

## **APPLICATION NARRATIVE**

### **A. NEED FOR PROJECT**

In Alaska, Native students have the highest risk for failure in school. This failure is consistently linked to a greater need for relevant curriculum embracing Alaska Native Ways of Knowing, as well as opportunities to develop greater resilience through traditional activities and experiences. Through this project we will address this issue while building on the longevity of the Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program and the strong relationship between Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD).

Supplementary education combining academic content, culturally-relevant methodologies, and traditional Alaska Native values is the foundation of this proposal. We seek to overcome the cultural, socioeconomic, and language differences between families and school staff that accentuate barriers to student achievement in our urban school district.

### **Current local enrollment**

The FNSBSD operates 33 schools with a total enrollment this year of 14,190<sup>1</sup> students. Fairbanks is the second-largest city in Alaska, the hub community for Interior Alaska, and the third largest school district in the state. Just more than 14% of District students are Alaska Native or American Indian, having filled out BIA 506 forms identifying themselves as tribal members.

### **Native Students' Test Scores**

Alaska's schools chart a developmental profile for children entering kindergarten or first grade to discover strengths and areas needing improvement. Schools administer the Alaska Benchmark Examinations for grades 3, 6, and 8. Tenth graders take the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE). These benchmarks are intended to tell parents and educators if children are making sufficient progress toward passing the high school exam, and graduating.

According to a landmark report prepared for the Alaska Federation of Natives, students from Interior villages score significantly lower on benchmark tests than students of all other ethnicities. Migration from these villages impacts Fairbanks schools, as discussed below. Average statewide high school graduation rate over the last seven years is 49% for Native students, compared to 64.2% for all other ethnicities.<sup>2</sup>

The FNSBSD Report Card from 2010-2011 shows the same trend. Native 12th graders graduation rate for the year was 50.08% even though Native attendance in grades K-12 is 90.08%; Native students are in school, but not engaged enough to graduate. Last year's Alaska Standards Based Assessments (SBAs) show only 58% Alaska Native/American Indian students in the FNSBSD score as Advanced or Proficient in Writing, only 59% score Advanced or Proficient in Mathematics, and only 39% score Advanced or Proficient in Science. These data create an excellent baseline for the project to expand the JOM tutor program.

### **Dropout rate**

While 19.47% of Alaska's population is Native, they are 23.3% of public schoolchildren. By the time they get to high school, they become 41% of the grade 7-12 dropouts.<sup>3</sup> We lose approximately 1,144<sup>4</sup> Alaska Native 7-12 graders a year from Alaska schools. The dropout rate among Native students has slowly decreased since 1999, while the number of Native students in Alaska schools has gone up; but this dropout rate is still greater than *all other ethnic groups*.

Numerous studies have shown Alaska Native students are at a great disadvantage in the educational system. Alaska Natives and American Indians are the least likely to attend and complete college of all U.S. minority groups: Alaska ranks 48<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states in the number of 19 year-old high school graduates of all races who enroll in college.<sup>5</sup>

Additional indicators for which Alaska's Native children fare worse than their non-Native

peers are child death rate, teen violent death rate, and percentage of teens not in school and not working.<sup>6</sup> The percentage of Alaska Native males, 16 years of age and over, employed is 51% compared to 76 percent for the overall statewide male population<sup>7</sup>.

### **Local Native input**

In addition to state and national reports, we rely on the experience of our community: the Alaska Interior Native Educators (an organization of local teachers), the FNA's Board Education Committee, Upward Bound Trail Markers - a college prep program for Native teens, and the JOM Native Education Committee, who identifies significant needs for Native children. These groups helped design this project and support greater academic intervention for Native students.

In 1974, the District was awarded an Indian Education Title VII, Part C grant; it created the Alaska Native Education Program (ANE) to serve Alaska Native and American Indian students. The program is advised by an ANE Parent Committee, as required by the grant. With parent input and review of student records, the program evolved and expanded in the 1980s. In response to the 1987 Mediated Agreement between the District and FNA, more direct ANE student services were offered such as academic tutoring, attendance monitoring, and cultural activities. Currently the district has only 14 ANE tutors, and cannot cover 33 schools.

### **Migration pressure**

In recent years, there has been large migration of Alaska Natives to regional hubs (e.g., Dillingham, Bethel, Nome, Barrow) and urban centers. The Institute for Social and Economic Research in Anchorage<sup>8</sup> reports that 53 percent of all Natives in Fairbanks are new arrivals. Student numbers in rural Alaska has also declined, more dramatically than overall population. Since 2000, hub schools have lost the most students but small village school student counts have also fallen<sup>9</sup>. These recently-uprooted students experience more transience than those in rural

communities, and *thus more barriers to school success*, which can contribute to dropout rates.

New data from the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), a non-profit for the Doyon Region, show how dramatic this movement is. TCC tracks its health-service clients, who are all Native under Indian Health Service eligibility requirements. In spite of an overall increase, “There has been almost no proportional growth in Interior village population in the past 20 years. Virtually all the growth in the TCC health-service population has been in the FNSB. Migration of residents from villages to the urban areas is expected to continue through 2015.”<sup>10</sup>

This means many students are transitioning to urban schools where they face challenges of navigating larger facilities and social structures that make it difficult to find the care and support students need to thrive academically<sup>11</sup>. The additional challenge of racism that may be more common in urban settings when student populations are more racially and culturally diverse, contribute to *learning difficulties, disengagement and dropout* of Alaska Native students.

