

ELIM'S CULTURAL VALUES:
REAFFIRMING AND IMPLEMENTING INDIGENOUS
VALUES IN EDUCATION

A
PROJECT

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Abstract

The curriculum project *Elim's Cultural Values: Reaffirming and Implementing Indigenous Values in Education* was brought to light through community-based participatory action research. Through informal interviews, survey analysis and discussions with local residents of Elim, Alaska; Elim's Cultural Values were identified and implemented into local curriculum. The Indigenous values of the community of Elim are a combination of both Yup'ik and Iñupiaq heritage. These values have been carefully laid out into a set of forty separate lessons, (ten cultural value units) in which educators in the local school can implement culturally relevant lessons that connect with the Bering Strait School District curriculum. This project is a living curriculum, currently being piloted in Elim's Kindergarten classroom. It seeks to utilize the many resources we have in our school and community in hopes of reaffirming Elim's cultural values within both school and community.

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Introduction

The village of Elim, Alaska, is a mixed- Native community consisting of around 350 people. The principal objective of the research was to determine how people in Elim's mixed – Native community identify with their cultural values and how we could incorporate these Indigenous values in a school setting. The research conducted sought ways to first identify the cultural values of Elim and then, implement the cultural values of our community into the local curriculum. The research questions for this project include, 1. How do community members identify with their cultural values? 2. How are the cultural values currently being shared, and how they have been shared in the past? 3. Is it possible and important for Elim Aniguiin School to start implementing our local values within our own school, and furthermore, how will we implement them?

The reaffirmation of cultural values includes alignment with the cultural standards, common core standards for educators, and values we are currently holding in our school. Through interviews and surveys, I was able to determine the Cultural Values of Elim's community and therefore, plan a curriculum that embodies those values. These values, comprised of both Yup'ik and Iñupiaq heritage, were what I found to be the most frequent values discussed during interviews and pinpointed in surveys surrounding the community of Elim at this time. Instead of labeling our values as Iñupiaq or Yup'ik, I decided it best to call them *Elim's Cultural Values*. The findings from within this research were used to reaffirm the core cultural values of the community of Elim and their presence in our community and school. Elim's Cultural Values are currently being implemented in the local school curriculum through ten place based units that I created myself. Each lesson is implemented once per week utilizing local resources and inclusion of parents and Elders. The final project of implementing Elim's cultural values will allow students and parents to share their values for generations to come both in and outside of school.

Rationale

Values have been around since the beginning of time. Each person in the world holds a set of unique values that they live by. Whether we realize it or not, every decision we make in life is set around a unique system of values that help us determine the choices we make, the perspectives we take, and the lessons we learn. So, what are cultural values? Why do they matter? Living in the Alaska Native village of Elim for the past five years, I have come to realize the ways in which cultural values influence one's life. Dr. Sean Topkok describes the presence of cultural values as a way to remember where we come from, whom we come from, and why we are here. In his dissertation he explains, "our Iñupiaq values help define our heritage. They are embedded in our lives and in our stories. They are in our spirit, passed down to us through our ancestors. Each *Iñupiat Ilitqusiat* converges with each other when we examine how each cultural value applies to our lives. We need to continue talking about our cultural values in every village to ensure our descendants live their cultural heritage" (Topkok, 2015, p. 5). It is important for me, as an educator of Alaska Native students, to be able to understand the importance of cultural values in a community such as Elim. It is also obvious to me that these cultural values should be incorporated in every aspect of a child's life, including school.

One of the questions I asked myself at the beginning of this project was if teaching cultural values was something we could do or should do at our school. The more I discussed it with co-workers and community members, the more I realized that there was a high interest and need for our community's values to be shared within our school. I have already had varying conversations about whether the sharing of cultural values was something that only needed to be done at home, or if it was something that could be done at school. Some staff members believed that the cultural values of the community should only be taught or shared at home with family members or relatives. Some of my co-workers might not believe that it is our responsibility to teach the students at our school about their core values, but it is apparent to me, and many staff and community members that Elim's cultural values are an important aspect of life both in and outside of school. At the beginning of this research project I was interested in hearing answers and opinions from staff members and community participants as to their willingness to see a cultural shift within our school. During that time, my main focus was to fully understand how Elim's Cultural Values are a living force in the everyday life of the Alaska Native people that

live here. It is important that we share the knowledge and skills learned from our cultural values so that the children of Elim will develop a stronger moral compass for generations to come.

If the use of cultural values occurs in our everyday life, and they encompass the way we live, the perspectives we have and the overall way we view the world, why were we not sharing our values in school? A better question might be; why should we discuss them, or how should we discuss them? These questions have made me look at my job as an educator in a different light and therefore, have prompted me to make significant changes to the lessons I teach my students. Even in Kindergarten, students are able to make deep connections with what they are learning and in turn discuss the cultural values that go along with those lessons. The cultural value units I have created and am currently piloting in my Kindergarten classroom have opened my eyes and widened my perspective in the teaching world. Not only are my students learning the target learning standards mandated by the state of Alaska, they are also making connections to their own heritage and cultural value system. Through the use of community resources such as Elders and parents, I am able to relay lessons to my students in connection to what they are learning through a different lens. These lessons are giving my students a stronger understanding of where they come from, where their place is in the world, and who they are.

In Dr. Topkok's dissertation he discusses the text "*Eye of Awareness.*" When he first brought this text to my attention I was overjoyed that an Elder from my community had contributed to this text and that there was a book that directly related the values of this region to the worldview and values of other regions. I had asked him where I could get this text and decided I would see if Bering Strait School District's library had this on shelf somewhere. After contacting the librarian through the school district, she sent me a copy via mail. As I was going through this text and realizing that it was something we could really use in our school, I brought it to the attention of our school secretary. I had immediately caught her attention with my ambition to utilize resources within our school to create culturally responsive lessons. As we talked she lead me over to a cabinet in our local school office. When she opened it, I was shocked that it was completely lined with copies of this text. This resource, created years ago to help teachers understand cultural differences and explore other worldviews than their own, was sitting on a shelf collecting dust. Not a single teacher in our school knew that this text even existed and they probably don't even know what it is for. I felt a deep sadness in my heart as I tried to come to terms with what our school has become. We have lost so much of our

community's culture within our school and transformed it into a place that does not utilize cultural resources or perspectives. Coming to terms with this only made me more adamant about doing something to help our students succeed. The "Eyes of Awareness" in our own school need to open up.

The text *Eye of Awareness* has helped me as an educator to compare the worldviews of Iñupiaq and Yup'ik people to that of a Western worldview in my classroom. I have shared ideas with co-workers about the difference it is making and how I am constantly keeping in mind that students, who live in this village but learn from me, need to "learn to be comfortable in comparing and contrasting worldviews" (Topkok, 2015, p. 28). The new perspectives that I hold have not only allowed me to change the ways in which I teach, but have allowed me to open the door to what the Alaska Native students in my classroom relate and respond to. In starting this project, it was my hope that more teachers would grow to understand just how important it is to include the culture of our students in their own classrooms. Proudly, I will announce that some teachers have decided to make positive changes to the ways in which they teach culture in the classroom. More teachers have come to me for resources than ever before, and I have noticed that four teachers this year posted a cultural values poster in their classroom. Although this is just a poster, it means that teachers are starting to listen and understand the importance of making cultural connections in their classrooms. This this is a positive start and I hope that as the year continues, more teachers will come to me and ask for resources to teach their own cultural value lessons.

Literature Review

Angelina Castagno presents her research in the article "*They Prepared Me to Be a Teacher, But Not a Culturally Responsive Navajo Teacher for Navajo Kids*": *A Tribal Critical Race Theory Analysis of an Indigenous Teacher Preparation Program*. The article shows a clear analysis of the problems related with the issues Castagno was researching, as well as explains how and why her research was done.

This article is mainly about Native teacher preparation programs. It aligns with my research because a large part of why culturally responsive lessons and standards are present or not present in teaching relies on the knowledge base of the teacher. It has been said that Native teachers may be more able to teach Native students because of the extensive knowledge base they possess

from their own culture. As a researcher and educator in Elim, Alaska, I often wonder if the reasons behind cultural responsibility or the lack thereof is due to the lack of knowledge that many non-Native teachers possess, or an inability to understand how to truly implement culturally responsive lessons in a culture that may be otherwise unknown to them.

This article highlights the original research done by Castagno. Data from this article came from the qualitative case study of the Indigenous Teacher Preparation (ITP) program at Southwestern University. This University is known for its teacher's preparation program and claims to be committed to diverse populations. Southwestern University has a specific goal of better meeting the needs of indigenous students and tribal communities. (p. 6) The teacher preparation program at Southwestern University is a fairly typical, mainstream program. (p. 6)

The ITP program and its success was the main focus of Castagno's research. The ITP program is a partnership with the Navajo community school. The program's primary goal is to recruit and graduate students from Navajo Nation. (p. 6) Southwestern University wanted to develop a program consistent with community goals to increase the number of Navajo teachers who are culturally connected and knowledgeable. (p. 6) Part of the ITP program was for students in teacher preparation programs to spend time observing and working with teachers and students in a rural reservation school. This three-year program covered students' last two years of school financially and provided instructional support during their first year of teaching. (p. 6)

The methods used for this research were focus groups with students and stakeholders, classroom observations of students in the program, and an extensive review of program related documents. There were thirteen students in the program, but only twelve participated in the study. The data from this study was collected during the third year of the program and many of the students were in their first full year of teaching at the time. (p. 7) Castagno's methodology stemmed from the need to understand the program from the perspective of those most closely involved. (p. 7) Ultimately, these perspectives would help her gain an understanding of how successful or unsuccessful this program is.

The information and data collected from Castagno's research gave her a very good insight into the perceptions of those who participated in the program at Southwestern University. This research and the conversations that she had with participants are easily relatable to the research that I have conducted in Elim. Although my main goal was not to evaluate a teacher preparation program, I did find ways to evaluate the use of cultural standards and values within an

institution. Part of my research was to determine if the cultural standards mandated by the state of Alaska are being used and are present in our school. The reason for doing this was to have a better idea of if our students were learning culturally responsive material. If that was not the case, there could be many reasons behind it and Castagno's research outlines one of those reasons. Understanding the background of teacher preparation programs for our current teachers may shed some light on if teachers in Native populations (like Elim) are prepared to teach culturally responsive lessons. Although this was not the main goal of my research I believe the survey questions I asked about teacher's knowledge on culturally responsive lessons play a definite role in discovering how the existence or nonexistence of cultural lessons in our classrooms take place. Castagno's findings outlined the feelings of many students going through teacher preparation programs in that they did not feel prepared enough to teach culturally responsive lessons. This may be the case for many other teachers out there who teach in rural communities of a different cultural identity than their own.

