

## NEED FOR PROJECT

The success of Alaska Native students can be compared to the cycle of salmon. Every year, a school of salmon hatches and begins the journey to maturity, eventually returning to their birth stream to perpetuate the cycle of life. During the journey, salmon are met with a number of obstacles, which in some cases, keep a percentage of salmon from successfully completing the cycle. Alaska Native students enter the school system eager to mature into young, contributing, successful individuals able to return and provide for their communities, but, like the salmon, are met with obstacles which, for many students, impede the ability to succeed. Unfortunately, these obstacles include the ability to retain teachers in Alaska, especially in rural Alaska; the low percentage of Alaska Native teachers working in our schools; the low number of Alaska Natives pursuing and graduating in the field of education; and the lack of cultural knowledge and awareness of Alaska Native cultures among the state's current teachers.

The proposed *Cultural Connectedness* project is designed to address a key obstacle: a lack of knowledge and awareness of Alaska Native cultures among experienced teachers and new teachers in the Juneau School District. The proposed project addresses three significant aspects of this complex issue: 1) the need to culturally orient new/ novice teachers, who are typically non-Native and unfamiliar with the culture(s) and geographic isolation of the community in which they teach, while opening the door to increase cultural knowledge of experienced classroom teachers in the two of Juneau's high schools; 2) the need to develop, field test and distribute throughout these high schools much needed culturally relevant, placed-based classroom resources (such as self-contained lesson kits and Sealaska Heritage Institute's geometry curriculum) and training teachers in their use; and 3) the need to create a cohort of teachers enabled and empowered to serve as cultural mentors to their colleagues. According to

teacher anecdotal reporting, the state's required multi-cultural courses fall far short of in-depth or regional cultural understanding, so this project is designed to supplement those required courses by providing in-depth, locally relevant cultural training. Experienced teachers, Alaska Native and non-Native alike, will also be invited to participate in the *Cultural Connectedness Project* to increase their effectiveness in teaching Alaska Native students and improve overall school climate and teacher cohesion. *Cultural Connectedness* will serve as a demonstration project to be replicated throughout the Juneau School District and eventually, the Southeast Alaska region. Over the three-year project, as many as 1680 high school students will be impacted, of which 20% (336) are Alaska Native.

An annual *School and Climate and Connectedness Survey*, conducted by the Association of Alaska School Boards, provides convincing longitudinal research for the need of such a project as the *Cultural Connectedness (2005-9 American Institute for Research Reports on Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement)*. The results of the survey indicate that a lack of teacher/student/school connectedness negatively impacts instruction and attitudes. Further, the results indicate that unless students feel connected to their teachers, and perceive teachers as open and interested in who they are as students and as human beings, the desire and discipline to work hard, complete assignments and meet district standards is greatly reduced and may be absent.

The School Climate and Connectedness Survey staff results statewide for 2011 indicate lower scores for "Overall Climate" and "School Leadership & Involvement" between Alaska Native/Native American teachers and their non-Native colleagues. And, as the table below indicates, overall climate for Alaska Native/American Indian staff in the Juneau School district follows this disturbing statistic (please also see "JSD Staff Demographic" in the attachments):

	Overall Climate	Staff Attitudes
Alaska Native	3.90	3.90
American Indian	3.76	3.78
Asian	4.10	4.07
African American	3.95	3.98
Latino	4.08	4.14
Hawaii/PI	4.01	4.09
White	3.99	4.10
2 or more races	3.94	4.03

The *Cultural Connectedness Project* will increase the level of Alaska Native cultural understanding and awareness among teachers in the Juneau School District, and will increase the amount of culturally relevant classroom instruction, and will emphasize math and social sciences. The result of meeting these two goals will be that both teachers' and students' feeling of connection to their school in the Juneau School District will increase, positively impacting Alaska Native academic performance. Goals will be met through the development and delivery of a teacher orientation focusing on Southeast Alaska Native culture and youth, and on the development, field-testing, and implementation of placed-based cultural lesson plans in math and social sciences to be woven into existing Juneau School District curriculum. Partners in the project are Sealaska Heritage Institute (lead partner and applicant), the Juneau School District, and University of Alaska Southeast.