Two months ago, the FNSBSD published an attitudinal survey of parents, students, and teachers that revealed a perception of racism<sup>12</sup>. It asked new questions about discrimination that had not been on previous surveys, including whether students are treated fairly regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture or disability. When high school students were asked if “Students of all races, ethnicities and skin colors are treated fairly, equally, and respectfully at their school,” only 60% answered yes, which was the lowest score except for the question asking whether gay, bisexual, or transgender students are treated fairly. Middle school students weighed in on the same question at 65%. The discrimination questions were not asked of elementary students.

### **Current resources to address the problem**

Currently, FNA JOM program is funded by ever-diminishing Bureau of Indian Affairs dollars. Without raising salaries, the program has been reduced from its historical high of seven

JOM tutors to its current two. The BIA money pays the salaries of the director and the program assistant, a Cultural Specialist, and wages for the tutors. A small amount [REDACTED] pays for support for the Native Education Committee, a group of parents/grandparents to gather community input and advise the program for better service.

The FNSBSD Alaska Native Education (ANE) tutor program is funded by the federal Title VII, Indian Education Program. In addition to district-wide cultural outreach provided by the ANE Coordinator and a Family Advocate, 14 tutors serve Native children in 17 schools with culturally-sensitive academic enrichment. As mentioned above, there is a significant gap in these services *across all schools*. An expanded JOM program can fill this gap, has proven performance in local schools, and has a mandate to incorporate Native cultures and traditions into the process.

#### **B. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN**

The JOM Tutor Expansion Project is an enrichment program to assist Alaska Native students in performing at a high level on standardized tests. Student Achievement and Student Growth will be measured by scientifically based research as defined in section 7304 of the Act that created this funding. **The Project Goal** (detailed more in Sections C and E) is to improve standardized test scores for identified Native Students, with **Objectives** to increase the number of JOM tutors assigned to Native students in the FNSBSD by 150%, and serve an additional 500 AI/AN students who are academically deficient with individualized tutoring services.

#### **A Proven Design**

The project is designed to compliment and dovetail with the FNSBSD Alaska Native Education (ANE) tutorial program. The goal of this expansion proposal is aligned with the goals of the District's tutor program, to provide the same standard of effectiveness, measurability, and accountability. These existing programs have a history of collaboration and are combined with a

clear purpose and mission, and dispense services within a clear organizational structure. JOM and ANE are referred to throughout this application, as these two entities strengthen each other's capacity like the interlaced fingers of two hands. The current combined program of 14 district tutors serving 17 schools and two JOM tutors serving two schools, will expand to 24 tutors serving at least 25 schools, including all 21 elementary schools. Since Native student Proficiency is a concern in every school<sup>13</sup>, we strive to cover the whole need.

**Cooperative Work Plan**

The District's ANE program has been enjoying the fresh perspectives of new staff members who came on board in the fall of 2011. The ANE Program Coordinator, Family Advocate, and ANE Liaison mirror the Director, Family Advocate, and Tutor Coordinator positions proposed. Job descriptions from the two entities are designed to complement each other.

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Alaska Native Education (ANE)	Fairbanks Native Association Johnson O'Malley program (JOM)
<b>ANE Program Coordinator</b> – works with JOM director to select schools with greatest need and coordinate cultural activities.	<b>JOM Director</b> – works with ANE coordinator to select schools with greatest need and coordinate cultural activities.
<b>ANE Graduation Success/Attendance Liaison</b> – works with JOM Tutor Coordinator to develop relationships with building principals and classroom teachers.	<b>JOM Tutor Coordinator</b> – works with ANE Liaison to place tutors in identified classrooms and develop relationships with building principals and classroom teachers.
<b>ANE Family Advocate</b> – works with JOM Family Advocate to reach out to Native families who seek academic support.	<b>JOM Family Advocate</b> – works with District Family Advocate to reach out to Native families to overcome culturally-inappropriate

	barriers. Plans parent enrichment events.
<b>Parent Advisory Committee</b> – advises program staff for continuous improvement.	<b>Native Education Committee</b> – collects community input for program improvement.

The current combined coordination under the ANE Program Coordinator and the JOM Director, will expand to include a JOM Tutor Coordinator who will function as the primary liaison responsible for integrating JOM tutors into FNSBSD classrooms.

**School/Classroom selection and Student Recruitment**

A multidimensional review of student need goes into determining where tutors should be placed. To rank the schools in the order of greatest need, the School District and JOM program collaborate to analyze several factors: the number of Native students at each school, (counting those 1,985 who have filled out a BIA 506 form, plus those identified, but have not completed the form – an estimated 40 families) State of Alaska Standards Based Assessments,<sup>14</sup> the Adequate Yearly Progress reports of the schools, (student performance data), and input from principals, teachers and families. Even with the expansion, student needs will be greater than tutoring resources can address, so tutor placement will be reviewed regularly, as it is now.

