attuned to personal and community interactions than are members of the white societies. • Parent Education Profile (PEP) used by family literacy programs (e.g. Even Start, for eight and younger, serving economically disadvantaged families) to construct the ideal parent supports dominant discourses and presumes there is a universal model of how U.S. parent should interact with their children to promote literacy development. Programs' use of assessment tools can promote deficit views of parents, primarily poor women and women of color and implies that following the PEP will produce equally positive results regardless of family background, school and community setting, or socioeconomic conditions. • Native students desire to achieve and participate in school demands alternative competencies or they may discredit the importance of school as they age.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• Teacher expectations for AI decline as the student ages and are not holding AI students to the same standards as other students. • Viable models like Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP) and inquiry-based Rough Rock (Diné) and Yupik(Western Alaskan) immersion programs incorporate Native themes, languages, and Elders in content and delivery of instruction. • Oratory is prevalent in Alaska Native culture is built on relationships of the speaker to the listener, prior knowledge/understanding brought to the communication encounter, gestures, ability to adjust the message, intonation, facial expression to deliver meaning, and metaphors. • Language + being Native=Total Positive Identity • Native-language proficiency "talking good" in an ancestral language is valued in any tribe. • One-size-fits-all high-stakes test for the diverse cultures in Alaska-Yupiks, Cupiks, Inupiaqs, Athabascan, Tlingits, Haida, and Aleuts will undermine and destroy Alaska Native cultures • High stakes test depict examples outside the cultural contexts of Alaska Native students and show bias and do not accommodate local cultural context. • Alaska Natives want their students to become knowledgeable and proficient in the ways of white society, along with learning Native ways through a relevant curriculum that focuses on their customs and daily lives. • Village English is an important part of the village culture and meets all the needs of communication, is culturally embedded, based on an economy of speech and pauses between phrases that are based on politeness. Children had vocabulary to talk precisely about what they know. • They must have opportunities to learn standard English that responds to their culture • Test is another test for white people to tell us we're stupid, a put-down, insulting, increases anger with failure, and inspires giving up. • Good Bilingual/Bicultural (Bil/Bic) education has difficulties-reporting back research • Concerns about standardization and narrowing curriculum around mainstream culture • The appropriateness of holiday themes studies that are void of any reference to the contributions of American Indians to American culture

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	through "New World" food, customs, and democracy, and are relegated to studies of "foods and festivals." • The selection of children's literature in their units was culturally irrelevant and related back to Jewish/Russian traditions or panders to romantic imagery of the Indian with little realistic depictions of an AI culture. . • Families of American Indian students have different perspectives on discipline are raised to evaluate their conduct and behaviors to meet the standards of the group. • Alaska Native educators working in the formal education system and Native Elders who are the culture bearers can be key change agents and help reconstitute education in rural Alaska. Think globally, act locally. • American Indian children and their families are a vulnerable population and are at greater risk than other ethnic groups for developing serious psychosocial problems of alcoholism, substance abuse, low self-concept, suicide, and other psychiatric disorders. • Cultural discontinuity is the lack of cohesion between two or more cultures brought to our attention when children come to school having been socialized to language that have different repertoires and make differential use of particular language patterns. • Traditional schools follow the Initiation-Reply-Evaluation discourse in contrast to CLD groups. • With IDEA and NCLB we must differentiate students with reading difficulties from those who actually require special education by providing opportunities to lessen over-identification of minority students. • NCLB claims to fund programs that provide "scientific research" but their findings are valid for those groups represented in the study's population. Lack of research specifically aimed at understanding the effects on the Native American/*Alaska Native* population means findings cannot be generalized to this population and invalidates any assertions about positive relationships between the programs being promoted and the achievement of Native students. • States with large Native school populations were concerned with implications of NCLB and meeting requirements based on unique AI/AN needs and unique circumstances of school operations in isolated rural areas. • Bush's OIE policy changes demanded that all Indian education programs be converted into strictly reading programs, implementing NCLB to diminish the role of Native languages and cultures in schools with