The project grew out of distinct needs voiced at tribal meetings and in district surveys by Native parents and leaders, as well as by District staff regarding professional development and cultural resources, both of which affect teacher effectiveness. While teacher retention is a related issue, as Alaska has a notorious turn-over rate which negatively impacts student achievement, discussions among these groups indicated that a lack of cultural knowledge and awareness was exacerbating a disconnect between Alaska Native teachers and their schools, as evidenced by low results on School Climate and Connectedness Surveys.

A lack of connection extends to students attending Juneau-Douglas and Thunder Mountain High Schools in Juneau, as indicated in the 2010 School Climate and Connectedness Survey for the Juneau School District: both of these high schools exhibited student Overall Climate scores markedly lower than all the other schools in the district (please see “JSD – Student SCCS” in the attachments). The *Cultural Connectedness Project* addresses a key factor of this problem: a lack of knowledge and awareness of Alaska Native culture.

Teachers who are new to Alaska’s schools, especially those who are non-Native, are naturally unfamiliar with local cultural contexts, family expectations and historical challenges in addition to being new to academic standards and curriculum. And, for many reasons, many experienced Juneau teachers also lack cultural knowledge and understanding. Teachers who feel less committed to an inclusive, culturally relevant curriculum that teaches and celebrates local culture, comment there “is not time in the school day,” even if they wanted to teach it. This gap in cultural, place based knowledge (including the history, culture, social structure, political context and contemporary issues of the Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian people), particularly in the predominantly non-Native teaching population of the Juneau School District, is considered a significant weakness in the mind of Juneau’s Alaska Native community. Whether new/novice

teachers or experienced teachers, instructors need training and resources to improve the relevancy of instruction for Native students in order to improve their performance. This project squarely addresses these gaps and challenges by giving support to teachers early in their careers and/or new to the district first, and then to other colleagues lacking cultural knowledge. Ultimately, all teachers need to learn their students' traditions, which are often difficult for non-Native teachers to understand.

The weakness in instructional delivery by both novice and experienced teachers also relates to materials and resources. Too often, instructors lack opportunity, given district purchasing and in-service requirements, to get Sealaska Heritage Institute's field-tested curriculum resources into the hands of teachers. Unfortunately, a common experience for newly hired teachers is to arrive in classrooms where others may have "borrowed" interesting resources, leaving shelves empty except for traditional textbooks. This handicaps new teachers from the start, reducing their confidence and skills to teach in a new environment, and it affects their perception of district support and satisfaction with teaching. Providing new and novice instructors culturally relevant materials during the first two years – the most challenging years – and training them in their use helps guarantee these materials will become effective elements in their "teaching toolbox" and result in more culturally respectful, responsive classrooms where students feel connected. Thus, by integrating cultural orientation with the opportunity to develop and learn about cultural materials, the *Cultural Connectedness Project* helps transform whole school climates and cultures. It also has the potential to affect district hiring practices as schools more purposely incorporate cultural familiarity questions during interviews. Project designers anticipate there will be more Native teachers hired in Southeast as an affiliated outcome of this project.

The *Cultural Connectedness Project* will be successful because Alaska Native educators in the Juneau School District feel strong personal allegiance to serving tribes and clans. Further, there is a strong sense of investment and ownership by the regional Native nonprofit Sealaska Heritage Institute as well as support from University of Alaska Southeast's Education and Native Studies faculties, as this project is an opportunity to make a wide scale impact on Native and non-Native teachers, students and school culture/climate in the Juneau School District and, in the longer term, the entire Southeast region.

**Sealaska Heritage Institute (SHI)** is the applicant and lead organization responsible for implementing this project, and **qualifies for Competitive Preference Priority 1**. Sealaska Heritage Institute is a regional Alaska Native nonprofit founded in 1980 to promote cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding. The institute is governed by an Alaska Native Board of Trustees and guided by a Council of Traditional Scholars. Its mission is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures of Southeast Alaska. For more than 15 years, Sealaska Heritage Institute has expended tremendous effort and cultural expertise in the development and implementation of programs aimed at increasing academic achievement for Alaska Native students. These efforts include the development, publication and distribution of Native language resources and culturally relevant, place-based curriculum, and the launch of the Latseen Leadership Academy for Alaska Native students from throughout the Southeast region. To develop and deliver its educational programs, Sealaska Heritage Institute has nurtured long-standing partnerships with the Juneau School District and with the University of Alaska Southeast, a relationship which culminated in the William G. Demmert Memorandum of Agreement, signed in April 2012 and designed to provide enhanced cultural, instructional, academic and career placement opportunities for Juneau' students. The Memorandum of

Agreements will be used to support, design, implement, and sustain existing and new projects and programs. A copy of this document is attached to demonstrate the partners' commitment to this project.