The target group, Native students with poor academic performance, is clearly defined. However, students who benefit from culturally-relevant tutoring do not always share characteristics that easily lump them into this category. Previous developmental and Graduation Success programs, and evolving household/family factors are contributing to academic success in some areas. For example a student may be doing poorly in Mathematics, but score in the upper percentiles in Language Arts. A student may test well but have poor attendance or other school readiness deficiencies. So, coordinators identify indicators for prioritizing tutor placement. These include referral by school staff and parent requests in addition to academic deficiencies.

Sometimes families call the JOM program directly for tutorial services, rather than approach their child's school or the district ANE program. They may perceive an adversarial relationship with the school: lack of cultural sensitivity, unfriendly environment,<sup>15</sup> previous bad relationship. Or, these families perceive a neutral advocate in the JOM program director who can ease the path to increased services. (Family members may be comfortable with school or a teacher, but feel that JOM program director "speaks the language of the school" better than they are able to.) In these cases, the JOM director goes to the school or accompanies family members there to investigate possibilities and develop relationships with teachers and principals of the students who request services. She connects with ANE staff to find the best solution for the student. In the proposed expansion, the JOM Family Advocate will take on these duties.

These selection and review methods have served the existing JOM tutor program well in its years of partnership with the District's ANE program.

### **Specific Activities**

When first assigned, tutor, student and teacher will devise a student enrichment compact that is a commitment between tutor and student. It is a written plan of realistic goals and strategies to achieve those academic goals, and includes a place for parent consultation.

Tutors customize the approach to each student to best address their academic needs: assistance in the classroom, reading and math skills practice, help with classroom assignments and homework, collaboration with teachers and staff, and cultural activities such as beading, storytelling, and talking about experiences. The Project can have deep impact by expanding into the primary grades. For young children at risk of cultural and academic disassociation, this time period is crucial, as identified in the District's review of its dropout prevention program<sup>16</sup>.

In consultation with the classroom teacher, the JOM tutor will offer one-to-one or small

group lessons in the classroom, or pull the student(s) out to another location. However this second option is not preferred. Both of the current JOM and ANE tutoring programs are working to prevent Native students from being stigmatized by having to receive special services apart from their mainstream peers. Both programs are working toward a "no pull-out" policy, by removing students during natural transition times, or working with small groups in the room.

It is important to note that in the years of success with this combined program, tutors work very closely with teachers and building principals to *customize* their service delivery. It is up to the teacher what lessons tutors deliver, and when and where they deliver it. Milestones and student goals are set by teachers, although some collaborate with tutors to develop academic milestones, and some are developed in the student compact process (above).

JOM Tutors will have their own tablet computers with keyboards, to immediately create reports on each tutoring session, so that teachers and parents can follow student progress.

### **Serving Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools**

The JOM program has had a tutor at Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School (EKECCS) since its founding in 2005. FNA wrote the original grant proposal that launched the school's Early College program. It serves grades 7-12 with a curriculum grounded in Alaska Native cultural beliefs and values, and is the only Early College high school in the state of Alaska. Core academic and elective courses give students general education requirements for Associate and Bachelor degrees. In spite of this special status, the school does not make Adequate Yearly Progress, has fewer than 60% of Native students proficient in Language Arts and Mathematics. The state and district reports<sup>17</sup> show a high attendance rate and classes taught by Highly Qualified Teachers, but only a 35% four-year graduation rate for Alaska Natives.

The proposed Project will allow at least one and possibly two more tutors to improve student

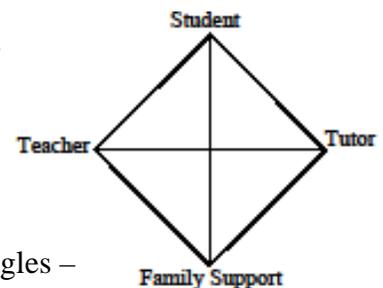
achievement at this Persistently Lowest-Achieving School. Tutors will train to deliver lessons targeting 9-12 graders preparing for the HSGQE, SAT or ACT to increase graduation and college enrollment rates. A letter from the EKECCS principal is included in this application.

### **Family Engagement**

We will use Best Practices for family involvement to improve student success. Research shows the direct effect of family engagement on test scores. When families are focused on supporting their children's mathematics learning, students show increased proficiency on standardized math tests.<sup>18</sup> Best Practices to engage Native parents are grounded in knowing and understanding their culture, issues related to their Native identity, their own educational experiences, and the historical and political struggles faced by Natives<sup>19</sup>. The best ways to bring parents into partnership are those that eliminate fear of retaliation, fear of discrimination and the stereotypes placed on Natives families.

The expansion includes the hire of a new Family Advocate, who will act as an advocate for families facing cultural barriers in the District. Assisting the JOM Director, the Advocate will provide empowerment training for parents, and accompany families to District offices and classrooms to deal with barriers or grievances. This position will also have the duties of raising racial and cultural awareness in the District with staff training and community presentations.