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	Native students and revert federal Indian education policy to a time prior to the 1928 Meriam Report, diminished research related activities, increased attention on testing and test results, and banning the use of Native languages and cultural instruction in Indian education programs. • Of all federally funded programs, 66 percent were not culturally related and are used to increase instructional time, such as summer school, homework assistance, tutoring, home-school coordination/student incentives, attendance improvement, and dropout prevention. *We have these same programs right now in our schools.* • OIE were calling superintendents to inform them that they could not focus on Native language and culture, but on English reading and math. Other Bush policies demanded BIA schools receiving federal impact aid, without consultation with tribes, adopt education standards of the state and assessments to determine AYP status and would not hear complaints or ideas to make Title VII work for American Indians. • Disaffection with NCLB within the Native American education community leads to NIEA hearings and in summary, holding schools and school districts accountable for results was a positive aspect of NCLB, but it would *leave Native children behind* and *with insufficient funding to boot!* • Increased achievement scores were skewed by higher student dropout rates associated with student boredom with direct instruction approaches • Driving teachers and educators from the field and highly qualified teachers does not relate to teaching skills for linguistic and culturally unique students. • 2006 passage of the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act. • Federal education statutes and federal support for Native languages by the Native American Languages Act (NALA) of 1990/1992 promises to preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages… • NCLB has a growing disregard of Native American parents in the education of Native American children, which may lead to the necessity to develop a new Indian Education Act that considers the relationships of federal, state, and tribal governments established by the original Johnson O'Malley Act in 1934, enabling tribes to assume parallel state government authority in education. • Historical experiences form a legitimate basis for many Native Americans' attitude toward schools and schooling, curriculum and materials, white teachers, and white control over their schools.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• The American industrialized school system reflects the belief in classical- European science and defines mainstream American Western belief that information is valid only if it is observable, quantifiable, and replicable, and maintains an absolutist point of view. Non-Western cultural world view or technologies are suspect, inferior, and subject to ridicule and don't qualify for use in instruction except as subjects of primitive curiosity. • Native cultures metaphorically organize and explain reality different from the world-view that layers of realities exist physically and spiritually and harmony and balance must be maintained through myths and legends of local heroes to maintain and teach values and morals. • American Indian/Alaska Native students' learning is characterized by social/affective (emotional or feeling) emphasis, harmony, holistic perspectives, expressive creativity, and nonverbal communication. Therefore, strongly influenced by their language, culture and heritage, different but not a deficit and requires different instruction, curriculum, and assessment. • Native students prefer knowledge validated through personal experience related to subsistence and high dropout rates can be contributed to being bored in teacher centered classrooms. • Spotlighting individual students to give answers requested by the teacher, an individualistic approach to learning is contrary to traditional Native child rearing practices that discourage learn by your mistakes. • The "crossover effect" relates to American Indian students functioning at an average rate until the 4th grade and by the 10th grade they are, on average, three years behind their peers.
Building Bridges	• When we teach students and assess in a way that fits how they think, they do better in school and becoming aware of those strengths and incorporating them into instruction, educators can boost student achievement. • Building relationships and establishing meaningful context for literacy instruction in teaching Alaska Native students. • It is the teacher's responsibility to mediate continuity between home and school and provide information or guides for CLD students through implicit and explicit cultural instruction for a diverse population. • Culturally responsive teachers have high teacher expectations, encourage students to tap their experiential knowledge, teach to different learning styles through varied instruction formats • Focus on phonological awareness using culturally and linguistically

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	relevant reading material and strategies to close the reading gap, build fluency, and increase comprehension. • Teachers misread AI students as being uninterested, overly shy, rude, or immature and teachers can strengthen relationships through meaningful mentoring, extracurricular, and community-based programs providing academic tutoring, companionship and role modeling while boarding with their students. • Teachers who use culturally responsive practices supportive of students' home culture, language, values, and strengths can positively impact academic achievement. • Inside-out approach is required in which educators develop trusting relationships with community members and then work with the community to design educational programs around the local place, language, and culture. • Parents must see their role beyond parents supporting the school to a role in which parents are active participants in school life and decisions, shared leadership, and education has a larger purpose than teaching skills and knowledge. • Students in underrepresented minority groups have culturally relevant knowledge and diverse cognitive abilities that schools can use to promote learning. • Urban Indians differ from reservations and are one to two generations removed from their tribal heritage and its customs, live in low-income areas which affect their relationships with the public schools • There needs to be ongoing communication with parents and community about teaching within a culturally relevant content. • As Alaska Native students mature, parents may need help as they are less able to assist in advanced curriculum. • School-wide anti-bullying, anger management, and substance abuse programs may curb declines in student achievement. Efforts to increase student achievement motivation should be directed at decreasing remediation which lack cognitive and cultural emphasis, deplete students' desire to commit to academic tasks. • Teaching within a culturally relevant content, building a sense of belongingness, using rituals, respecting children families, and community and are essential especially in early learning programs. • School-wide screenings may be effective in identifying AI students before underachievement occurs through individualized intervention plans implemented, monitored, and revised until desired outcomes are