In the article *Changing the Culture of Schooling: Navajo and Yup'ik Cases*, Jerry Lipka and Teresa McCarty explain how two separate study groups of teachers could change the overall culture of their schools with hard work and dedication. The study groups both in the Rough Rock Navajo School and the Ciulistet group out of Alaska were able to find creative ways to use their culture, their knowledge, and their language within the curriculum of their schools. Their research, which extends beyond this article, is revolutionary in that teachers in these groups were able to do research of their own and form new and improved programs for their school, community, and students. This research, carried out with local educators had the overt aim to produce positive educational change (p. 2).

Although the research was done in two separate locations the two researchers both had the same goal in mind. They had clear methods for their research which included participant observations, community sociological surveys, interviews with school staff, students and community members, analysis of video footage from both community and school and reflective logs maintained as part of the teacher-initiated change groups. (p. 2) Both researchers understood that in order to conduct their research they must have "mutual and trusting relationships that are collaborative rather than hierarchical." (p. 2) Their goals for research were the same, and the intended purpose of the research was to make certain their schools would maintain culturally appropriate curricula. Both McCarty and Lipka were consultants for groups within their schools.

Their studies lead to the growth and development of many programs and because of this it led to student improvement and less teacher/principal turnover.

This article relates to my research as I myself am trying to promote cultural wellness in my school. As I was reading this I realized that I am a teacher/researcher just as Lipka and McCarty had been and that what I am doing ultimately has the same goal in mind. This research is relevant to my own research in that both McCarty and Lipka wanted to find creative ways to keep their culture in the school while still adhering to district and state policies involving curriculum and standards. I feel as though their efforts guide my own research in that their successes show relevant reasons why keeping cultural studies in our schools is important. In my own research, I have been trying to make the case that culturally responsive and appropriate lessons are important and lead to student success. We can see through McCarty and Lipka's research that this is possible and appropriate.

The text *Alaska Native Education; Views from Within*, edited by Oscar Kawagley and Ray Barnhardt is an amazing resource for any educator working with Alaska Native Youth. It was difficult to choose an article within this text because there were many relatable topics that would potentially go along with my research. In the end, I chose to reflect upon the article *Indigenous Ways of Knowing: Implications for Participatory Research and Community*. I chose this article for many reasons; one being that Patricia Cochran serves as an executive director for the Alaska Native Science Commissions, which provides opportunities to create partnerships between science and research in Alaska Native communities. Cochran is very knowledgeable in the area of community research and therefore I have much to learn from her.

Within this article, Cochran gives many examples of how indigenous research has been done inappropriately in the past. She urges us to learn from these mistakes and understand how easily trust between researchers and participants can be broken. She stresses the need for an ethical research approach based on consultation, strong community participation, and methods that acknowledge indigenous ways of knowing (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2010, p. 151). Although Cochran's views on research stem from her knowledge about research in the science and health field, and my research is not, her views on ethical research directly correlate with the ways in which I must conduct my own research in an ethical and responsible way.

Working in a partnership with individuals who have Indigenous knowledge, expertise and skills has been relevant and useful to any researcher working with Indigenous populations. It is

within these partnerships that researchers find the bulk of the information they need for their research projects. Within this article Cochran points out who should benefit from Indigenous knowledge. Before a person starts their research, Cochran reminds researchers that it must be clear regarding what, and for whom, the expected benefits are to be. For many who work in Indigenous communities, there is the sense of contributing to the social good, community well-being, and social justice through their research. (p. 154) She also warns that through this process what is shared must be protected, and that the different purposes and values of community research participants must be both acknowledged and accommodated to the extent possible.

Through the examples provided by Cochran, I was able to formulate a better understanding of how to perform Indigenous research. This article is helpful to my research in that it reminds me all research should be done in an ethical and responsible way, making it clear to those participating what the benefits are and how this research will ultimately help the community. I know that for my own research I needed to make it very apparent that my work as an educator in the community has provided me with the idea for the research, but the knowledge I need to complete it will come from within the community. Participatory research in Indigenous communities has many challenges, but being aware of those challenges and knowing how to confront them will help me to become a better researcher.

There are many ideas that align with the research I am conducting in Elim. One of the main reasons as to why I am conducting research in Elim is to identify how local values are being incorporated into our school. To better understand the importance of community values and beliefs I have chosen to include the article *Community Values and Beliefs* by Bernice Tetpon, found in the text *Sharing Our Pathways: Native perspectives on Education in Alaska* edited by Ray Barnhardt and Oscar Kawagley.

Tetpon describes the many values and beliefs that Alaska Native communities may practice. These include different forms of respect such as respect for nature, respect for Elders, respect for family roles and respect for sharing. Other values include knowledge of language, cooperation, love and respect for one another, humor, hunting traditions, compassion, humility, avoidance of conflict and spirituality (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2011, p. 103). Tetpon explains that these values, taught by everyday example, stay with children for the rest of their lives (p. 103). She also expresses the importance of building upon these values as children enter Western-oriented elementary and secondary school. (p. 103).

There are many reasons why including cultural values and traditions in a school setting are important for Alaska Native students. One of the reasons is that the inclusion of such provides opportunity for students to relate to their own culture and environment within a school setting. Students are better able to make connections with basic curricula through what they already know from their own environment. Tetpon, being a teacher herself, says it best, “When instruction does not relate to the students’ community values and beliefs, or it is taught out of context, they cannot relate to what is being taught and lose interest in school” (p. 104). She continues to give advice by saying, “educators who come from the outside must make an effort to become part of the community so they can incorporate the local knowledge system into their teaching” (p. 104). Tetpon also states, “in order to find out what the local values and beliefs are we must become acquainted with a knowledgeable Native person in the community to help guide us in our everyday lives as we join in on community activities and informally visit community members to develop a sense of how the community functions” (p. 104).

Being an educator from the outside (meaning I am not originally from Elim) can be a difficult platform to stand on when it comes to cultural knowledge. Although most of us were raised with similar values and beliefs we must try to see through a different lens and understand that the values and beliefs of another’s culture are important to uphold and teach the students in that community. It is our duty as educators to accommodate our students with the best possible ways of teaching and learning; therefore, the inclusion of community values and beliefs in our everyday curricula is imminent for student success.

If I ask myself why I am conducting research in the Native village of Elim one thought comes to mind. I want our school to be as culturally responsive as possible. It is my goal to conduct research in order to identify if in fact our school is including cultural values and beliefs in our everyday curricula as well as to identify if we are utilizing state mandated cultural standards that align with the overall ethnical identity of the population of Elim.

In the article *Components of Culturally-Responsive Schools*, Frank Hill explains what a “culturally- responsive school” looks like. He asks the question, “What would be happening in a culturally-responsive school that would be different than other schools?” (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2011, p. 27). Alaska Native Knowledge Network publications *Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Schools* and *Guidelines for Developing Culturally-Responsive Teachers for Alaska’s Schools* provides guidance for describing what we should find in culturally-

responsive schools. Instead of going into great detail about what all of this means, Hill lists some of the things that make a school culturally responsive. Some of these include, teachers who were born in the community or region in which they teach, local community having input for hiring staff, school is named for a cultural leader, local cultural statement of values and beliefs are prominent and displayed throughout the school, behavioral standards are based on the values of the local culture, classrooms display local culture, local Native Elders are regulars within the school, local school's annual goals are displayed, teachers teach within the culture, not about the culture, teachers utilize local environment and instructional program, and curriculum include local Native language and history. (p. 27-28) There are many more included in Hill's list of what a culturally responsive school must include. He explains that these components are really only the beginning of a plan for a school to become culturally responsive.

After reading through the large list of components for a school in an Alaska Native community to be considered culturally responsive, I have a much clearer idea of what Alaska Native students should be learning during their time in school. This wide variety of components all come together to meet one goal and that goal is to see students learning in ways that are best for their success. Without the inclusion of these components Alaska Native students may struggle with the idea that they should be one person in school but another person outside of school within their community. This problem can be easily solved by community collaboration and an active relationship between school and community that links the two into one solid foundation for student success and prosperity. It is within these components that I find how important local cultural values and beliefs are in forming a school that is responsive to all students. Although it may not be possible at this time to include all components, I know that each school working with Native students should be trying to better their students' academic life by including as many of these components as possible.

Culturally responsive schools include many components that work together to make the ultimate learning experience for Alaska Native students. Another very large component in small rural schools like Elim is the sharing of stories through traditional storytelling sessions with Elders and local community members. In Alisha Drabek's PhD dissertation *Liitukut Sugpiat'stun (We are learning how to be real people): Exploring Kodiak Alutiiq Literature Through Core Values*, she explains in great detail the need for traditional storytelling in her Kodiak Alutiiq

Community. Her past experiences with the culture and language give her unique perspective into how traditional storytelling can help to improve the community as a whole.

While reading this dissertation I was immediately drawn in by the wealth of information provided about Alutiiq culture and history. The background information about why and how storytelling has decreased in past years reminded me of the community of Elim that I live and work in. The similarities between Alaska Native communities amazes me because no matter what region in Alaska, there seems to be a common disconnect when it comes to the loss of a piece of tribal culture.

In her dissertation, Dr. Drabek explains that there are few Elders remaining who are comfortable telling traditional stories and that in the past several generations, few Alutiiq traditional stories have been passed down. She also explained that many adults and young adults believe there are no more traditional Alutiiq stories. (Drabek, 2012) The loss of these traditional stories stems from colonialism and imperialism that took place generations ago, but also in this new modern society, the Alutiiq people are not taking time to listen to their Elders and there are fewer families who tell hero or family stories. These stories were once the primary source of education for children (Drabek, 2012). There are many battles to overcome to revitalize traditional storytelling in her Kodiak Alutiiq community, however, Dr. Drabek's background, traditional knowledge, and resources provide her with opportunities to begin gathering a collection of traditional knowledge stories for sharing within the community and school.