Improving the academic success of Alaska Native children requires a collaborative effort on the part of parents, children, and schools. It is important for student success that teachers and tutors commit to involving families<sup>20</sup>. In the JOM program, this important flow of communication among the parties is graphically represented by the shape of a diamond – four overlapping triangles – with one point representing students, one tutors, one parents and one teachers. It shows



communication about academic enrichment getting to the family.

### **Best Practices in Tutoring**

The expansion (as well as current services delivered to students) is informed by Best Practices for tutoring programs, particularly those that serve Native families<sup>21</sup>. These shape the design of the project, and add value to the administration of tutoring interventions:

- Developing regular (or scheduled) communication among tutors, teachers, building principals, and families.
- Having clear mission and organizational structure that creates transparency and access.
- Prioritizing cultural proficiency and advocacy.
- Engaging families in the planning and review of enrichment (tutoring) services, including collecting data for feedback and improvement.
- Aligning objectives with partners' and stakeholders' needs.
- Creating opportunities for tutors and other staff to engage in the community.

### **Reporting and Accountability**

Tutors maintain confidential paper and electronic logs of activities and interactions with students. In this collaborative project, JOM tutors will have access to the FNSBSD Power School Premiere electronic record-keeping software. Each tutored child is assessed with indicators for success, such as attendance, performance on state standards, and past grades. Students with lots of negative indicators are flagged as needing priority service. The Tutor Coordinator will monitor students on Power School, and through direct reports from Tutors throughout the year so tutoring interventions can be increased if a student is having difficulty. Likewise, if a student is enjoying continued success, he or she will have tutoring decreased. The JOM Tutor Coordinator will track tutor/student interactions, as well as the frequency of reports each tutor gives to

classroom teachers/building principals, and to the families. Parents receive tutoring reports using the District's Power School program, or through electronic mail and telephone calls. We are sensitive to the "digital divide" in our community, and understand that not every family has electronic/computer access. Families will also get phone calls, and if necessary, a personal visit from the Tutor Coordinator. More on reporting is detailed in Section C.

### **Tutor Placement and Supervision**

Currently, when a JOM tutor is placed in a school, the JOM director meets with that school's principal, and any ANE staff members assigned to the school. Under the proposed expansion, these liaison duties will be taken up by the JOM Tutor Coordinator. Joint supervision is set up using guidelines from the program's past success. A key component of that is *respecting differences for each school* that may require a customized approach. A principal might have restrictions or guidelines, another principal might be comfortable with more initiative on the part of the JOM tutor assigned to the school.

Tutors work around the bell schedule at the school at their assigned school. Part-time tutors offer times of availability to the teachers at the beginning of the year to help determine what their schedule should look like. At schools where tutors are split, timing between the schools can either be for example, Monday/Wednesday/Friday at one school, and Tuesday/Thursday at another. Depending on need, a tutor might travel daily between two schools. JOM tutors will each have a cellular phone with texting capability, so that they can receive fast information about changes in scheduling. The texting is noiseless, and will not interrupt ongoing lessons.

The proposed JOM Tutor Coordinator position will ease the transition from the current 16 tutors to the expanded 24 by assisting teachers and principals in matching, scheduling and supervision to get the highest use out of tutor resources.

### **Qualifications and Training**

All JOM tutors must have a high school diploma or GED, a minimum of one year of college course work and strong written, verbal, analytical, and interpersonal skills. They must have a strong understanding and sensitivity to diverse cultures, with demonstrated experience working effectively with Alaska Native populations. We have had success with the local talent pool, however, in our implementation plan is recruitment for Native men among University of Alaska students in Fairbanks, to answer the need for more role models for boys.

The expanded JOM program staff will take advantage of professional development and training.<sup>22</sup> Tutors will receive cultural sensitivity training from an FNA Cultural Specialist, and Family Engagement and tutoring instruction from the JOM Program Director and the District ANE staff. In the budget is enough training money to bring an expert to Fairbanks to provide group training, which will be open to the District's ANE staff as well. The JOM Director and ANE Coordinator are developing a Joint Training Plan for the 2012 – 2013 school year; a draft is in the appendices. It includes a workshop in Learning Styles from the Association of Interior Native Educators, and specific tutor training to help 9-12 grade students prepare for the HSGQE, SAT and ACT, to increase graduation and college admission rates.

In the budget are expenses for membership in the National Tutor Association, and on-line training of three modules of para-professional development from that organization. Training for the new tutors will be systemized and comprehensive, with allowances for staff turnover. In addition, the expanded JOM staff will attend any relevant District and community meetings about Native education, including the School Board's Ethnic Committee meetings, District teacher in-service training, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks lecture series and workshops offered by FNA programs and partner organizations.

After initial hire and orientation, the JOM tutoring staff will meet as a group every month to review best practices, discuss staff professional development, and review schedules. (See Joint Training Schedule in appendices.) Between staff meetings, the Tutor Coordinator meets individually with employees, to debrief their tutoring visits. Tutors will have their own tablet computers, and may also attend “virtual” staff development meetings and webinars over FNA’s server, if those prove to be more productive.