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	achieved. • Build trust; develop understanding of the culture to be able to use it in the context of instruction. • Larger schools increase the sense of depersonalization and de-contextualization in learning. • Schools should be the right arm of the community • Accommodation for those whose primary language is not English. • Need classroom-level provision of equitable opportunities to learn and use of culturally responsive teaching practices. • Eliminate the defeatist attitude which says, "Why attend school when we can never graduate?" • Many Alaska Natives favor a statewide test that assesses in ways that respect learning styles might be a more accurate indicator of learning instead of using the results to fail schools, students, and teachers. • Teachers of social studies should research the historical interpretation, economic, and social structures of the local Indian community and emphasize the cultural strength and contributions and place in the context of state and national history. • Prospective Native teachers should be valued for their "lived reality" and make connections through self-reflection where they examine their own knowledge and connect their values and beliefs, cultural symbols, and personal characteristics is empowering. • Break through the stereotypes, such as AI/AN can't avoid being a drunken Indian or prevent teen pregnancies. • Increase tribal leaders in the curriculum and pedagogical (teaching) decisions. • Few instructors, administrators, and mentors had visited reservations before teaching a course to pre-service teachers and had little knowledge or sensitivity to the culture or best practices in the reservation classrooms. • "I always did my own book (curriculum unit) binders of my lesson plans that related back to my culture, which was acceptable, I used it in my classroom to teach my culture...the way our culture teaches...not used." Too often this voice is ignored, or silenced. • Multi-year, rural based cultural camps that live in and experience the culture provide a "bifocal" lens to pre-service teachers by giving them a comparison and insight into the lived reality of their students, parents

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	and communities. • Collecting, transcribing, retelling, and adapting traditional stories for bilingual picture books in language revitalization and maintenance and school-based literacy and reading comprehension. • Developmental changes within the child contribute to the cultural gap as American Indian children develop and it is these changes related to increased social awareness and stronger cultural values. • Parents who are struggling with literacy or are overburdened with life demands as many poor, working-class, and immigrant parents are expect teachers to impart knowledge. • How parents talk to their children is the problem in the PEP model and is not substantiated by research and obscures the need to alter institutions, policies, and social structures. • Cultures and lifestyles different from the white middle-class mainstream are not pathological, deviant, or deficient relative to the mainstream but are legitimate and valuable in their own right. • Students respond to modeling, independent analysis of behavior, and humility by not outdoing their peers, it is important for the group to succeed first. • Education of NA must focus attention on the cultural components for a successful school experience, developed *with*, rather than *for* NA. • Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI) has been implemented to document the indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into the Alaska education systems. • Addressing Alaska Native issues needs to be initiated and implemented from within the Native community itself and adapted to their respective cultural regions. • Urban public schools need culturally relevant school programs for AN/AI children and their families. • Urban Indian students need social workers to help professionals to understand the cultural contexts of AN/AI students, including those cut off from their tribal affiliations and customs to encourage respect and identity with their proud heritage. • Even though conflict resolutions reflect generational conflicts with immigrants (i.e. first, second, and third generations) we can encourage teachers, administrators, and students to consider cultural connections as underlying causes, see education as a socio-cultural process which demands understanding and appreciation of the culture, ethnicity and personal experience of our students in affecting student achievement,

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	and use cultural responsiveness as a positive force in measuring successful teaching versus color blindness that only considers positive test scores and grades. • Interventions introduced as culture-based rather than more traditional conflict resolution strategies that address myths, misperceptions, and stereotypes through stories and literature, film, writing poetry, and dialogue acknowledging shared cultural connections. • Our stories need to be shared by our own people, in our own words and from our own points of reference to bring Indigenous education full circle as pedagogy of the land. • Educators are struggling to find the right balance between core academics and attention to native culture as way to help engage and motivate Native American children by making Indian education part of the state education department, have teachers take a three-semester-hour course in American Indian history and culture to become certified (SD). Paring down the curriculum to focus on language arts and math (CA). Incorporating Native American culture, history, and practices into lessons and teaching by doing and showing, using instructional conversation, hearing lesions in a storytelling form, infusing Native American culture into the curriculum, and hiring teachers who are more sensitive to the children's culture. • Varied strategies for meeting AYP were stressing academics rather than cultural approaches, after-school programs, emphasizing homework and tutoring, and summer programs focused on reading, math, and enrichment classes because Native American, special education, and economically disadvantaged students did poorly, hiring math and reading specialists for every grade, extending the school day, and providing transportation *(and other incentives)* for children to stay after school for tutoring. • When students' values and culture is "tapped" in the classroom, it builds a bridge to school success along with developing skills needed to communicate in the language of power, yet valuing their differences from the dominant culture. • Connect Native perspective to issues beyond their own communities. • Culturally linked school programs have provided evidence of that result in increased student learning, higher test performance, and improvement in related indicators. • There is no Indian history there are histories between tribes which needs more understanding and historical accuracies without being divisive to building Indian Country relationships.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• White educators need to acknowledge not being well prepared to teach our Alaska Native/American Indian students, but find mentors, get educated specific to groups we teach, know and participate in the community, question personal knowledge and historical "facts" and work through the difficult realities and shared history, create material, expect measured success, give ourselves time, and push for training along with strong administrative support to take risks and create a culture of safety. • Diné (Navajo) teacher training programs must face skepticism of training Native teachers due to parents' and grandparents' past negative experiences with boarding schools and some parents who assume only Anglo teachers can teach better. • We must connect the past with the present, but Native American teachers can't find classroom material printed in Diné (Navajo). • On the Diné (Navajo) reservation only 20% of 6,000 certified teachers were natives. By contrast almost all teachers' aides were Diné. It seems natural to help paraprofessionals earn their teaching credentials. They are good role models, and would create a diverse and culturally responsive teaching force for diverse needs of the students economically, socially, and culturally. • Ford Foundation money to the Navajo Nation helped set up an office of teacher education, shifted the power to Diné administrators telling the universities what they wanted by sitting at the table and working together, and giving more control to Indian leaders to stipulate conditions for their nontraditional students, who have to meet the same requirements which are not "watered down, diploma mills". • Passing the standardized test required of prospective teachers is debatable, with those who claim racial and cultural bias with those who raise the issue of putting a less qualified, culturally attuned teacher in the classroom, and does passing an exam necessarily means you have a better teacher? The alternative would be to prepare a portfolio presented before a state review panel for licensure and guarantees that a teacher who graduates from the program could teach anywhere. • Reaching Native children and families is essential since American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children are four time as likely to live in rural communities as in non-rural communities and further challenges providing developmentally and culturally appropriate early childhood education to Native children, and 7 of 10 are living in poverty. • INARTF (Unpublished) goal was to ensure the survival of Indian people through education, recognizing the non-assimilation attitude of tribes, but melding two separate societies to become compatible with a "Bill of