## **PROJECT DESIGN**

The *Cultural Connectedness Project* is crafted to improve school climate and Native student academic success through cultural orientation and preparation of teachers at Juneau-Douglas and Thunder Mountain High Schools in Juneau, Alaska, and will use multiple measures of evaluation data, including indicators of Native student academic social/emotional growth and teacher satisfaction (School Climate and Connectedness Survey), to determine effectiveness. The project's two goals and allied practical objectives reflect the careful design and planning by partners to address needed improvements. It is, in essence, a demonstration project, crafted in collaboration with University of Alaska Southeast and the Juneau School District, so that what is implemented, learned and documented in the Juneau School District can be shared.

## **GOALS, MEASUREABLE OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES**

**Goal 1:** Increase the cultural knowledge and awareness of 60 classroom teachers in the Juneau School District by a minimum of 30%, as evidenced by pre- and post-testing of project participants.

**Objective 1:** By the end of Year 1 of the project, provide 50 hours of cultural orientation to at 20 high school teachers in the Juneau School District and 3 students enrolled in University of Alaska Southeast's Preparing Indigenous Teachers & Administrators for Alaska Schools program and administer pre- and post-testing of cultural knowledge.

**Objective 2:** By the end of Year 3, complete delivery of cultural orientation to a minimum of 40 more high school teachers (total of 60% of the 104 Juneau School District teachers in the two targeted high schools).

**Goal 2:** Increase the use of culturally relevant classroom instructional materials, with a preferred emphasis in math and social sciences, by a minimum of 50% through the distribution of existing and new place-based resources/tools and for those subjects, and by training classroom teachers in their use.

**Objective 1:** By the end of each project year, develop, test, and refine 23 kits (total of 69 for the project period) and develop plans for training other teachers in the use of those kits.

**Objective 2:** By the end of Year 3, all 69 kits, as well as SHI-created curriculum for Geometry, will have been implemented in classrooms in the targeted high schools.

The objectives and goals will be met through the following project components, all of which are components of the William G. Demmert Memorandum of Agreement (attached).

**Cultural orientation of Juneau School District high school teachers:** This component falls directly under the signed Memorandum of Agreement referenced earlier. Sealaska Heritage Institute is recognized by regional educators as the primary organization with Southeast Alaska Native cultural expertise, but to date Sealaska Heritage Institute has not had adequate funding to support embedded professional development to help teachers deepen their knowledge and understanding of indigenous culture. Through the William G. Demmert Memorandum of Agreement, Sealaska Heritage Institute will collaborate with University of Alaska Southeast and Juneau School District to provide professional development credit for orientations in all project years. The project will provide teachers in the two targeted high schools intensive Alaska Native cultural orientation, and teachers will be encouraged to participate in associated cultural events like Sealaska Heritage Institute's biennial Celebration. In anticipation of the award, Sealaska Heritage Institute's President, Dr. Rosita Worl, will assume the role of Project Director (PD) and will hire an education specialist as the Project Manager (PM). In anticipation of the award, the Project Manager and Project Director will work closely with Laury Scandling (Assistant Superintendent) and the district's human resources department to identify any new classroom teachers assigned to the targeted schools, as they have priority as orientation participants, and develop an application and selection process by which to select the other high school classroom teachers to participate in the project. Math and social science teachers will be given preference, as there is an identified need for culturally relevant materials in those subject areas. Post-award, the Project Director will contract with two (2) Alaska Native Elders to provide cultural expertise

in developing and delivering the orientation, and in creating any aligned materials, including the cultural knowledge inventory to be used as a pre- and post-test.