### **Key Staff Positions for the Project**

Currently, all of FNA’s JOM program staff is Alaska Native or American Indian. Job descriptions are included in the appendices.

*Program Director*, Linda Woods, an Inupiaq Eskimo from Nome, Alaska, a depth of experience in Alaska Native/American Indian Education: a B.A. in Elementary Education and M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. She recently held the regional seat on the Johnson O’Malley National Board. Ms. Woods has been with FNA since 1996. This project request covers half her salary; the other half will be paid by BIA funds.

*Tutor Coordinator* – This is a new position for a Master’s-level education professional. Duties will include scheduling tutors, collecting data to measure outcomes, and communicating with teachers, principals and District ANE staff.

*Family Advocate* – This is a new position. Duties will include coordinating educational and social activities for families, coordinating training for parents, and advocacy to remove culturally-inappropriate barriers.

### **C. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

#### **i. Objectives are Timely & within Budget, Clearly Defined Responsibilities & Milestones**

Because we are modeling the Tutor Expansion Project on an existing program, the

responsibilities and milestones are clearly defined. FNA's JOM program, now in its 38<sup>th</sup> year, has the same goals as those proposed above, and will expand service under this funding *without any gaps*. The following chart maps the planning and implementation for the Project.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Time</b>
Hire expansion project job candidates	Program Director	1 <sup>st</sup> month
Orientation for Tutor Coordinator, Family Advocate, & Tutors	Program Director/FNA HR	1 <sup>st</sup> month after each hire
Establish Tutor Training Year-Long Schedule both staff-wide and for individual staff members as defined by varying experience levels	Program Director & Tutor Coordinator, in collaboration w/ District ANE Coordinator	2 <sup>nd</sup> project month & each spring to prepare for next school year.
Log and Review Tutor Training	Tutor Coordinator	Monthly during school years.
Implement data development/ training in all elements of JOM Tutor Expansion Project. Implement Evaluation Plan.	Tutor Coordinator and Evaluator	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter and ongoing as new staffers are hired.
Identify Students with District ANE staff	Tutor Coordinator	1st month
Coordinate with District ANE staff regarding Tutor placement and scheduling	Tutor Coordinator	1st month & ongoing during school years.
Coordinate with individual Principals regarding Tutor placement and supervision	Tutor Coordinator	1st month & ongoing during school years.

Provide one-to-one academic instruction, adapting curriculum & activities to individual student needs	Tutors	On-Going
Coordinate with District Research staff for collection of student data. (Ongoing as students are added.)	Tutor Coordinator	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter and ongoing
Purchase Equipment & Supplies	Program Director	On-Going
Design Parent Education events & workshops	Program Director and Family Advocate	Quarterly during entire project
Review Tutor Coordinator's scheduling & collecting student baseline & progress data	Program Director	School year beginning & end
Complete Monthly reports to Director	Tutor Coordinator & Family Advocate	Monthly during school years
Employee reviews	Program Director	Twice during school years
Review Program Evaluation with Evaluator and JOM Native Education Committee	Program Director	Quarterly during entire project
Complete Annual Report	Program Director, Evaluator	Annually
Attend monthly program staff meetings	All JOM staff	Monthly
Attend regular combined JOM/District ANE program staff meetings/trainings	All JOM staff	As scheduled during project
Attend District Board Ethnic Committee meetings	Tutor Coord., Advocate & Tutors as appropriate	Monthly, or as scheduled

Attend District ANE Parent Committee Meetings	Program Director, Tutor Coord., Family Advocate	Monthly
JOM Native Education Committee meetings	Director & Tutor Coord.	Monthly
Facilitate communication and cooperation between students, parents, and school	Tutors, Tutor Coordinator & Family Advocate	On-Going
Maintain records of services and activities, monthly reports to Tutor Coordinator.	Tutors	On-going
Maintain regular communication with extra-curricular staff (i.e.: coaches) as appropriate.	Tutors, Tutor Coordinator & Family Advocate	On-going
Attend training as opportunities arise.	All JOM staff	On-going
Participate in program evaluation via surveys and interviews with the evaluator.	All JOM staff	Quarterly

The JOM staff works during the school year and suspends its schedule during the summer months, when Fairbanks families are busier with hunting, fishing and visiting village relatives.

### **Second and third year priorities**

Because the expansion project will be integrated into an existing, successful, collaborative program, we anticipate a quick implementation. Training, communication/reporting, and review activities listed in the chart above will be repeated on a regular basis in all years of the project.

### **ii. Procedures Ensuring Feedback and Continuous Improvement**

#### **Annual Partnership Review**

At the beginning of this school year, FNSBSD Superintendent Pete Lewis met with FNA Executive Director Steve Ginnis, and JOM Director Linda Woods, for what is to become an annual review of the Implementation Agreement between FNA and FNSBSD. This meeting

quickly became the foundation for a friendship, and the Superintendent and Executive Director continue to meet monthly to have lunch and discuss the best service delivery for Native students.

A letter from Superintendent Pete Lewis is included in this application.