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	Rights" for AI/AN students to meet individual needs through the tribal political systems. • Preschools and immersion programs aligning the school community with the Native community served will be seen as part of the community and supportive of parents and students. • Window Rock Unified School District on the Diné Nation moved its various Native language immersion classrooms into a single elementary school and accommodated the quasi-experimental research design (2000) and continues to meet or exceed performance levels as measured by standardized tests. Other participants include Punuana Leo (Hawaiian), Lower Kuskokwim (Yup'ik), the Piegan Institute (Blackfeet), and the Niigaane (Ojibwe) as Bugonaygeshig.
Future for K-12 Education for Alaska Natives	• "If you don't know your history, you are history." The preservation of tradition and culture is essential for student knowledge and the vitality of the people. • State remains adamant in using test scores as the sole or primary indicator of what students know and school success. • Lakota readers published by BIA in the 1940s needs to be evaluated in the historical record as the initial impact of bilingual and bicultural education for the Native population. • Efforts to increase student achievement motivation should be directed at decreasing remediation which lack cognitive and cultural emphasis, deplete students' desire to commit to academic tasks. • School policies can be produced and legitimate Indigenous ends. • Address poor teaching and assessments at the school and classroom level. • Partner with local communities to improve local student assessment to reflect more accurately educational achievement and preparation of students. • Focus on rigorous and relevant academic standards. • Measure success to include local performance assessments and informed teacher judgment. • Develop a school quality review system. • Periodic visits of critical friends to improve best practices in teaching. • Creating a more institutional and transparent local curriculum. • Assist rural schools in creating new curricula or building on existing curricula developed for the unique setting of rural Alaska schools.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• Lesson plans and material should be developed and owned by the school and not leave with the individual teachers creating continuity of learning. • State test serve as one indicator of student learning and school quality and means for improvement and not used to punish schools not meeting an AYP standard score. • Indigenous community-based education, promoting tribal language as essential for Indigenous self-determination and cultural survival. • Teaching Native American languages in schools, because the *Essence* of Native culture flourishes and exists in language and culture despite generations of pressure to change. • Indian peoples need to determine the future of our children. • Focus of intersection between research and social action: race and culture, and language and identity. • Listen to Native researchers and educators rather than privilege only white perspectives. • Lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT) is crucial to interpreting the schools experience of American Indian students in ways that situate family, education, culture, and language as strengths while pointing to the ways in which schools function to disenfranchise these students and their families. • Resiliency and adaptation are strengths and it is imperative that culture and language together form a more positive identify for Native students. • Learning home language first help students do better when they are taught English as a second language, test results on benchmarks are higher. • Turn the deficit portrait of Native students to institutional failures of schools through more qualitative, ethnographic research. • Critical Language Studies (CLS) goal to critically "read" language policies and practices as a means of understanding their social, political, economic, and racialized meanings within particular sociocultural contexts. • Bilingual-bicultural education was/is a powerful expression of Indigenous self-determination, windows to opportunities, new implementation spaces for transformative education practices. • Use research to devise academically sound education programs that promote local languages and cultures while bridging the mainstream society in healthy child-, family-, and community-affirming ways.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• Analysis of the Rock Point Program-a four-fold empowerment program-Diné school board, staff, parents and students who value their Diné -ness and see themselves as capable of succeeding *because* (versus in spite of) of their Diné-ness, see also Yupik, Hualapai, New Mexico Pueblos because of impetus given to community input in schools, new hope to American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian parents. *Powerful!* • Where a century and a half of cultural genocide has been ignored, it is necessary to acknowledge or address AI/AN/NH (Native Hawaiian as an oppressed indigenous culture, as well) history or culture would help understand the present education failure. • In a critical democracy include all voices and recognize the many contributions of AI/AN/NH. • Access to meaningful learning opportunities, supportive teachers, and safe schools equal school success. • Practitioners and scholars should consider whether assessment procedures and instruments foster inclusion and self-determination. • The Freirean-inspired approach demonstrates collective reflection on strengths and limitations of different child-rearing practices. • Discussions among pre-service teachers familiar with American Indian culture were able to generate a list of culturally responsive educational practices (solutions) regarding high special education referral and placement. • Building our own education based on our own terms of reference, our teachings, and our worldview, evaluating and validating Indigenous ways of knowing through cultural camps since we don't learn in isolation. • It is recommended that future research examine how society influences the socialization process for CLD children and examine the impact of mainstream American education on immigrants and Alaska Natives/AI/NH. • Evaluations of academic achievement should reflect the holistic, intuitive, and experience-based learning styles of aboriginal students through a visual narrative inquiry. • Imagining a new school with a traditional calendar, extended year, longer school days, seasonal ceremonies, and daily routines incorporating rituals, and elders and cultural guides and differentiated instruction. • Teacher Education Programs (TEP) need for centralization of multicultural education within the entire program versus a predominant