As I was reading her dissertation it struck me that all the Alutiiq values are grounded in storytelling. Each story told from generation to generation must have contributed to the teaching of one of the core values within the community. Dr. Drabek's research seeks to further encourage exploration by future generations so that they may know what it means to be Alutiiq and what it means to be spiritually grounded in place and values. She also explains that embracing our Indigenous worldviews through stories may bring healing (Drabek, 2012). Dr. Drabek quotes Oscar Kawagley in that "Indigenous cultures use mythology and stories for value creation and teaching what it means to be human." Oscar Kawagley also explains that the storytelling process instills one's identity and emphasizes the importance of tradition and its value as a practice (Kawagley, 2006). Traditional storytelling provides so much for Indigenous cultures and the amount of people who could be positively impacted by the revitalization of such is truly astonishing.

In Elim, storytelling is not as prevalent as I once thought it to be. As I continue teaching in this Alaska Native community I understand that there are few people who tell traditional stories and few people who know them. I have not heard of many families who share stories at home with their children and I have not seen evidence of traditional storytelling being done in many classrooms. Just like Dr. Alisha Drabek's community, the traditional storytelling seems to be decreasing and I worry that generations to come will not be able to tell their children the stories passed down by their Elders.

As part of my Master's research through UAF, I am determined to reaffirm the cultural values within the community of Elim. Part of the Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic is the learning of our values and practicing of our values through traditional storytelling. I fear that the loss of traditional storytelling will then result in an even further loss of the use of cultural values within our community. To me, it seems that traditional storytelling and the Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic go hand in hand to create mind, body, and spiritual wellness. More importantly, these values can be practiced in traditional storytelling in multiple ways. Dr. Alisha Drabek describes the many forms of storytelling in her dissertation. From what I gather, there are legends, myths and origin stories. There are also stories that are told as tales or history, as well as stories that are told through dance and gestures (Drabek, 2012). Although Dr. Drabek's traditional storytelling methods come from Alutiiq culture, I believe that Iñupiaq storytelling traditions are similar in that they too can be told in multiple ways and forms. Having a connection with storytelling in multiple forms can provide a deeper sense of identity for Alaska Natives as well as provide a solid foundation of cultural values to promote health and overall wellbeing.

Just as Dr. Drabek describes in her dissertation the ways in which cultural values connect with traditional storytelling, Dr. Charles Sean Asiqluq Topkok addresses the Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic in his dissertation *Iñupiat Ilitqusiatic: Inner Views of Our Iñupiaq Values*. Dr. Topkok's explores the ways in which the Iñupiaq Ilitqusiatic (Iñupiaq values) are passed down from generation to generation. The main method during this doctoral research was through the use of group interviews. In the 17 group interviews that Dr. Topkok conducted his overall aim was to discover how the Iñupiaq Values defined Inuit heritage. He describes the presence of cultural values as a way to remember where we come, whom we come from, and why we are here. As quoted previously, "Our Iñupiaq values help define our heritage. They are embedded in our lives and in our stories. They are in our spirit, passed down to us through our ancestors. Each *Iñupiat*

Ilitqusiat converges with each other when we examine how each cultural value applies to our lives. We need to continue talking about our cultural values in every village to ensure our descendants live their cultural heritage” (Topkok, 2015, p. 5).

I chose to do a review of this dissertation because it directly relates to the research that I have conducted in the small village of Elim. Topkok does an excellent job describing through stories and interviews that “Each Iñupiaq *munaqqiq* (village) has an understanding and view of our *Iñupiat Ilitqusiat* (Iñupiaq values). Our cultural values constantly converge with one another” (Topkok, 2015, p. 172). As an educator, I realize that it is through the children that we must instill these values and share the wealth of cultural knowledge we possess. My own research in Elim is helping to reaffirm the cultural values that the community once shared consistently with their children and families. My goal is to open a new door for the sharing of our cultural values and knowledge through pathways such as traditional storytelling and themed lessons. In his dissertation Topkok expresses the need to “pass down our *Iñupiat Ilitqusiat* for the *munaqqiq* (village) by involving our children in our daily activities. Through the community stories, we see the balance of the cultural values as they converge with each topic” (Topkok, 2015, p. 175). My goals as an educator and as a researcher will prove to be attainable because each village has an understanding of why these cultural values are important and I believe they will be accepting of the positive changes cultural value units have to offer.

In the conclusion of Topkok’s dissertation, we can see that there is a natural flow to the Iñupiaq *Ilitqusiat*. Each of his participants had a viewpoint on each cultural value and how they are interconnected (Topkok, 2015, p. 174). His research also allowed for participants to share how their cultural values are passed along and ultimately, he discovered that “The Iñupiaq values have not changed from one generation to the next, but there continue to be certain challenges teaching our children to practice our cultural values” (Topkok, 2015, p. 174). The challenges communities face are difficult to address with knowing that so much of the ancestral knowledge in small rural villages have already been lost. However, as these challenges arise, we know that cultural values have been an important aspect of Alaska Native lives for many years and with each generation to come there will still be a connection to be had with them. So, although some villages may have to make unique changes to the ways in which these values are shared with one another whether it is because of loss of language or loss of traditional storytelling, there can be ways to continue teaching future generations about the ways in which our cultural values define

our lives. Dr. Topkok urges us to take a look at the ways in which our cultural values are always present and that “Every Iñupiaq needs to continue talking about our cultural values and recognizing how each is observed in our everyday lives” (Topkok,2015, p. 183).

Knowing the importance of our cultural values is one way that educators working with Alaska Native students can try to connect to the everyday lives of their students. Dr. Barbara Amarok, an Alaska Native from Nome and educator in the Bering Strait Region for over 30 years, discusses the achievement of students in the Bering Strait Region in her dissertation *An Indigenous Vision of 21ST Century Education in the Bering Strait Region*. Dr. Amarok has many suggestions on how to improve the quality of education for Alaska Native students in the Bering Strait Region and beyond. Her suggestions stem from a variety of interviewing methods and from her own experiences in education. Her desire to see change within the education system has one goal in mind, “So that schools can more effectively serve the communities to which they are responsible and so that local life ways and priorities form the foundation of schooling” (Amarok, 2014, p. 5).

Being an educator in the Bering Strait region, I can identify with the need for change within our current construct of school. Alaska Native students need curriculum and educators that are familiarized with their students own backgrounds and worldviews. Dr. Amarok suggests that the low achievement rate of some schools in the Bering Strait region is due to, “The historical and ongoing minimal requirement of appropriate teacher training, intentional or unintentional worldview changes perpetrated by numerous educators, and the common lack of affirmation by educators of local knowledge and activities.” There are many flaws in the current education systems we have in place. Dr. Amarok pinpoints many of them by describing the racial, political, and educational worldviews that many educators hold. The lack of knowledge in historical background and culture on the teacher’s behalf is most certainly preventing Alaska Native students from receiving the quality education they need to succeed. Dr. Amarok suggests that, “Teachers of Alaska Native students need to be prepared more comprehensively, including in the areas of colonialism and authentic history, multiple worldviews and cultures, and race relations and social justice, to be able to ensure that students succeed” (Amarok, 2014, p. 57).

Within her dissertation, Dr. Amarok suggests that we improve our teacher preparation programs for teachers who have a desire to teach Alaska Native students. As an educator in a small rural community, I am familiar with the courses that are required to teach in Alaska. Dr.

Amarok has strong but valid views on this topic. She states, “Completion of two or three courses is not adequate for Alaskan educators to be their most effective when the Indigenous peoples of Alaska hold a rich history, culture, and worldview that is important and valuable to all. In schools whose majorities are Alaska Native and in communities where maintenance of worldviews and life ways are a priority, teacher preparation is particularly critical. The UA requirements for Alaska teacher certification should ensure that educators receive an expansive and relevant orientation to teaching in a specific region of Alaska. This cannot be obtained by taking two or three courses” (Amarok, 2014, p. 60). I would have to agree with Dr. Amarok on this statement. For many teachers in the Bering Strait region there is little or no knowledge of the background, culture, and history of the students we are teaching. The courses I had to take from Alaska Pacific University did not adequately prepare me for my job as an educator in Bering Strait School District. It was not until I started more graduate courses that I realized what my students really needed to succeed. Dr. Amarok’s suggestions about teachers being required to take cross-cultural courses throughout their career would be an excellent support for teachers who teach Alaska Native students what they really need to know.

One of the biggest issues in small rural schools is the complete disconnect between home and school. I have seen first-hand the frustration and anger that can come from educators and students not having the same values or worldviews. The institution of school itself holds a very dominant power over everything around it. In small communities such as Elim, I see this happening with parents and community members daily. Parents are continuously frustrated with the rules and values at school compared to the rules and values at home. My graduate project seeks to help lessen the strain of conflicts between parents, educators, and administration within our school. Ultimately, the values of the community should be the same as the school. This would prevent many of the issues we are having and lead to a better understanding of how community and school can work together to do what is best for our students. Dr. Amarok (2014) explains, “Educators can experience greater accomplishment if they are willing to learn the ways and expectations of the community and work together with organizations and families. Working with the community involves two-way, not one-way, communication” (p. 68). Just as the school needs to work with the community, teachers need to form bonds and relationships with their students and with their families. Especially in situations where teachers come from a much different background than the students they are teaching. Dr. Amarok advises all teachers, “In

order to build and maintain intimate and positive relationships, teachers need to know more than just the names of the students and how they interact in the classroom. They need to reach out to families to get to know students. They need to get to know the personalities and dreams of each of the students to build strengths and help them fulfill their aspirations. Every classroom has a child who is outgoing and always making others laugh or smile. Teachers should appreciate and utilize this trait in the classroom rather than see it as a negative characteristic that detracts from the plan. Humor and enjoyment are beneficial to the emotional well-being of children, so teachers must ensure that students have fun in the classroom. When teachers learn the ways of the community, develop relationships, and care about students, situations will be less likely to occur where there are two opposing sides, “locals” and “outsiders,” with the disconnect between community and school being widened. When students are respected, they develop inner strength and high expectations for themselves. They are not forced to spend time being afraid or hurt, and educators are not forced to address the reactions that come with these feelings” (Amarok, 2014, p. 81).

In conclusion, the well-being of our students depends on the ways in which our educators view the world around them, the way that our school system is run, and the ways in which we communicate with one another. All of these components come together to either make or break a child’s education. Dr. Amarok’s suggestions on how to improve student achievement are valid and on point. Her experience in the field of education makes her an expert in understanding the complexity of local knowledge and the education of the students within small rural Alaska Native communities. I have taken her ideas and suggestions into consideration during the implementation of my cultural values units.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the importance of ethnic identity, cultural values, and cultural standards within a learning environment was crucial to this research project. The theories associated with these concepts have guided the development of the theoretical framework for this research project. Grounded theory is formulated through the use of data analysis. The theory for this research project was developed over time through the discovery of data. This mixed-method research, with the majority of the data collection being based on qualitative data, lead to the construction of a theoretical framework.