**JOM Native Education Committee**

The primary function of the JOM Native Education Committee is to provide feedback and continuous improvement for the program. Composed of parents and elders, the committee meets monthly with the JOM staff to exchange reports and discuss issues such as cultural barriers in schools, helping families with school readiness, access to tutoring, test preparation, and event coordination. They are a primary gathering point for grievances about Native education, and act as advocates for families who need greater empowerment to solve these grievances. In addition to advising the JOM Program Director, the committee interacts with the District ANE Parent Advisory Committee. This counterpart, also made up of parents and elders, currently has an FNA staff member serving as an officer. A roster of committee members is included in the appendices.

**Best Practices Review**

The Tutor Expansion Project design is informed by Best Practices in tutoring, particularly strategies effective for Native families. Although not stated as Project Goals, these desirable additions to the project will be examined for milestones as measurements of progress:

Developing regular (or scheduled) communication among tutors, teachers, building principals, and families.	Are tutors using PowerSchool or other reporting to teachers/principals? Are families receiving phone calls, e-mails or written reports?
Having clear mission and organizational structure that creates transparency and access.	Do parents know whom to ask for services? Can parents ask questions and bring grievances? Are issues tracked and followed-up?

Prioritizing cultural proficiency (including training) and advocacy.	Do families perceive a welcoming environment? Are barriers confronted? Is cultural knowledge increased among school staff and the community?
Engaging families in the planning and review of enrichment (tutoring) services, including collecting data for feedback and improvement.	Are families attending training or social events? Are parents responding to survey questions? Do they attend parent/teacher conferences? Have they been invited to planning and review sessions?
Aligning objectives with partners' and stakeholders' needs.	Are teachers/FNSBSD staff invited to JOM planning and review session, and vice-versa?
Creating opportunities for tutors and other staff to engage in the community.	Is program promoted in newsletter or social media? Are tutors supported as community members?

### **Evaluation as an Improvement Tool**

Evaluation is a systematic tool that will strengthen the Tutor Expansion Project. Our evaluation plan and procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement<sup>23</sup> of the proposed expansion is explained in detail below in Section E. An external Evaluator will be hired on a contractual basis. All Fairbanks Native Association contracts over [REDACTED] are publicly posted in a competitive bidding process and team-reviewed against criteria including contractor history with FNA, value for price, and quality of application. We will use an evaluator with a history of appropriate work including program evaluations of a similar nature.

### **D. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES**

#### **i. Costs are Reasonable in Relation to Persons Served and to Results and Benefits**

Costs in the accompanying budget and justification have been reviewed with a careful eye on effectiveness. Planning discussions with the School District's ANE program staff, and the

JOM Native Education Committee have helped develop the strategy of having a mix of full-time and part-time tutors. This allows tutors to be placed economically when the children are in the best position to take advantage of the service. For example, in the elementary schools, tutors are most often needed in the morning, when the more intense part of the curriculum is being taught: two part-time tutors, working in two different places address needs more effectively than one full-time person working the whole day.

More economy is gained because the proposed project resources are leveraged against the existing structure of the JOM program, the existing staff, the Native Education Committee, and services provided by organizational and community partners.

Using funds to support Family Engagement activities increases the number of people served and has long-term benefits. Integrating family engagement activities in the tutor expansion project is an economical way to improve student performance. Studies show that “schools would have to spend [REDACTED] more per pupil to reap the same gains in student achievement that an involved parent brings.”<sup>24</sup>

Hiring and staff turnover costs have been reduced by the JOM Director; each spring, she requests a letter of intent to secure tutors’ for the following school year. In the last few years, many of JOM tutors have returned after summer hiatus, creating a continuity of performance, accessibility, and known relationships. The current staff works 36 weeks from September through May to have their summers off for traditional subsistence activities.

## **ii. Commitment of Partners**

FNA has a strong relationship with the District’s Alaska Native Education Department dating back to the JOM program’s inception. In 1987, a pending lawsuit provoked the District to mediate an agreement with FNA to provide improved services for Native children. FNA and the

School District revised the agreement in 2007. Both the original and the revision are included as appendices to this proposal. As evidence of this relationship, the District's new ANE staff has updated and revamped their department website, posting the program goals, eligibility information, and both the 1987 Mediation Agreement with FNA and its 2007 revision.

As mentioned above, the implementation plan for this expansion project includes an already-established timetable of scheduled meetings between the JOM Director and the District's ANE Coordinator, plans for regular meetings between the Family Coordinators and the JOM Tutor Coordinator with the ANE Liaison, a Joint Training Plan, and, as mentioned in Section C, an annual review of the Implementation Agreement with the FNSBSD Superintendent, FNA's Executive Director, and the JOM Director. In Section C above, the close relationship between the JOM Native Education Committee and the District ANE Parent Advisory Committee are described, including having an FNA staff member on the District committee.

Included in this application are letters of support from the Superintendent of Schools, the ANE Coordinator, the Principal of EKECCS, and the Upward Bound Trail Markers program.

### **iii. Budget is Adequate to Support Proposed Project**

The proposed budget detail and narrative for this project is included in this application. The budget has been developed to ensure necessary funds are in place for all tutor-student interactions, staff training and data collection. FNA's JOM has the equipment, supplies, and positive community relationships to provide excellent services for students.