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	focus on stand-alone courses; incorporating multiple perspectives to explain school failure, such as CRT; transformative learning experiences; expanded knowledge base and curricula to challenge traditional knowledge; inquiry-based approaches that facilitate pre-service teachers' skills to transform multicultural theories into practice; effects of multicultural teacher preparation on teachers and their students; and increase the number of CLD teachers and research external forces that results in marginalization of multicultural teacher preparation and funding for research. • Using qualitative data collection of 17 volunteer teacher candidates, *distancing strategies* immerged to avoid interactive discussion about racial inequities: silence among friends, family, and in classrooms; attempts to convince peers they were not racist; avoiding classes focused on social and education inequity; associating with the "good" White label by choosing culture over racial issues arguing that race should be discussed within the broader context of color which they believe no longer influence CLD learners; embraced color-blindness by not "seeing" color in their interactions with friends, colleagues, and students; Separation from responsibility that racism was a thing of the past, affirmative action was reverse discrimination, failure to respond to a *meritocracy.* • A reverse strategy for distance strategies would be open and honest discussion that promotes critical and respectful analysis of White talk through an explicit *meta-dialogic approach* to consciously develop awareness of distancing (or avoiding the issues) strategies. • By engaging in community activities where pre-service teachers are the minority and interacting with people from historically marginalized groups, results showed they gained a better understanding of themselves in relationship to oppression, they were better able to identify structural inequalities that sustain marginalization, and developed empathy or a change in heart about marginalized groups. • Future teachers must be reflective practitioners who possess the skills to monitor, evaluate, and revise their teaching techniques based on the learning styles of students they teach and have experience with their students during their teacher training. • In the last 20 years, cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) to address cultural-historical issues introduced as an outgrowth of Lev Vygotsky's (1962) social constructivist theory, by Luria and Leont'ev theorize that human cognition and activity has no beginning, middle, or end, but an evolving, complex structure of mediated and collective human agency and in TEP it takes a critical mass commitment because of attrition of faculty members to transform practice and minimizes hierarchies of

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	power. • What goes unacknowledged will become invisible and CHAT will allow teacher educators, researchers, policy makers, journal editors, and funding agencies to address problems and improve outcomes associated with educating CLD learners with and without disabilities. • Fearful their traditions and language will be forgotten, American Indians are recruiting and training home-grown teachers to help preserve their way of life using portfolios versus passing the exam. • If Native Studies at a university level reflects Euro-American worldview and Whitewashing, then Native studies programs and programming needs careful reflection of current practices. Drawing the available expertise from the diverse rural communities and explore ways to develop an equitable education system. • If Americans are to embrace diversity, the conscious and unconscious expressions of racism within our society must be identified and done away with. Schools cannot be guardians of the status quo. • Developmentally appropriate curricula for Native young children from birth through 8 year should include tribe-specific cultural components, instructional strategies that relate to tribal customs with accredited guidelines and learning outcomes to meet National Association for the Education of Young Children (1996) with goals that include family and community and tribal leaders involvement, develop a Sharing and Learning Place Curriculum that helps keep and support the child's home languages, which is linked to success in understanding and speaking English. Develop a knowledgeable and skilled local teaching staff to alleviate high teacher turnover, include elders as cultural teachers in EC classrooms, and on-going communication with child care workers with continued review of EC curriculum. • INART goals: Acknowledge that Native societies value education, fluency in English, and want the highest quality education possible, through changing the industrial age approach of standardization, training, certification, and unionization. • Maintain the government to government relationships between tribes and the United States with adequate funding, local control through joining together for success through forward funding directly to schools that educate Native students alleviating the middle-man (federal and state). • Natives must consciously give up ignorance, dropping out, alcoholism and substance abuse, poverty, unemployment, disease, hate and preoccupation with the injustices of the past to free themselves,