Through the use of my literature review, I have formulated many ideas that have developed and grounded my research in a way that envelops Native ways of knowing. The entire framework of this research project stems from the knowledge and opinion of the Alaska Natives living in Elim. Based off of their knowledge I was able to collect data and organize it in a way that will help me develop and conduct social research.

What are the underlying assumptions that ground this research? There are many assumptions in my research that explain why this research problem exists. This research includes the assumption that teaching culturally relevant material is important for Alaska Native students. Other assumptions in this research include the need for an understanding of the cultural values of Elim, and a need for a cultural value system to be in place both in community and school. These assumptions have guided my research and explained why the research problems exist.

Methods and Methodology

Through a mixed paradigm of methods that include both qualitative and quantitative data, I have conducted research in Elim to determine 1. How community members identify with their cultural values 2. How the cultural values are currently being shared and how they have been shared in the past. 3. If it is possible and important for Elim Aniguiin School to start implementing our local values within our own school and furthermore, how will we implement them? Through the use of interviews with community members and Elders I have begun to understand how the majority of the community identify with their cultural heritage and values. Because Elim is a mixed-Native population it was a high priority to determine what cultural values we will focus on, whether they be Iñupiaq values, Yup'ik values, or both. Through interviews and survey analysis I have determined that both Iñupiaq and Yup'ik values be incorporated in what we the people of Elim would call, *Elim's Cultural Values*.

The qualitative data collected in the interviewing process was analyzed and transcribed. The interviews, being informal and mostly conversational, were transcribed and the commonalities between interview responses were taken into consideration in determining which cultural values were most important to community members and Elders involved in the research. The final methods used in this research were surveys. One to the community and parents of Elim School, and one to school staff members about their opinions on cultural values and their willingness to accept or promote a cultural shift within our school. This survey also seeks to understand how school staff feels about learning new and important aspects of Alaska Native student's lives, and how we can utilize them in the classroom. This quantitative data has helped me to gain an insight as to how prone our staff is to the idea of change, and if our staff is willing to make a positive shift for our students that includes the implementation of cultural values within our school. The school staff survey also gave me an idea of how knowledgeable teachers and staff are about teaching culturally responsive lessons, and if they have or would be willing to implement more in their classrooms.

Interviews and Surveys

The first step into my research was to interview community members and Elders to inquire about how they identify with their cultural values. These questions were an important component for my research, as community and Elder input is what will motivate change the most. Their ideas and opinions would be the driving force in creating a curriculum. Throughout the interviews, it became very clear just how important cultural values and sharing cultural knowledge is in the community of Elim.

A large portion of the interviews were also about the implementation of the values in our local school and how we could go about sharing our values and reaffirm them within community. Understanding how to share knowledge within the classroom was crucial to my interviews. Many interviewees made it clear that cultural knowledge and values should be shared with help of local experts. This would ultimately give me an idea of the correct pathways for sharing our values, and the understanding of how a disconnect occurred within the overall sharing of our values in our community. These interviews provided me with much more insight as to why cultural values are an important aspect of life for Alaska Natives. The information provided by interview participants gave a greater definition of a value, the way we use them in our everyday lives, and how values have changed over time. These were all important components to my research. Gathering a clear perspective of change over the course of the years was also important for my research as we must know where we came from to determine where we can go from here. My hope for these interviews was that community members and Elders would be accepting of change within our school and would be actively involved in reaffirming our values with community and school. I feel that these hopes have been reached as Elders and community members have graciously accepted requests to enter my classroom and help with the curriculum units I have created.

During the interview process, I was able to complete 7 interviews with local Elders and community members. The interviews were informal and mostly conversational regarding the following questions:

Table 1: Interview Questions:

Why are cultural values important?
Do you feel there were disconnects that happened overtime regarding Elim’s Cultural Values?
Is traditional storytelling a common pathway for values to be shared and passed on?
How are the values in Elim tied to your culture?
How would you define a value?
Would you like to see Elim’s Cultural Values incorporated in our school?
Do you think the project I am doing is important or relevant?
What cultural values are most important to you and why?
How are cultural values currently practiced?
What are some ideas on how we can get community members and Elders more involved in the sharing of cultural knowledge and practices at our school?

Interview Analysis

It is from these questions that I was able to gain a better understanding of the cultural values that still thrive within our community, and the cultural values in which these interview participants would like to reaffirm. After transcribing the interviews with each participant, I was able to find some areas of common ground between them. In every interview, participants expressed that Elim’s cultural values were an important aspect of life because they, “Keep our people alive.” In almost every interview it was pointed out that the presence of cultural values “Keep us healthy, strong and able to lead our people.” It was an overall consensus that cultural values are what help people survive.

When participants were asked about cultural values changing over time I again heard the same answers with each interview. All participants expressed that changes within the community, such as introduction to English and Western ways of life were the primary factors in the decline of cultural values being shared within families. These changes had a deep impact on the people of Elim and in turn, much of their culture was lost. It was also brought to my attention that as the years went on less and less families were teaching their children Iñupiaq and Yup’ik ways of life and these “life lessons” or cultural values were becoming lost. There were in fact some cultural values that were not lost. In every interview, the value of hunter success and

subsistence activities was brought up. Participants in all interviews expressed that they did not want to see these value decline as the others had.

Through the comparison of interview notes, I could easily tell which cultural values were important to the participants and the community of Elim in general. It was not surprising to me that the Elders in these interviews had almost the exact same things to say about why cultural values are important. To participants in these interviews, having cultural values show strength in identity and holds a community together. When asked to identify what a value means to them, participants all manifested the same ideas pertaining to the fact that values are “The ways in which we know how to live.”

Some of the most frequently brought up cultural values in the interviews were the value of hard work, mainly expressed through stories of how people used to work hard for what they have and things have changed in the now. It had been said multiples times in interviews that children are not learning the value of hard work, “Because their families are not showing them or guiding them.” In more than one interview it had been expressed that families in Elim are still able to show their children the values of hard work, respect for Elders, sharing, and responsibility through the subsistence hunting and fishing process. These values have been expressed as very much alive in that many community members still practice them frequently.

When asked about traditional storytelling as a pathway for sharing cultural values, all participants agreed that it was a common form of teaching. Many of the participants expressed a concern that we do not have very many storytellers in the community of Elim and that we should try to do this more often for our children. In all of the interviews participants were asked what cultural values they remembered most from childhood, and again many of the participants responded similarly in that hard work and responsibility were a large part of their childhood and a small part of children’s lives today. Subsistence hunting, gathering food, and putting away food were among the most important ideas for families to teach their children. It came up that many of Elim’s cultural values contribute to these activities such as hard work, love for children, sharing, respect for Elders, and celebrating hunter success.

Towards the end of each interview, the conversation took a turn. Instead of discussing the past, participants were asked about the present and the future. When asked about teaching cultural values in school and how this should be done, participants came forth with some really great ideas. Five of the participants mentioned the bicultural program at the school and that it

could be stronger. Solving this issue could certainly improve student learning at school. Others mentioned that Aniguiin School students needed more hands-on activities that are of interest to them. It was noted that Elim's children would learn best about their culture through interesting and modernized lessons about their culture from people of their culture. Participants also made it very clear that community members and Elders should be more active in the school and community experts such as hunters, women who prepare Native foods often, or storytellers should be asked to share more often.

The final question of how to get community members more actively involved in the school setting brought forth many ideas for my curriculum project. All of the participants in these interviews had great suggestions about how to get more community involvement in the school, and also how to get new teachers the resources they need. One Elder suggested that each teacher in the school have a list of active Elders in the community in which they could invite to share knowledge in the classroom. Another participant suggested that at the beginning of the school year we have a "meet the Elders" night, where new teachers could meet our local knowledge bearers and get to know them. Other participants suggested that we get more community involvement by bringing back some older ideas like "family slide show night" to share our cultural values as a community. Some participants suggested that we give money incentives to Elders and community members willing to share knowledge. All of the participants suggested that teacher simply ask. It was said that many people are simply not asked to come and share their knowledge.

In conclusion of these interviews, the seven interviews conducted were useful in forming the cultural value curriculum unit lessons. The interviews gave me a much better idea of the types of expertise that is available for sharing in classroom lessons. The interviews helped me to gain better insight as to what values are very much alive in Elim, and which values could be reaffirmed through community and Elder participation within the school. I gained many ideas from these interviews and feel as though I can understand better what the cultural values of Elim mean to the people of Elim as well as how to incorporate them in a school setting. I have learned that community members and Elders are more than willing to share their cultural knowledge within the confines of school curriculum and with this knowledge I am better able to share ideas with my colleague ways they too can get involved in the sharing of Elim's Cultural Values.

Staff Survey

The second step in this research was to survey the community/parents and staff members at Elim Aniguiin School. Each staff member, including paraprofessionals were able to rate their opinions on their own familiarity with Elim's Cultural Values, their student's familiarity of Elim's cultural values, and their own willingness to learn more about them. Many of the questions focused on how staff and community view the cultural values and if they consider them to be an important component to the school day. Staff members were asked a series of questions that pertain to utilizing local knowledge in their classrooms, their willingness to learn ways to incorporate local knowledge into classrooms, how comfortable staff is with teaching cultural lessons, and if they view teaching our students their cultural values as important. The method of using a survey has allowed me to gather some quantitative data, and from this data I gathered the information needed to determine if our school is willing to make a change or be open to the implementation of cultural values within our school.

All school staff members were sent a link to a survey entitled *Elim's Cultural Values*. The instructions were as follows: *As part of my graduate research I am seeking answers to some important questions about staff willingness to help promote the learning of Elim's cultural values in our school. As part of my research project I am hoping to implement a new program in which community and staff come together to get community experts more involved in the sharing of their knowledge and expertise when it comes to our cultural values. Please be honest with your answers.* From the school staff survey I have gathered the following information. There were 15 respondents out of 20.