After planning meetings to design this project, the hourly wage for JOM tutors in the proposed budget was increased to create closer wage parity to District tutors, further integrating these programs and the value of the services offered. FNA has an employee benefits package that is comparable to the School District's.

Student incentives such as gift cards, toys and games will be used to assure initial and ongoing participation in tutoring activities. Gift cards or similar incentives will be offered for parent participation in evaluation surveys and interviews.

## **E. QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION**

### **I. Methods are Thorough, Feasible and Appropriate to Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes**

FNA has experience with local highly-qualified professionals who evaluate US DOE-funded education programs or SAMHSA-funded health programs. These contractors review program data quarterly, provide semi-annual and annual reports and a final report at the end of the grant award period. Currently, FNA contracts with Elaine Andaloro to conduct program evaluations similar to the plan described below, for our evidence-based Tribal Home-Visiting program. We anticipate her responding to our request for bids to do this work. Her resume is in the appendices.

#### **Reaching the Goal**

This evaluation plan will be used to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. It follows a Logic Model: If FNA/JOM is able to hire more tutors to work in the public schools, then more children who are struggling academically can receive additional services and, after receiving quality tutoring services, would show an increase in academic knowledge as indicated by an increase in standardized test scores. The project's goal and objectives are written to provide a clear path toward achievement:

**Goal:** Improve the standardized test scores for identified Native Students

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of JOM tutors assigned to Native students by 150%

**Objective 2:** Serve an additional 500 AI/AN students who are academically deficient with individualized tutoring services.

We will complete a *formative evaluation* of the JOM Tutor Expansion Project that will

examine its implementation and administration. The formative evaluation will 1) describe the Project activities and processes; 2) describe parent, community member, educators, and staff perceptions about Project services; 3) identify problems encountered during delivery of the Project and how they were resolved; 4) determine whether the Project as implemented matched the Project as it was planned; 5) ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the Project; and 6) develop hypotheses about the Project's impacts on the outcome goal and reasons why any may or may not have been met based on operational factors. These steps will help inform the project in with a level of detail and in a more timely fashion than annual student achievement reports.

We will also complete a *summative evaluation* of the JOM Tutor Expansion project that will address whether the activities described helped to increase student academic achievement. The summative evaluation will describe specific outcomes of students who participate in the JOM Tutor Expansion project with input from the educators, students, and parents who participate. It will also describe whether, and to what degree, the project's activities met goals.

## **ii. Objective Performance Measures Clearly Related to Outcomes of the Project**

The evaluation will rely on several quantitative and qualitative data sources to determine whether the Project was successful. The District and State data will provide baselines; Student Assessment Results, individual School Report Cards and Adequate Yearly Progress are published annually. These are described in the following table.

<b>Collection Tools</b>	<b>Data To Be Collected</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Program files	Start-up activities, outreach activities, interactions with partner organizations, identify problems	Review bi-annually and at the end of each program year
Monthly activity	Services delivered, number of students and	Collect and review every

logs for all project components	families served.	six months for duration of the project.
Quarterly Staff Interviews	Description of activities, challenges, goals, and other program information.	Hold each quarter.
Training Evaluations	Description of what participants learned at each training and their perception of its value	Collect and review after each training/conference.
School Staff Survey	Survey teachers involved and ANE staff to assess thoughts about the program services	Review annually.
Student Survey	Survey tutored students to assess how they feel about the program services.	Collect and review quarterly.
Parent Survey	Survey to parents to assess how they feel about the program services.	Annually
Program Survey	Survey program to assess their use of the tutorial and enrichment services and support.	Annually
SBAs, SBA/Science Alaska HSGQE, or standardized test scores for elementary students.	Describe the standardized test scores of students who receive tutoring services. Alaska Standards Based Assessments (SBAs), Alaska High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE), WorkKeys, and TerraNova tests.	SBAs reviewed annually. 10 <sup>th</sup> graders take the test Spring 2012 (baseline data), 2013, 2014, 2015 Elementary students annually for progress.

At the end of each year and at the end of the project, the Native Education Committee will work toward a summative or final assessment with an external Evaluator, who is retained to monitor the project from a neutral, objective viewpoint. The JOM Tutor Coordinator will

assemble necessary information and work with the Evaluator. Annual reports to the funder will be prepared with the Evaluator's assistance and will describe cumulative progress in achieving project objectives and address problems in program implementation, reflect quantifiable progress in obtaining the performance indicators as well as a quantitative analysis where appropriate.

In addition, evaluation will include an *assessment of major program components*. Careful examination of the following will be accomplished through student surveys and internal records and interviews with staff: tutoring visits, group meetings, developmental screenings, numbers and types of referrals, recruitment, program management, staff training and development.

The summative evaluation will provide evidence of the effectiveness of the JOM Tutor Expansion project. It will describe academic improvements and standardized test scores collected by the JOM Tutor Coordinator from schools where students receive direct training. The Evaluator, to develop a hypothesis about the JOM Tutor Expansion project's impacts on the outcome goals, will use this information and reasons why certain project goals may or may not have been met based on operational factors and to recommend if the project warrants replication to other localities. The evaluation plan will be finalized before the school year begins so it can influence the shape of the program.