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	mentally, spiritually, and physically to grow and contribute to your tribe. • Changes of behavior, attitudes and values of non-Natives working in schools is required through basic understanding, respect, and appreciation for AI/AN; understanding why their societies exist and act accordingly acknowledging the history of treaties and government-to-government relationship. • Native education must emphasize high quality academics and the cultures of Native students reflected in *quasi* Native education, which is a combination of the best of both by recognizing the complementary nature of Native and Western knowledge using both as a foundation for school curriculum and to integrate them into the way we think about learning and teaching. • Develop a working partnership of mutual respect and understanding between the Native and educational communities by drawing together the expertise from each and exploring ways to arrive at an equitable synthesis: (a) from within; (b) shoulder the major responsibility; (c) existing government policies and programs need to relinquish control and provide latitude to address issues their way and live and learn; and (d) requires formal education system and indigenous knowledge systems in rural Alaska. We have to work through existing systems and "not throw the baby out with the bath water." Further, adapted to the cultural and geographical variables of Alaska's Native regions. • Emphasize and continue to ensure success for Alaska Natives through the Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN), Spiritual Pathway for Integrating Rural Alaska Learning (SPIRAL) Curriculum Framework clearinghouse and cataloging resources; Cultural Documentation/Atlas; Native Educator Associations; Native Ways of Knowing; Academies of Elders; Cultural Standards; Village Science Curriculum Applications; American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) Coalition to increase interest in science and math education in rural Alaska; and Math/Science Performance Standards incorporating cultural and geographic perspectives to provide equity in the assessment process. • To initiate academic success where there is incongruence, or misalignment, with school and community use culturally responsive practices that are supportive of students' home culture, language, values, and strengths. • Teachers will do well if they honor the natural desire of children to want to learn about things that matter with techniques: expression through art and music; critical thinking about relevant issues; across-the-curriculum awareness of core virtues beyond classroom management; authentic honoring of cultural values; academic skills that keep students connected

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	to the natural world around them; and knowledge of their home community and environment, through inquiry-based projects which aligns with community- and place-based education for American Indian students. • More traditional Native communities want their language and culture taught in schools but by local teachers which means nurturing bilingual teachers to become active and a constructivist curriculum which honors place community, and cultural values of self-reliance and responsibility. • Because we are all related we have stories to tell and retell from our cultural and institutional experiences that need to be used to create a new beginning where families are a part of teaching, culture is imbedded into the educational system, where we are our children's future before they are ours. • Research agenda was developed with five priorities: ECE programs in Native America as they influence language development and incorporate Native languages and cultural programs; the level of congruency between the culture of a healthy community and culture of the school; influences of violence in schools and community on student achievement and development; the characteristics of an effective education programs and teachers in NA, analysis of curriculum, teachers, school culture, and family and community involvement; and analysis of NAEP to determine levels of growth in math and reading among Native American students. • A National research agenda proposed: a national broad-based study of alterable variable between successful and less successful Native students; a series of smaller, site-specific studies to examine effects of previously identified variables on student achievement; and aggregation of the results using standard meta-analytic techniques. • Indian Education research Web site was developed. • Native educators re-energize their efforts to ensure that federal education policy embraces Native American languages and cultures and is responsive to tribal education needs and concerns. • There is research-based knowledge that teachers of American Indian and Alaska Native students should know that is usually not provided in teacher education programs. • Research from both Native and non-Native sources should create awareness, more teacher preparation opportunities and programs for more Indian children to live in and contribute to both their local and global communities that honor and value their wisdom and cultural values.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• Observe how students respond to curriculum materials and teaching styles by learning more about their students' homes and culture and challenges they face. • Use a wisdom-centered pedagogy which is child-centered but connected to knowledge of elders, metaphors embedded in Native languages, watching plants and animals (seasonal knowledge), and learning the metaphors of ceremony that heals the spirit, this is learning that really matters to Native students. • Build high expectations by alternative ways of using more formative ways to assess learning, for example, with value laden performance-based measurements versus high-stakes, one right answer assessments. • Values and reciprocity embedded in Native cultures' worldview can apply to local and global issues that honors input from the community. • Working with the family, extended family, and American Indian/Alaska Native education associations to gain their support in literacy and academic achievement, reinforces their efforts to pass on culture, and develop a strong, resilient and caring identity. • To counteract youth gang activity and drug abuse teachers, students, and parents can work together grounding themselves and toward understanding their culture in a constructivist approach to learning. • To motivate and engage students establish a strong personal relationship with students, and make values, self-reliance, and responsibility an intrinsic value that makes the student "feels good to their core" that each person is his/her own teacher and learning is life-long, "you live and learn", "don't do that again" discipline. • Support culturally sensitive, new teachers who resist programs that make Native teachers and students act white and like robots following a script based on doubtful research but call for using more content related to the children's environment and culture, which accelerates learning. • Continue to assert the importance of Indigenous language rights and challenge racism in public schools and in society through research through the domains of critical race theory and critical language studies. • Learning from nature through direct interaction with the environment through immersion camps, language development camps, bridging camps validating both "thought-worlds" through elder knowledge which defines the parameters of the camp, shelters, subsistence activities, knowledge of plants and animals within a local, seasonal curriculum, acknowledging the value to abuse will lessen our success, using modern technology to lessen work, but not abandoning local technology for a "*plastics-only*" world.