The Project Director, Project Manager, Native elders, and assigned Sealaska Heritage Institute staff will deliver 50 hours of cultural orientation during each project year; approximately half of the meetings will take place on a Saturday, the other half after school hours, to avoid the burden and costs of substitutes. Orientation topics will include but not be limited to Southeast Alaska tribal community and family systems; area history, ceremonial traditions, and the historic role of the public schools in Alaska Native life; learning styles of Alaska Native children and youth; and challenges of bridging the cultural and emotional gaps between Alaska Native families and the local public schools. All participants will complete the cultural knowledge inventory at the beginning and end of the orientation, and will take a satisfaction survey within 1 week after the final orientation meeting. These instruments will provide a portion of the data collected and analyzed by the Project Evaluator.

Using evaluations and comments from the participants, the Project Manager, in collaboration with Elders and assigned Sealaska Heritage Institute staff, will refine the cultural orientation materials and agenda, improving upon the delivery of this important component in Years 2-3. Aspects to be considered for refinement include how to work with Native and non-Native teachers when delivering cultural knowledge, and effective teaching strategies for Alaska Native students. Elders will advise upon and review the refined orientation materials. The timing of this process for months 10-11 will ensure that the revised cultural orientation is ready for delivery the following year. All regular classroom teachers completing the full year cultural orientation will receive professional development credit through University of Alaska Southeast's School of Education, and a [REDACTED] stipend.

**Inclusion of apprentice teachers and in the project:** Collaborating with the University of Alaska Southeast’s School of Education, the Project Director and Project Manager will work with University of Alaska Southeast’s Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska Schools (PITAAS) program to identify three (3) Alaska Native students enrolled in that program to participate in the *Cultural Connectedness Project*. Education students with a “B” average within three semesters of graduating with either a Bachelors or Masters degree will be eligible and invited to apply to the project. These apprentice students will work alongside working classroom teachers to develop the new classroom resources. Additionally, the students will use their experience and knowledge gained in their education classes to present a portion of the cultural orientation focusing on learning styles of Alaska Native students, and challenges that teachers may face. This interaction will naturally evolve into a symbiotic relationship with the classroom teachers learning more about the learning styles of Alaska Native students and the apprentice teachers receiving hands-on experience in the development of professional presentations as well as classroom resources and their use, again embedding the concept of cultural mentoring.

**Development, field testing, and distribution of culturally relevant, place-based resources:** Project designers have focused the development of new culturally relevant classroom lesson kits for use in the two targeted high schools, and as stated earlier, will give preference to teachers in the areas of math and social sciences to develop materials specific to those subjects. Sealaska Heritage Institute has produced a number of K – 12 curriculum resources, including a 3-volume sequenced *High School Geometry*, which will also be used for this project. Lessons and units were developed considering state academic and cultural standards, and have been reviewed by Elders.

Each project participant, including the Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools students, will be expected to produce a tested, refined lesson kit for their classrooms by the end of the project year, and the management plan includes this process as part of the calendar, running concurrently with the orientation. Kits will be designed as self-contained lesson plans with reproducible components, instructions for classroom use and a list of state standards and objectives that the lesson meets, all contained in a heavy-weight closable clear plastic bag. Ultimately, the refined kit will be available for check-out from other faculty, thus disseminating the new resource throughout the department and building.

After each participant has a concepts for the kit, the Project Manager, Project Director, or Curriculum Specialist (Katrina Hotch) will work with each participant to fully develop and write the lesson plan for the kit in accordance to Alaska state standards, and will assist in creating, as needed, supplementary materials (photos, puzzles, posters, manipulatives for math, for example). Field testing of the kits will take place in the participants' classrooms, and regular classroom teachers will offer their classes as test sites for the PITAAS students. The Project Director and Project Manager will observe the field tests and make detailed notes regarding the kit's effectiveness and the students' receptiveness. Following the field tests, all participants will refine their kits and produce a final, classroom-ready "edition." Sealaska Heritage Institute's media/publications director, in collaboration with the Curriculum specialist, will ensure that each kit has a consistent look; further, she will ensure that all kits are edited faithfully and meet the approval of the contracted Elders prior to final publication.

A component of this process is training other teachers how to use the kit effectively. Participants will create a training plan for their own kits, pilot that training with the group, and refine it for implementation in the target high schools.