Staff Survey Questions and Results

Figure 1



I am familiar with the cultural values of Elim

15 responses

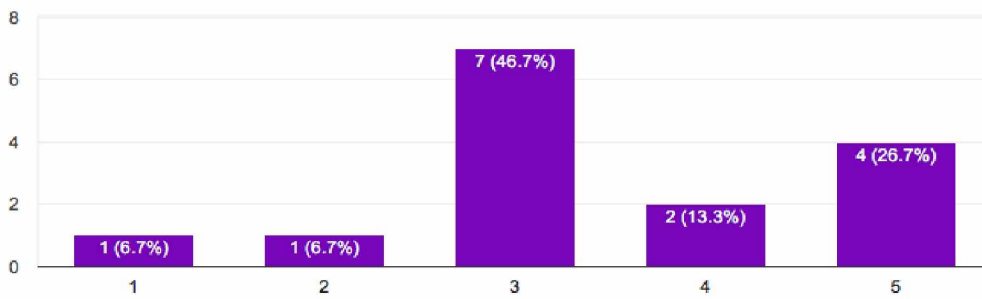


Fig 1: From these responses, I have concluded that a large majority of our staff members know what cultural values are and are familiar or somewhat familiar with them.

Figure 2

I have seen connections to cultural values in classroom lessons and activities

15 responses

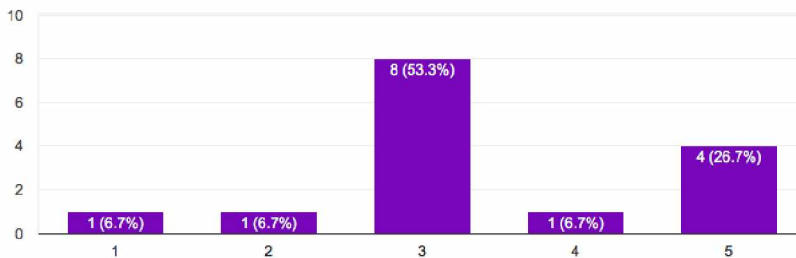


Fig 2: From these responses, I have concluded that the majority of our staff members have not seen others make cultural connections in lessons.

Figure 3

I know how to make connections to Elim's cultural values in my classroom lessons and activities



15 responses

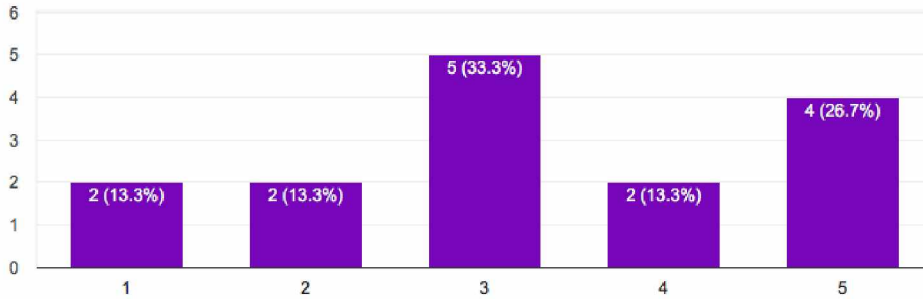


Fig 3: From these responses, I have concluded that more than half of staff members feel uncertain about how to make cultural connections in their classrooms. 6 staff members did feel as though they could make connections to local culture.

Figure 4

**I make an effort to include culturally relevant material in my lessons:
check all that apply**

15 responses

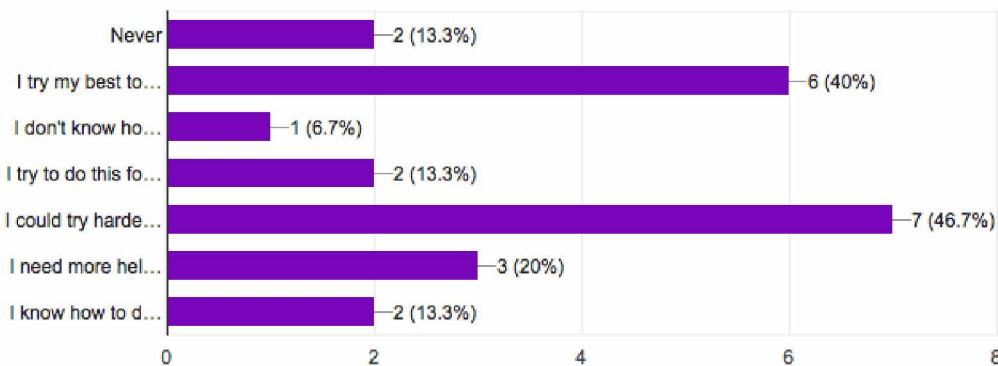


Fig 4: From these responses, I have concluded that most staff members try to include culturally relevant material but that they could try harder to do it more.

Figure 5

I have asked members of the community to share cultural knowledge in my classroom this school year : check all that apply

15 responses

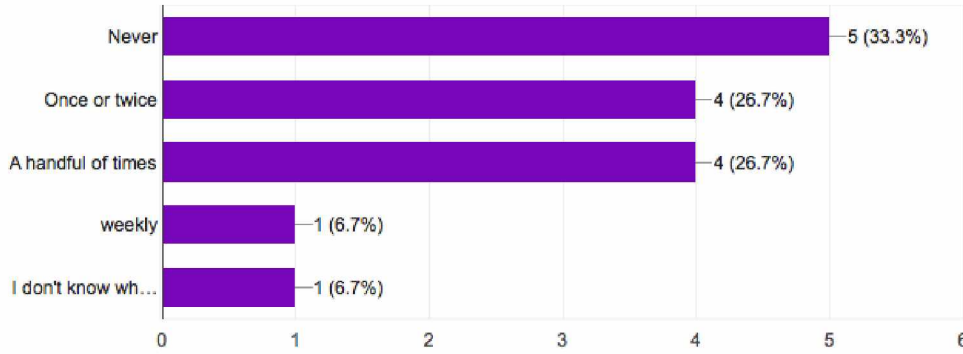


Fig 5: From these responses, I have concluded that 5 teachers or staff members have never reached out to the community for the sharing of cultural knowledge. 8 teachers have invited community members in at least once and 1 teacher even weekly. 1 teacher responded, “I don’t know who to ask.”

Figure 6

Elim School includes cultural values in learning and extra curricular activities

15 responses

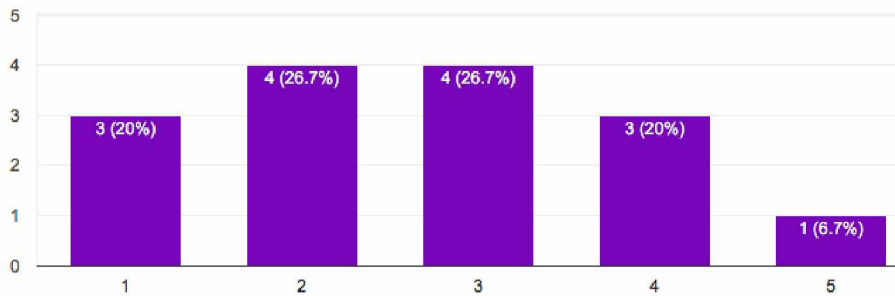


Fig. 6: From these responses, I have concluded that Elim School makes an effort to include cultural values in extracurricular activities and learning, sometimes.

Figure 7

I would be willing to learn more about Elim's cultural values



15 responses

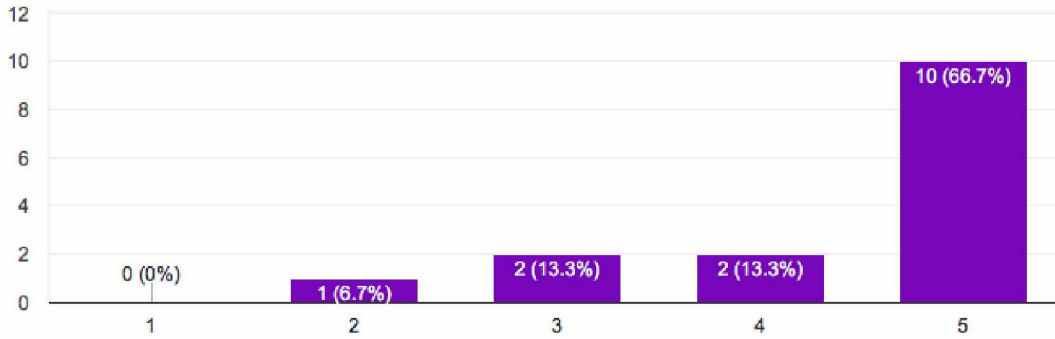


Fig. 7: From these responses, I have concluded that 10 of the staff members who responded would be interested in learning more about Elim's cultural values, 4 of the respondents might be interested in learning more and 1 respondent is not interested in learning more about cultural values.

Figure 8

I believe cultural values are an important part of learning for Alaska Native students



15 responses

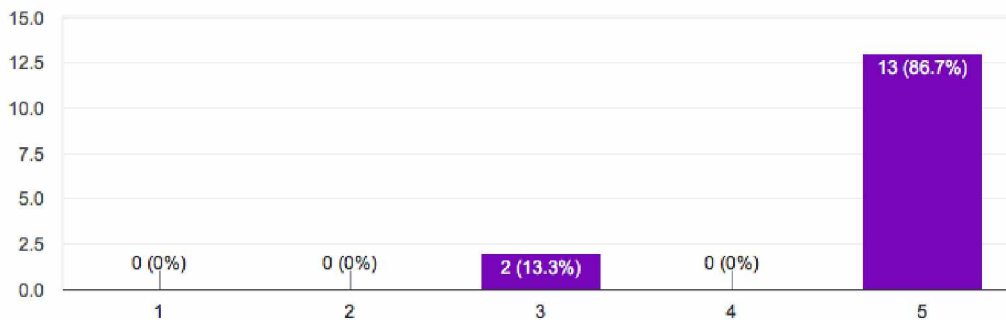


Fig 8: From these responses, I have concluded that 13 of the respondents feel the inclusion of cultural values is very important. 2 respondents feel that it is mildly important.

Figure 9

Local knowledge can be shared in many ways. I would like to be a part of finding ways to implement cultural values in our school and classrooms



15 responses

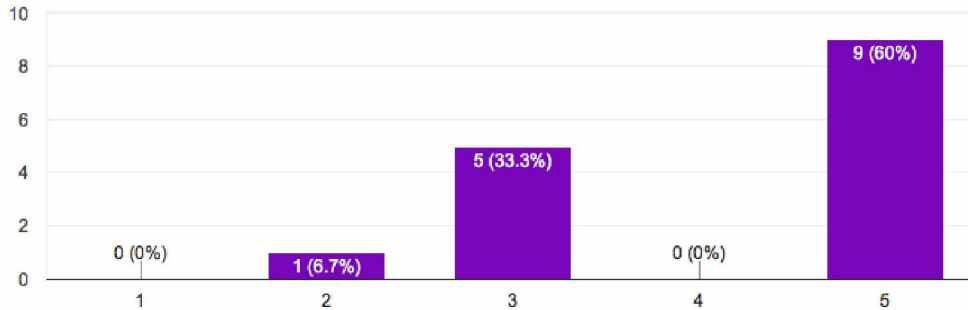


Fig 9: From these responses, I have concluded that 9 staff members would like to be a part in finding ways to implement cultural values in the school and in their classrooms. 5 staff members responded with a 3 meaning that they might be interested in helping. 1 respondent chose a 2 meaning they weren't really interested in helping with this process.