Theme Clusters	Formulated Meanings
	• De-compartmentalizing skill of communication, decision-making through common sense, analytical and critical thinking that recognizes many different ways of doing things acknowledging the community and environment in instruction. • Reading, language arts, and language arts related subjects with specific effective, instructional strategies are necessary as well as identifying programs that work for Native students, such as: analyzing the language complexity of the learning task; providing contextual cues, peer interaction and cooperative learning experiences; modifying lessons or providing alternative activities for limited English proficient (LEP) students; comprehension checks, preview, review; making the text comprehensible by adapting to learning styles, or different modalities; and adapting content to the community to assist many Native students access the language of American academia. • Writing strategies in a Northwest Alaskan school that helped non-writers and reluctant writers used laminated paper with wipe-off markers, accepting all writing with simple edits and revisions, photocopying their laminated papers and storing them in writing folders with periodic sorting, by students, to make "paragraph books" as collections of sentences on a single subject. Using colorful sentence strips to write opening, closing, and transitional sentences to add to an existing piece, school-wide daily assessments, other written models viewed on an overhead read and assessed by students using 6Traits+1 language, such as, ideas, organization, and voice increased students' critiquing skills, attitude toward writing, and improved their writing. • Repairing education and achieving equity for Native students internally through improved facilities, more funding and resources. Through listening, respecting and involving learners young and old, and teaching others our strengths and grow from each other's knowledge. • In academics additional research needs to be initiated, published, presented, and used in policy development for change.

Discussion

In this section, I will summarize the major themes that emerged from my analysis of the 47 articles in this review of the literature, with connection to problems with K-12 education for Alaska Natives, historical context, cultural context, building bridges, and future for K-12 education for Alaska Natives.

Theme 1: Problems with K-12 Education for Alaska Natives

With the arrival of explorers and pioneers hoping to get rich off of Alaska's resources, Alaska Natives have had to adapt to a constant changing environment socially, emotionally, spiritually, and economically. As we prepare for the 50th year of Alaska Statehood, it was brought to my attention, at a Native forum luncheon by a Native Senator that the Seal of Alaska does not depict any historical images related to Alaska Natives and the celebration will be based on the successes of White settlers. When schools began in Alaska the purpose was to educate a labor force for the whaling, fur, and fishing trade. Schools developed first by Russian missionaries and then Anglo-Saxon missionaries, funded by the federal government to educate Natives used assimilation, as the most expedient way of reaching *government* goals, goals that were not aligned to the wishes of the cultural groups being educated.

My mother was a homemaker and my dad was a laborer. They had no technical skills but learned skills of problem-solving that helped them survive. My father was a mail carrier using a dog team, heavy equipment operator building a road, a railroad worker, trapper, and fisher. My mother had the culturally learned skills to sew for her family, dress and prepare game and fish, while supporting her husband with his trapping endeavors (she could, amazingly, skin small animals from the mouth back) and they had to transfer our education to the school system which had a calendar, which had – and still has – no regard for the culture of place, contradicting local Native seasonal calendars. We wouldn't gain that local knowledge. We still have people who are second and third generations from the beginning of schools in Alaska. With the literature I've read about education for Alaska Natives, I can say, "I can relate to that story!" Each student, parent, and Elder has a story, and as we put all of the pieces together, they are important to the

total picture. Not only that, they bring cultural strengths and funds of knowledge which can be used to connect to standards and curriculum.

Summary of Theme 2: Historical Context

From the arrival of Russians in 1741, Alaska Natives' lives changed. In a land that had supported us we were not considered citizens. Our land and resources were being used and depleted by non-Native settlers in their quest to become rich. From Russian occupation to the 1819 Civilization Fund Act government goals were being established, and many subsequent actions and reports have continued to critique American Indian/Alaska Native education as inadequate. It was amazing and appalling to me that even with information and research dating as far back as the 1928 Meriam Report and subsequent task force studies since, there is still an achievement gap where Native scores are lower than non-Natives. The primary concern is with funding inequities between rural and urban schools which affect hiring enough teachers and support staff, creating and purchasing resources. Even though, we now have local high schools in every rural community we still have to maintain these facilities. These outside controls coupled with high-stakes testing that all schools must meet by 2014 lessens our ability to provide a high quality of education to Alaska Natives.