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan outlines objectives, activities, persons responsible, deadlines and anticipated outcomes that will ensure the Project meets its stated goals. The Management Team described below will implement the *Cultural Connectedness Project*, monitor progress, and address feedback for adjustments and adaptations.

Project Director – Sealaska Heritage Institute’s President, Dr. Rosita Worl (30% FTE) will oversee the project, provide vision and guidance, and present emerging data/findings; Project Manager (TBD 60% FTE) will supervise all activities, staff and implement the Management Plan. A Juneau School District Liaison will collaborate with the Project Director to facilitate communication, delivery of orientation, and delivery of new resources. A Sealaska Heritage Institute administrative assistant (TBD 50% FTE) will manage logistical support, communications (at the direction of the Project Director and Manager), and materials dissemination. Sealaska Heritage Institute Curriculum Specialist (Katrina Hotch, 30% FTE) will participate in planning, refining, and implementing cultural orientations and be responsible for assisting in the creation of the place-based cultural lesson kits and compilations for publishing; Sealaska Heritage Institute Director of Media/Publications (Kathy Dye, 15% FTE) will direct final production of all kits and orientation materials and monitor website contacts/visits. Two (2) Elders/Culture Bearers (contracted for a total of 12 days/year), include members of Sealaska Heritage Institute’s Council of Traditional Scholars who will advise the key staff throughout the project. A Project Evaluator (TBD; contracted, 30 days/year) will be responsible for implementing the comprehensive Evaluation Plan and will have active participation in Project Team planning in all project years.

<b>Goal #1: Increase cultural knowledge and awareness of high school classroom teachers in the JSD by a minimum of 30% as evidenced by pre- and post-testing of project participants.</b>			
<b>Objective 1:</b> By the end of <u>Year 1</u> of the project, provide 50 hours of cultural orientation to at 20 high school teachers in the Juneau School District and 3 students enrolled in University of Alaska Southeast's PITAAS program and administer pre- and post-testing of cultural knowledge.			
<b>Outcome: Twenty participating classroom teachers &amp; three apprentice teachers will be better prepared to engage Alaska Native students, thus improving school climate and academic achievement as evidenced by increases in SCCS scores by a minimum of 0.5 pt. (on a 5pt scale).</b>			
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
1. Selection of JSD and PITAAS participants	Prior to award	PD, PM, Elders, JSD liaison, & PITAAS Director	20 high school teachers and 3 apprentice teachers are
2. Date for orientations and logistics are set; notices sent to all project participants and project staff; <i>weekly communication for entire project via</i>	Month 1	PD, Admin assistant	selected to participate in project

<u>blog and email begins</u>			
3. AASB contracted to conduct SCCSs for both schools all three years of the project (survey taken Jan-Mar each yr.)	Months 1-2	PD	
4. Begin process for awarding professional development credit via UAS' School of Education	Months 1-2	PM	Data collection point
5. Orientation agenda set and materials selected or produced (includes cultural knowledge inventory)	Months 3-4	PD, PM, JSD Liaison, Elders	Cultural orientation is refined for Year 2 Participant receive
6. Orientation delivered over 7 sessions, including 3-4 Saturdays; pre- and post-tests are administered and scored	Months 1-9	PD, PM JSD Liaison, Elders	feedback about their level of cultural knowledge
7. Feedback gathered from participants; tests scored and analyzed	Months 8-9	PM, Admin assist, JSD Liaison, & Elders	

<p>8. Use feedback and scores to refine orientation delivery and materials</p> <p>9. Annual reporting</p>	<p>Months 10-11</p>	<p>PD, PM, JSD Liaison, Elders</p> <p>PD</p>	
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> By the end of <u>Year 3</u>, complete delivery of cultural orientation to a minimum of 40 additional high school teachers (total of 60% of the 104 JSD teachers in the two targeted high schools) and 6 additional PITAAS students.</p>			
<p><b>OUTCOME: A total of 69 teachers and apprentice teachers are oriented in cultural knowledge and effective practices resulting in improved performance, confidence in working with Alaska Native students, and increased job satisfaction and cultural knowledge as evidenced by increased cultural inventory scores and School Climate &amp; Connectedness Survey scores for the two targeted Juneau School District high schools.</b></p>			
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b></p>	<p><b>Person(s) Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Milestones</b></p>
<p>1. Selection of JSD and PITAAS participants</p> <p>2.Orientation agenda set and materials selected or produced (includes cultural knowledge inventory)</p>	<p>Prior to award, months 12 and 24</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> month in years 2-3</p>	<p>PD, Elders, JSD liaison, PITAAS Director</p> <p>PD, PM, Admin assistant</p>	<p>12 high school teachers and 3 administrators are selected to participate in project; 3 PITAAS students invited</p>