Figure 10

Cultural values should only be taught at home

15 responses

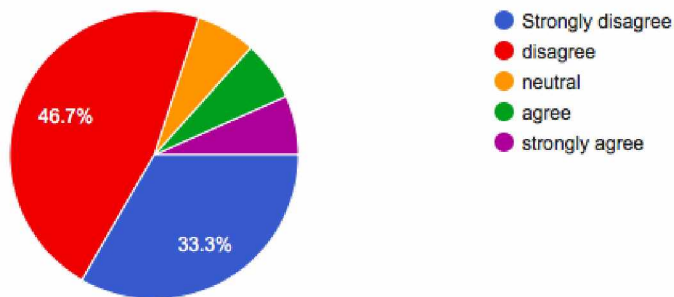


Fig 10: From these responses, I have concluded that 79% of staff members believe cultural values should not only be taught at home.

Figure 11

Having the presence of cultural values in our school is important to me



15 responses

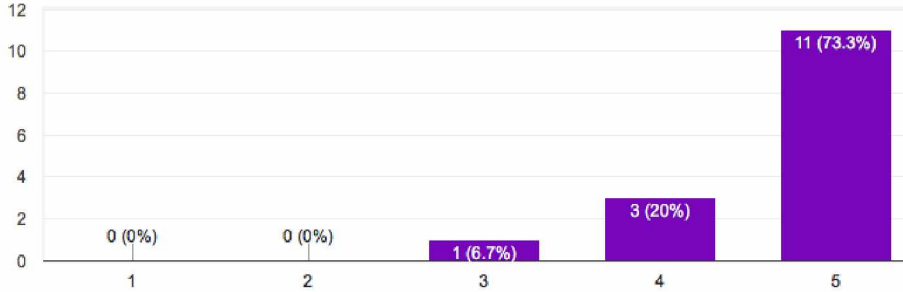


Fig 11: From these responses, I have concluded that 93% of staff members think the presence of cultural values is an important component for our school. 6% of staff members consider it to be mildly important.

Figure 12

I would like an example of how cultural values could be incorporated into our classrooms



15 responses

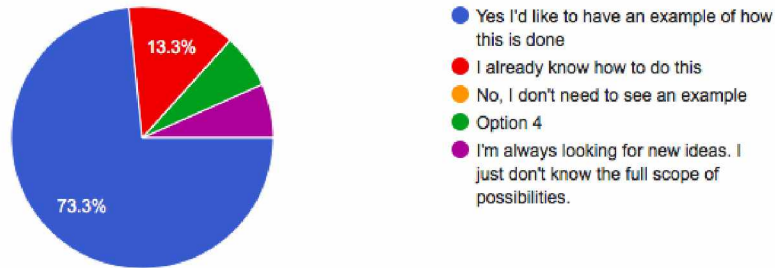


Fig 12: From these responses, I have concluded that 73% of staff members would like more examples of how to include cultural values in the classroom. 13% of staff members said they already know how to do this.

Figure 13

We need new incentive for community involvement in our school



15 responses

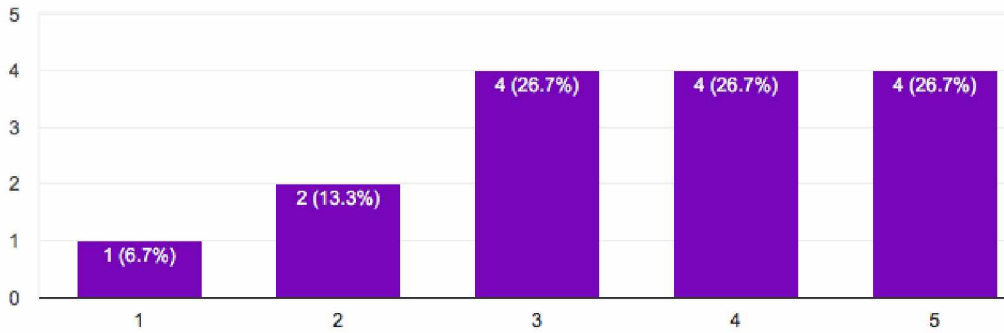


Fig 13: From these responses, I have concluded that 81% of staff members feel we need new incentives for community involvement. 20% of staff members did not feel this was necessary.

Figure 14

I feel comfortable asking community members to share knowledge in my classroom



15 responses

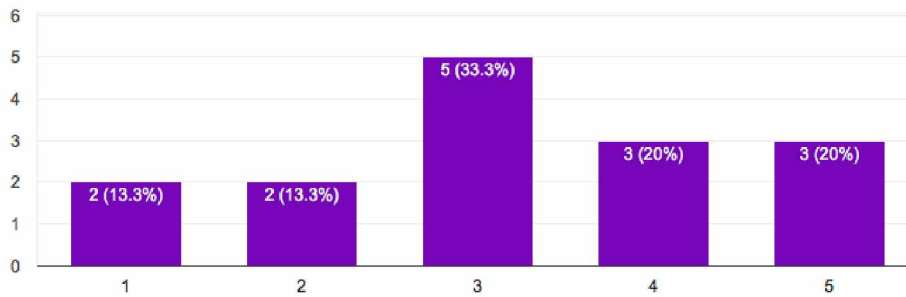


Fig: 14 From these responses, I have concluded that 40% of staff members feel confident in asking community members to share knowledge in their classroom. 33% of staff members feel somewhat comfortable, and 26% of staff did not really feel comfortable asking.

Figure 15

I have taught a culturally relevant lesson to my students this year

15 responses

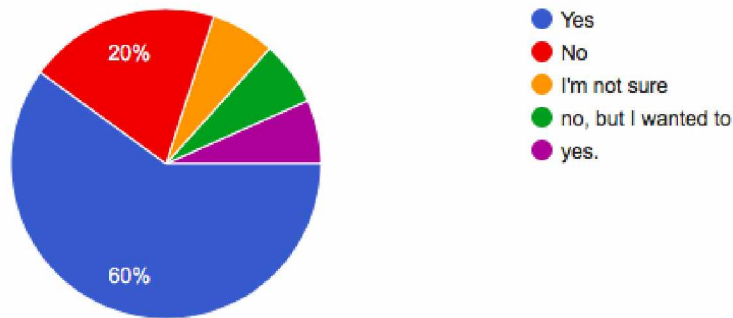


Fig. 15: From these responses, I have concluded that 67% of staff members taught a culturally relevant lesson during the school year of 2016-2017. 5 respondents stated they had not taught a culturally relevant lesson to their students.

Figure 16

Our school staff would benefit from professional development pertaining to cultural values, traditions, practices and resources

15 responses

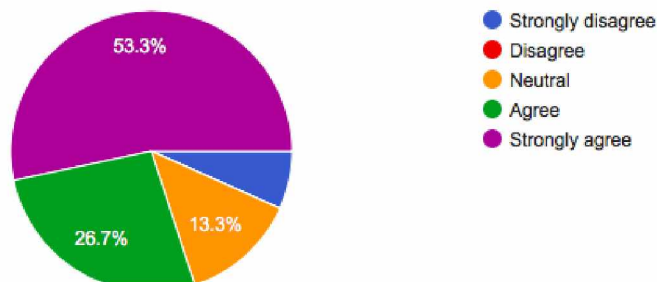


Fig 16: From these responses, I have concluded that 12 out of 15 people agreed that it would be beneficial to have professional development on these topics. 2 staff members felt neutral about this and 1 person strongly disagreed.

Summary and Reflection of Staff Survey Results

In conclusion of the staff survey results, I have realized that the inclusion of cultural values and culturally responsive lessons is important to most staff members. The results of the survey have allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that surround teachers' ability to

include culturally responsive lessons in their teaching. Although teachers find it important to implement cultural values and lessons into their curriculum, this survey concludes that many would like professional development training on how to do so. The lack of knowledge or examples on how to incorporate these lessons is an ongoing problem within our school. Thus, another reason why developing a cultural value curriculum was important to me. The lessons I have created will serve as a unique example of ways we can include cultural lessons in our curriculum. These lessons could be used for any population of Alaska Native students but it is important for staff to recognize that the curriculum lessons I have created were designed to directly relate to Elim's population of students. The lessons can also be modified to meet all age levels with a few tweaks.

I was pleased to find that most staff members would be willing to find new ways to implement culturally responsive lessons in their classrooms. There was also a very positive response to teacher's willingness to learn more about Elim's cultural values. Again, I gather that educators at Aniguiin School would highly benefit from a professional development session with a local knowledge bearer who could help educators to understand the importance of implementing these kinds of lessons into the daily curriculum. Educators could gain a deeper understanding of the kinds of cultural connections they can make from listening to an Elder or community member discuss their own culture. From the survey results I have already concluded that most staff members feel that cultural values are important, however, the lack of knowledge of these values and how to teach them prohibits teachers from taking action in their own classrooms. This was an area of the survey that concerned me the most. Out of 15 respondents, 7 staff members either did not know how or had never tried to make an effort to include culturally relevant material in their classroom. Even more concerning, half of the respondents felt uncertain as to how to make connections to cultural values in their daily teaching. Another large issue recognized from this data is the comfortability of staff to ask community members and Elders to share their knowledge in the classroom. 9 out of 15 respondents expressed that they may not be very comfortable doing so. In fact, 33% of staff members have never asked a community member to share at all. As I began to think about the results of the survey, I started to think about why. Aniguiin School staff seem to think these ideas are important, yet many of the educators are not implementing culturally responsive lessons in their classroom. Many teachers are not utilizing resources from the community or do not know how to go about doing so. This ongoing

problem could relate to the high teacher turnover rate Bering Strait School District experiences each year. The lack of knowledge from educators who move to remote Alaska Native villages do not have the local, cultural knowledge they need to provide their students with these opportunities to learn. This is one of the many reasons why creating a cultural value curriculum is an important addition to our school. By piloting this curriculum in my classroom and making it available to staff members as an example, my hope is that more educators within our school will be motivated to implement culturally responsive lessons. Educators in our school can learn from one another and become more comfortable in teaching culturally responsive lessons or asking community experts for help, if they are able to see it being done by a co-worker. Educators at Aniguiin School have the resources available to them and I have made it known that I am there to help them in this journey.