As an educator, I have to consider that my students have histories which may or may not support learning and as an educator I have to adjust my style of teaching to individual needs of students but, also, taking into consideration the findings for success by Native educators' research for at-risk learners: (a) challenging early childhood environments and activities; (b) language development; (c) physical, social, and cultural environment influence who they are and become; (d) exposure to violence, poor health, substance abuse, disruptive family environments, and a lack of stable home relationships can retard emotional and intellectual development and

cause major physiological problems among children; and (e) children need safe and culturally rich environments to mature properly. We can begin to take a critical look at our history and rewrite our stories and history. Taking what worked in the past and using that knowledge to help our students become problem solvers by working together. As "assimilated" young adults we didn't know a lot, but by observing, trial and error, and discussion with close family members, we learned together – and we can transfer this method of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Summary of Theme 3: Cultural Context

Alaska Natives are diverse in their language, customs, and culture, but similar in spirit to the way they interact with their environment. It is in this way that we were able to survive. Our knowledge gives us our creativity and natural strengths. Native people and culture is constantly adapting, if not, we would not survive. When the church came literacy was introduced by writing the language into books and music, and it is through these examples that we are able to reconstruct our language. Even though we have been assimilated, we still live in a reciprocal society that expects us to give back when we return home for the success of our village and clans.

. Goals established without listening to the stakeholders have not been realized because they don't relate to each unique cultural situation. It was not apparent to me at first reading, but work that was started by committees and task forces to find what works for Native students have not been shelved or forgotten by Native educators nationally but are being used in developing Native education policies. We have Native organizations which have developed websites and provide us with statistics, teaching resources, and examples for success. I believe that keeping up with current information is possible because of internet access to lesson plans, and activities

that are culturally relevant, and cultural based standards that charge us with reaching out to other Native educators and community elders to create place based curriculum.

Summary of Theme 4: Building Bridges

When I consider my past and the past of students educated in Alaskan schools and boarding schools, I have to contribute my success to mentors who were genuinely caring, who had high expectations for us, but encouraged us to keep our Nativeness throughout our educational experiences. Not all, but the successful leaders, teachers, and elders are those who listen and learn. They have caught the innate language of metaphors (though not fluent in their Native tongue) that would bridge the gap between being Native and living in a non-Native world. Through it all they were bound to the necessity to give-back for the success of their communities and clans locally, regionally, statewide, and nationally. This is our Nativeness, our strength, what give us the tenacity to keep going, even though Native politics is tough.

As an educator, I have to have empathy for the community I serve, not because I have to "fix" my students, but because I can relate from my life experiences to my students and their families. It is through building a positive relationship through our cultural connections and communication styles that we can collaborate to increase academic achievement. It is important to look through ethnographic lens before I make conclusions about my students. Who are they? Do they have adequate housing, nutrition, health and dental care, and are they coming to school ready to learn? I cannot just see a young person whose behavior is "off the wall" and react too soon with punitive measures. There is a need to observe before taking action.

Summary of Theme 5: Future K-12 Education for Alaska Natives

We have learned and continue to teach in a "one-size-fits all" educational system for Alaska Native students and teachers. Mainstream education is looking for the "holy grail" the

"silver bullet" that will fix the achievement gap. Well, they don't exist, I'm sorry to say. Who knew that we are so manipulated by NCLB and federal policies in how we use Indian Education funds to those ends? I felt so disheartened, so helpless upon learning these facts.

I have to use the "Theme" binders created by regional Native educators based on place-based education using language, culture, literacy, and standards to teach local Tlingit students. These are web-based and easily downloadable and can be adapted through the teacher's creativity and use of local tradition bearers. We have the best practices of mainstream and Native knowledge, collaboration, and methods to use in our classrooms for success in both worlds. At the same time, I feel strongly that our history is still being written through interactions with Elders and their stories that will fill in the gaps and technology for students to use in literacy activities that will make the stories they write meaningful.

Conclusion

It is imperative that we stay informed and educated on the policy mandates that the federal government imposes on tribes and states, which then funnels into local schools with high Native enrollment, through staying involved by websites and local, regional, and national Native teachers' and educators' Associations. We have to work harder, demand higher work ethics, mentor each other, and keep growing our Native educator population. Education in Alaska is young. A mere 200 years have passed from its inception. We can learn from our past, our mistakes, and create a system that works because we have tribes who are experiencing success in raising test scores through creative education systems that works using their language and cultures. We have laws that protect us, and we can make them work for us. As it has been through my education experience, I have to fall back on those who really encouraged and continue to encourage my voice, and pushed me to higher achievements though "Wooch' een"

(collaboration, working together). The next step is to research current programs and provide the hard numbers of success that will give Native education the credence it deserves.

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