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**ABSTRACT**

Fairbanks Native Association's (FNA) Johnson O'Malley program (JOM) is now in its 30th year serving our community. JOM sends tutors into classrooms in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) to assist Alaska Native students. We propose to expand this service with a Tutor Expansion project to serve these students in more schools, including one of the state's Persistently Lowest-Achieving schools. We expect to serve approximately 500 of the 2,000 Alaskan Native students in the Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Our project goal is to improve the standardized test scores for identified Native students. Our objectives are to increase the number of tutors assigned to Native students in the FNSBSD by at least 50%, and serve an additional 500 AI/AN students who are academically deficient, with individualized tutoring services.

Project services will expand the current practice, and therefore will implement in a timely manner and without any gaps.

In collaboration with FNSBSD educators, parents, and the students, we will review targeted students' previous standardized exam scores and grade reports to define skill areas, then customize strategies for academic improvement. FNA will provide tutors with culturally and academically-rich material and culturally-appropriate methodologies to help our students make meaningful connections between their academic work and their out-of-school experiences.

FNA's Johnson O'Malley (JOM) program will, in the context of this proposal, coordinate with the School District to provide tutoring services to Native students in need. FNA has a strong relationship with the District's Alaska Native Education Department dating back to the JOM program's inception. In 1987, a pending lawsuit provoked the District to mediate an agreement with FNA to provide improved services for Native children. FNA and the School District revised

the agreement in 2007. Both the original and the revision are included in the appendices to this proposal.

FNA is an **Alaska Native Regional Nonprofit Organization** as defined under Competitive Preference Priority 1. It is a cultural and community-based organization with experience in developing and operating programs to benefit Alaska Natives. This project will be serving one of the state's **Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools** as defined under Competitive Preference Priority 3. The FNA JOM program is a **novice applicant** as defined under Competitive Preference Priority 4. It has never received an ANEP grant nor a discretionary grant from the Federal Government. The FNA JOM program is eligible for preferential scoring under these three priorities.

### **PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY**

Fairbanks Native Association was originally founded in 1963 to help improve the lives of urban Alaska Natives. FNA incorporated as a state non-profit in 1967, and has since grown to become the largest social service provider in the Fairbanks North Star Borough (FNSB), serving both Alaskan Natives and the greater Fairbanks community. In addition to the JOM program, FNA has programs in early childhood education, community services and behavioral health.

FNA has more than 40 years' history of grant administration, a budget of more than [REDACTED], oversight of 12 programs, and a staff of just over 218 employees (75% full time, 45% of whom are Alaska Native). FNA is governed by a 9-member, all-Native Board of Directors, elected by FNA members. Members are defined as adult residents of the FNSB who are at least ¼ Alaskan Native. FNA is an independent Alaska Native Regional Nonprofit Organization, recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity, **and is thus eligible for Competitive Preference Priority Points as described in CFDA 84.356A.**

Johnson O'Malley is a novice applicant as defined in 34 CFR 75.225(a). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.225, the FNA JOM program has never received a grant or subgrant under the Alaska Native Education program, nor has ever been a member of a group application, submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129, that received a grant under the Alaska Native Education program, and has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal Government for the last five years, **and is thus eligible for Competitive Preference Priority Points as described in CFDA 84.356A.**

The Tutor Expansion Program will address the Secretary's Competitive Preference Priority 3 with the following: (a) Improving student achievement in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined below); (b) Increasing graduation rates (as defined below) and college enrollment rates for students in persistently lowest-achieving schools; and (c) Providing services to students enrolled in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined below), by increasing tutoring services at Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School, **and is thus eligible for Competitive Preference Priority Points as described in CFDA 84.356A.**

### **Alaska's Definition of Persistently Lowest Achieving Schools**

#### **Overview of Criteria for Tiers**

##### **Tier I**

*Any Title I School at Level 2 or above (in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring) for 2009-2010 with more than 25 FAY students tested on the SBAs in 2008-2009 and 2007-2008 that:*

- Is among the lowest-achieving 5%, or 5, whichever number is greater (6 schools in Alaska) of those schools; or,
- Is a school that includes grade 12 with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent for 3 years.

**Tier II**

*Any secondary school with more than 25 FAY students tested on the SBAs in 2008-2009 and 2007-2008 that is either eligible for but did not receive Title I, Part A funds in 2009-2010 or any Title I secondary school (did receive Title I, Part A funds in 2009-2010) that is in the bottom 20% of all schools in the state based on proficiency rates or has not made AYP for two consecutive years that:*

- Is among the lowest-achieving five percent, or 5, whichever number is greater (5 schools in Alaska) of those schools; or
- Is a school that includes grade 12 with a graduation rate of less than 60 percent for 3 years.

Under the School Improvement Grants Program (see 75 FR 66363) as part of a State's approved FY 2009 or FY 2010 applications **Effie Kokrine Early College Charter School (Tier II Grad)** is identified as a **Persistently Lowest Achieving School**. Currently, 50% of FNA JOM's tutoring program resources support Effie Kokrine students.