Parent Survey and Results

The parent survey included 24 responses from families whose children attend Aniguiin School. The survey was given to understand how parents of Anguiin School’s students feel about the sharing of Elim’s cultural values in a school setting. This survey was needed to fully understand how parents view the inclusion of local knowledge in a school setting. The 24 families who responded to this survey account for a large selection in our school that averages about 100 students. Many of the respondents have multiple children in our school.

The survey questions and results are as follows:

Figure 17

Do you think Elim's cultural values should be taught in school?

24 responses

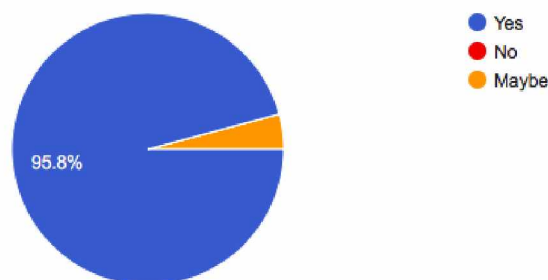


Fig 17: From these responses, I conclude that parents of Aniguiin School’s students feel strongly about the inclusion of cultural values in our school.

Figure 18

What cultural values are most important to you? Check all that apply

24 responses

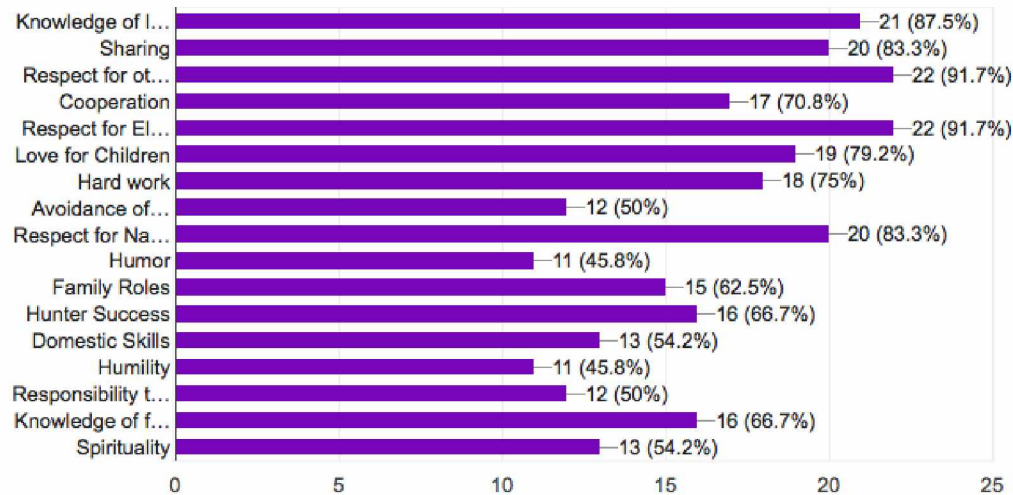


Fig 18: From these responses, I have concluded that out of 17 Iñupiaq and Yup'ik values listed, most families pointed out that all of the values are important. A few families did not consider the values avoidance of conflict, humor, domestic skills, humility and responsibility to tribe to be important.

Figure 19

The presence of cultural values in our school is important to me

24 responses

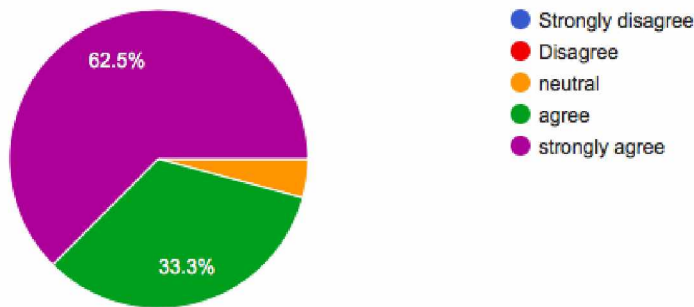


Fig 19: From these responses, I can conclude that about 99% of parents who responded agreed or strongly agreed that the presence of cultural values in our school is important to them.

Figure 20

I would like to see more local knowledge be shared in our school

24 responses

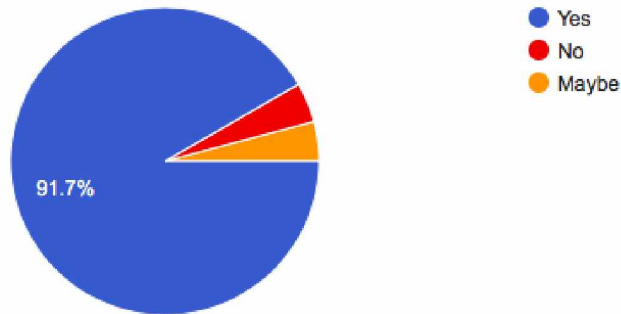


Fig 20: From these responses, I have concluded that the mass majority of our parents want to see more local knowledge being shared in our school.

Figure 21

I have been asked to share knowledge at our school

24 responses

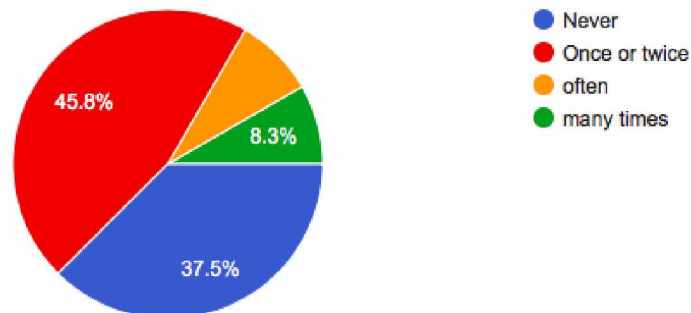


Fig: 21 From these responses, I can conclude that about 38% of parents have never been asked to share knowledge in our school. 46% of parents had been asked to share once or twice and 16% of parents said they have been asked often or many times. Note: I did not ask them within a specific time frame, so one may consider the fact that these responses are grounded in a time period over how many years their children have been attending our school.

Figure 22

How often should cultural values be taught in our school

24 responses

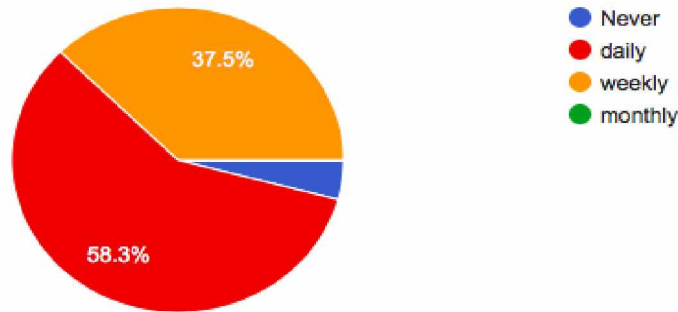


Fig 22: From these responses, I have gathered that 96% of parents believe cultural values should be taught in our school daily or weekly. 38% weekly and 58% daily. A low percentage (4%) of parents thought cultural values should never be taught in the school.

Figure 23

To what extent do you think community members should be involved in school lessons?

24 responses

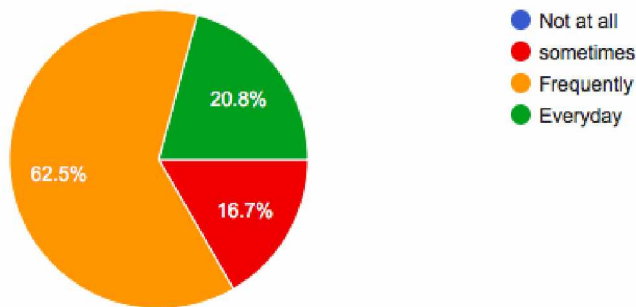


Fig 23: From these responses, I have concluded that every parent who responded to the survey believes community members should be involved in school lessons whether that be sometimes, frequently or every day.

Figure 24

Do you think it is important to include Native ways of knowing into our everyday lesson plans?

24 responses

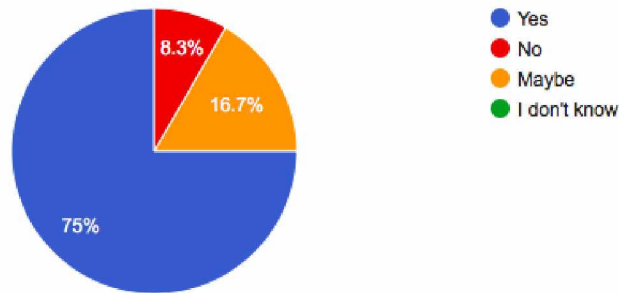


Fig. 24 From these responses, I can conclude that 18 of the respondents think the inclusion of Native ways of knowing in lesson plans is important. 2 of the respondents did not believe this was important and 4 of the respondents thought that maybe this was important.

Figure 25

It is important for the school to include local knowledge in student learning

24 responses

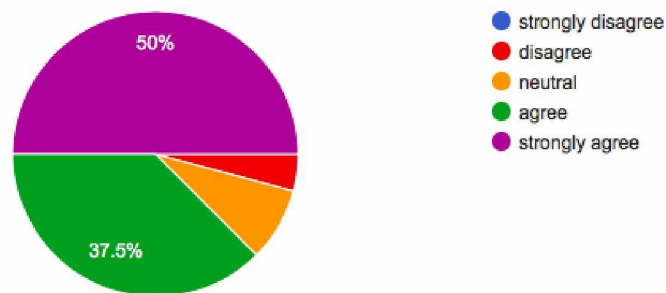


Fig 25: From these responses, I have concluded that 88% of parents strongly agree or agree that including local knowledge in student learning is important. 2 parents were neutral on this topic and 1 disagreed.

Figure 26

Our school would benefit from a new program that includes learning about cultural values

24 responses

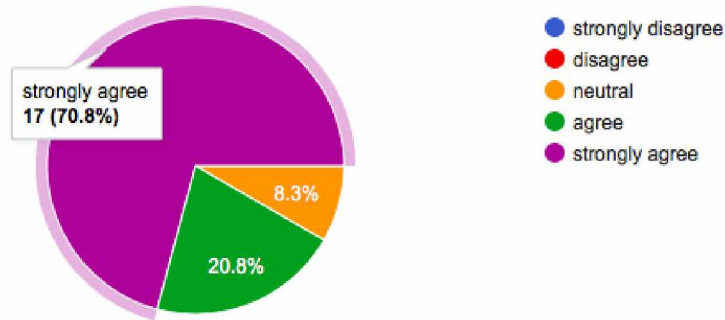


Fig. 26: From these responses, I have concluded that 92% of parents either agree or strongly agree that our school would benefit from a new curriculum program that includes cultural values. 8% of respondents were neutral on this topic.