<p>3. Orientation delivered over 7 sessions, including 3-4 Saturdays; pre- and post-tests are administered and scored</p>	<p>Months 1-9</p>	<p>PD,PM, JSD Liaison, Curriculum Spec., Elders</p>	<p>Data collection point</p>
<p>4. Feedback gathered from participants; tests scored and analyzed</p>	<p>Months 8-9 of years 2-3</p>	<p>PM,JSD Liaison, Elders</p>	
<p>5. Use feedback and scores to refine orientation delivery and materials</p>	<p>Months 11-12 of each year</p>	<p>PD, PM, JSD Liaison, Elders</p>	<p>Cultural orientation is refined for consistent,</p>
<p>6. Annual reporting</p>	<p>Month 12 of each year</p>	<p>PD</p>	<p>sustained delivery over multiple future academic years</p>
<p><b>Goal 2: Increase the use of culturally relevant classroom instructional materials, with a preferred emphasis in math and social sciences, by a minimum of 50% through the distribution of existing and new place-based resources/tools and for those subjects, and by training classroom teachers in their use.</b></p>			
<p><b>Objective 1:</b> By the end of each project year, develop, test, and refine 23 kits (total of 69 for the project period) and develop plans for training other teachers in the use of those kits.</p>			

<b>OUTCOME: Collaboration between SHI, Elders, Juneau School District high school teachers, and University of Alaska Southeast's PITAAS students, fosters working relationships and allows apprentice teachers an opportunity to participate in a real-world, practical project.</b>			
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Milestones</b>
1. Gather SHI-developed resources and disseminate among participants	Month 1	PM/Admin	
2. Introduce participants to the lesson kit concept; develop ideas for their own classroom kit	Month 2 ea year	PD, PM, JSD Liaison	
3. Facilitate kit development; ensure that kits meet state standards	Months 2-6 ea year	PD, PM, JSD Liaison, Curriculum Spec., Elders	Collaboration between classroom teachers,
4. Field test new materials	Months 5-7 ea year	PD, PM	apprentice teachers, Elders
5. Refine kits and instructions	Months 7-9 ea year	Curriculum specialist; Media Dir	

<p>6. Kits are formatted and produced for regular classroom use</p> <p>7. Annual reporting</p>	<p>Months 9-10 each year</p> <p>Month 12</p>	<p>Curriculum specialist</p>	
<p><b>Objective 2:</b> By the end of <u>Year 3</u>, all 69 kits, as well as SHI-created curriculum for Geometry, will have been implemented in classrooms in the targeted high schools.</p>			
<p><b>OUTCOME:</b> Use of new resources will result in higher levels of cross-cultural understanding among all high school teachers, higher levels of Alaska Native Student engagement, and increased levels of Alaska Native student achievement.</p>			
<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b></p>	<p><b>Person Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Milestones</b></p>
<p>1. Refine kits &amp; teaching methods per feedback and classroom observations</p>	<p>Months 7-9 ea year</p>	<p>PD, PM, Curriculum specialist, Elders</p>	<p>Apprentice teachers collaborate alongside classroom teachers</p>
<p>2. Participants prepare and present a training to the group on the use of their kit</p>	<p>Month 9 ea year</p>	<p>PD, PM, Curriculum Specialist</p>	<p>Culturally relevant materials available to all</p>
<p>3. Participants implement kits in their classes and share with colleagues</p>	<p>Months 8-10</p>	<p>PM, JSD Liaison</p>	<p>interested teachers in the two target high schools</p>

## **FEEDBACK AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

The *Cultural Connectedness Project* includes recursive reviews throughout the entire project using surveys, testing, workshop feedback, and weekly communications. During the project, input will be sought to continuously improve activities and better meet district needs in terms of teacher effectiveness and Native student motivation and achievement. All project participants will be invited to express themselves and address challenges and successes via a password-protected blog site. Monthly, the Project Director, Project Manager, the Juneau School District Liaison, and designated liaison from University of Alaska Southeast's School of Education and Preparing Indigenous Teachers and Administrators for Alaska's Schools program will meet to keep project activities in motion and aligned with goals and objectives, including the awarding of professional development credit to participants. The project's Administrative Assistant, with oversight by the Project Director, will be charged with gathering and organizing all related feedback regarding the project and formatting it for review by project participants. The Project Director will present a report on the program at the meetings of Sealaska Heritage Institute's Board of Trustees (three meetings per year), and will gather feedback from the Trustees. Annually, the Project Director, in collaboration with the school district liaison and University of Alaska Southeast liaison will prepare a report for the Juneau School District and University of Alaska Southeast's School of Education highlighting the project's activities and met objectives. Regular updates on the Sealaska Heritage Institute website will include on-going evaluative feedback on project activities. The Evaluation Plan below reiterates the focus on regular feedback, reflection and improvement.

## PROJECT EVALUATION

The project evaluation is designed so that a variety of measures, aligned to project Goals and Objectives, will yield significant evidence and lessons learned to pass on to the region's other school districts, and eventually to school districts throughout the state. The Evaluator will address process evaluation questions that include, but are not limited to: *How were Juneau School District high school teachers impacted by the cultural orientation? What were the successes and challenges associated with creating these new cultural components? What were the responses from experienced, new/novice teachers? What were the responses of the high school students working with the new resources?* The Evaluator will ensure that all federal reports are produced and submitted by their deadlines, and that reports of emerging data/information in a variety of formats suited to stakeholder audiences.

The comprehensive Evaluation Plan outlined below allows the Evaluator and project staff to confidently determine the degree to which the objectives identified for this project have been met and that goals will be achieved by the end of the grant cycle. Both formative and summative evaluation components are included in the Plan.

The Project Evaluation Plan explicitly tracks objectives, using both quantitative and qualitative measures, regular analysis and reporting. As the Management Plan and Evaluation Outline illustrate, performance indicators were crafted to yield quantitative data that will complement the blog narratives, field test results, and anecdotal from both teachers and students. Further, this plan was designed to capture information relevant to the future replication of this project in other districts both in Southeast Alaska and around the state.

<b>Goal/Objective</b>	<b>Data/Evidence to be Collected</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Evaluation Instruments</b>
<b>1.Increase cultural knowledge among participants</b>	Cultural knowledge test scores, routine feedback via email and blog entries	By semester	Pre-post cultural knowledge tests, blogs, email summaries, direct interviews w/ participants
<b>1.1. Delivery of cultural orientation</b>	Attendance by sector, participant satisfaction and feedback	After orientation	Attendance records, participant satisfaction survey, blog entries
<b>1.2. Delivery of cultural orientation to up to 60% of teachers in targeted HS</b>	Attendance by sector, participation & input into revision, participant satisfaction and feedback	After orientation	Attendance records, participant attendance records, blog entries, participant satisfaction survey
<b>2. Increase use of culturally relevant materials</b>	Aggregate list of cultural resources and developers;	Twice annually	Lists of kits and checkout forms, participant observations, surveys of teachers & students,

	evidence of use of new kits; effectiveness of new kits and teacher/ student satisfaction		SCCS scores
<b>2.1 Participants create new resources</b>	Collaborative planning of kits; participants' engagement in their development; kits meet state standards and cultural relevancy;	Twice annually	Planning documents, participant attendance and blog entries, Alaska State Standards documents, interviews with Elders
<b>2.2 New kits implemented</b>	Effective in-class field testing; effectiveness of kits; refinement of kits; plans for training and disseminating of kits; graduation/drop-out rates of targeted high schools	Months 9-11 annually	Written plan for field test, surveys of teachers and students testing the kits, participant blogs and other communications; draft plan for training/sharing new kits; school and district annual district report cards and statistics from EED