Figure 27

To what degree do you feel your children are aware of the cultural values of Elim?

24 responses

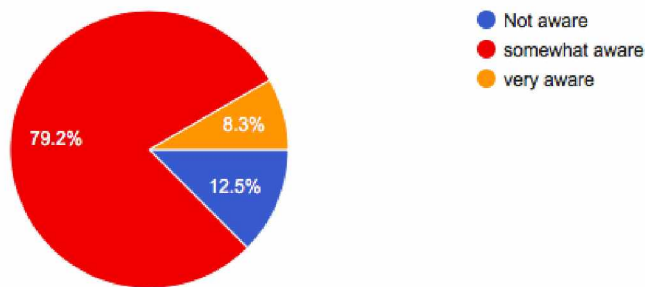


Fig. 27: From these responses, I have concluded that 79% of the families who responded have children that are somewhat aware of their cultural values. 8.3% of children from these families are very aware of their cultural values and 13% of children from these families are not aware of the cultural values in Elim.

Figure 28

I would be willing to share knowledge about cultural values in a school setting

24 responses

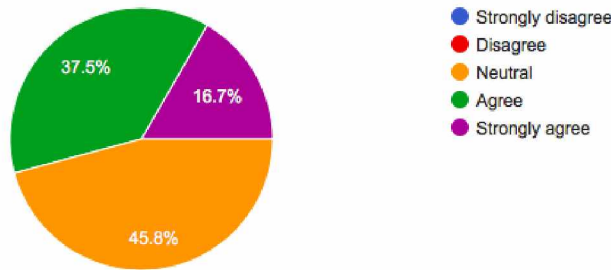


Fig. 28: From these responses, I have gathered that 55% of parents who responded to this survey would be willing to share knowledge of cultural values in a school setting. 45% of parents felt neutral about sharing their knowledge.

Figure 29

I consider my Native heritage to be.....

24 responses

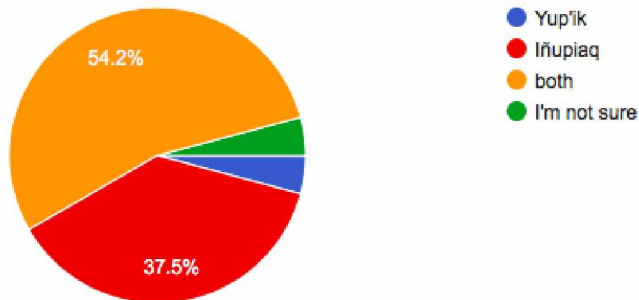


Fig. 29: From these responses, I can conclude that 1 parent/family identified themselves as Yup'ik, 1 parent/family was not sure of their Native heritage, 9 parent/family identified as Iñupiaq and 13 parents or families identified as both Iñupiaq and Yup'ik heritage.

Summary and Reflection of Parent Survey Results

In conclusion to this parent survey, I have realized that a high percentage of parents believe the inclusion of cultural knowledge and cultural values in a school setting is important. As far as the cultural values, the majority of parents who responded believe that both Yup'ik and Iñupiaq values were important for their children to learn. The inclusion of both makes sense in that 54% of families who responded to this survey consider their family to be of both Iñupiaq and Yup'ik decent. The data analyzed from this report helped in the decision to include both Iñupiaq and Yup'ik values in what we call *Elim's Cultural Values*. This data also helped in the decision to include all of these values in the curriculum I have created.

The survey data that was analyzed further exposes the need for change within our current school infrastructure. The need for implementation of cultural knowledge and values is high and the data proves that this is something parents of Elim's children feel strongly carrying out. The high interest in providing daily or weekly inclusion of such lessons has been identified as something we must not ignore. The inclusion of community experts in sharing knowledge during the school day is something that is seriously lacking in our school of 100% Alaska Native students. It is this data that motivated me to start a curriculum within my own Kindergarten classroom in hopes that children would be able to relate to their own immediate world around them. The lessons I have designed promote community inclusion in the learning of our students which is not only important for the sharing of cultural knowledge, but necessary. It is obvious to me as a researcher and educator at Aniguiin School, that parents and community members strive to be involved in more learning than what we are already allowing for. The parents' opinions on sharing cultural knowledge within a school setting prove that inclusion of sharing cultural knowledge and cultural values in a school setting should be at the top of our priorities as educators within this school.

Application

Through the data analysis on the surveys and interviews conducted it became time to apply the knowledge I had gained in a way that is both relevant and necessary for the students and community of Elim. Applying this knowledge in a way that could be useful for educators and ensuring that the use of this knowledge would make an impact, I decided to a cultural value

curriculum to pilot in my own Kindergarten classroom. This cultural value curriculum consists of ten thematic units that directly correlate with the current ELA curriculum in Aniguiin School. These thematic units also align with the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. The majority of the lessons in these units have been created by me and a few lessons were adapted from the North Slope Borough School District Iñupiaq Values Curriculum. Using the NSBSD curriculum as a guide, I was able to create a curriculum molded to the needs of Elim's students that directly related with their world view and culture. I have successfully applied the knowledge from my research into a curriculum that will not only enhance student learning, but promote community interaction and participation weekly. The lessons, which I have been applying since August, are available for staff at Aniguiin School to implement in their own classrooms.

Elim's Cultural Values Unit Outline

Iñupiaq and Yup'ik values to be implemented in the classroom environment starting August of 2017: Cultural Value Units

- Unit 1: Hunter Success: Celebrating subsistence
- Unit 2: Family Roles: Helping one another and domestic skills
- Unit 3: Respect for animals, land and nature
- Unit 4: Hard work
- Unit 5: Respect for Elders/Honoring our Elders
- Unit 6: Cooperation
- Unit 7: Honesty
- Unit 8: Sharing
- Unit 9: Love for children
- Unit 10: Elim's cultural values review

The cultural values identified above are the ten thematic units developed and implemented by me. This ten month process will dedicate each month to one of the core cultural values in Elim. Some of the units will include more than one cultural value, as they are all innately connected. Each month will be comprised of four cultural lessons in which community members and Elders can sign up to be a part of the learning experience. These lessons will be in the Kindergarten classroom only. My hope is that this trial run will promote others within the school to create lessons of their own and invite community experts in their own classrooms. The lesson plans created can be modified for any grade level, so they will be available for staff to utilize at any point during the school year and will serve as a guide to promoting cultural values in their own classrooms. This is my final product.

Table 2: Unit Schedule based on season and cultural values, in line with BSSD scheduling

Month/Unit	Unit/Week	Cultural Value	Who's involved?
August Unit 1	U1 W1	Hunter Success	Elders
	U1 W2	Hunter Success	Community Members
September Unit 2	U2 W1	Family Roles	Family members
	U2 W2	Family Roles	Family members
	U2 W3	Family Roles	Teacher
	U2 W4	Family Roles	Elder
October Unit 3	U3 W1	Respect for land, nature and animals	An Elder or community member
	U3 W2	Respect for land, nature and animals	An Elder or community member
	U3 W3	Respect for land, nature and animals	An active hunter
	U3 W4	Respect for land, nature and animals	Teacher
November Unit 4	U4 W1	Hard work	Elder
	U4 W2	Hard work	Teacher
	U4 W3	Hard work	Community member
	U4 W4	Hard work	Parents
December Unit 5	U5 W1	Respect for Elders	Extra lessons provided
	U5 W2	Respect for Elders	Extra lessons provided
January Unit 6	U6 W1	Cooperation	Elders
	U6 W2	Cooperation	Teacher
	U6 W3	Cooperation	Teacher
	U6 W4	Cooperation	Parents/guardian
February Unit 7	U7 W1	Honesty	Teacher
	U7 W2	Honesty	Elder
	U7 W3	Honesty	Teacher
	U7 W4	Honesty	Teacher
March Unit 8	U8 W1	Sharing	Elder
	U8 W2	Sharing	teacher
	U8 W3	Sharing	Elder
April Unit 9	U9 W1	Love for children	Parents
	U9 W2	Love for children	Elder/teacher
	U9 W3	Love for children	Teacher
	U9 W4	Love for children	Teacher

May Unit 10	U 10 W 1	Review of values	Elder/Teacher
	U 10 W 2	Review of values	Elder/Teacher

Unit Lesson Plans

Unit One: Hunter Success

Unit 1 Week 1

Cultural Value: Hunter Success

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn about and share their knowledge of animals and traditional Inupiaq hunting traditions</i>	<p>C. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>1. assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well-being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 1 “Step into School” Main idea: What happens at school?</p> <p>Cultural value connection: The beginning of the school year runs at the same time as the beginning of subsistence moose hunting. Just as we start a new year of learning, hunters in the community start a new year of hunting. Other connections include, school tools and hunting tools. We learn from the teacher and we watch the teacher. (cutting fish) watch and learn</p> <p>Supporting Standards for all lessons: CC.K.L.5.a sort objects into categories to gain a sense of the concepts the categories represent</p> <p>CC.K.SL. follow agreed-upon rules for discussions e.g. listening and taking turns speaking about topics under discussion</p>

Introduction: Why is hunting important? Why do we celebrate hunter success?

Students will gain a better understanding of the importance of hunting in their community and what hunting provides for families and communities. Inviting an active community hunter into the classroom can provide students with insight as to why hunting is important and why we should value hunting. What would our community look like without hunting? What are the types

of animals we hunt? When we catch an animal what does that mean for our families and our community?

Activity 1: (adapted from North Slope Borough School District (NSBSD) Iñupiaq Values Curriculum)

After a community member or Elder has had a discussion with the class about the cultural value hunter success, students will need to be familiar with the animals that are caught in Elim. You can get pictures of the things that are used to catch the animals such as nets, traps, harpoons and guns and pictures of the animals being hunted in Elim such as beluga, caribou, moose, lynx, wolverine, walrus, seal, salmon, muskox and so on. Each child will get a picture of an animals and they will go on a scavenger hunt around the classroom to find the matching tool used to catch or kill the animal they have. Once everyone has found their match students will sit in a circle and share what they have found. This game can be played again and again by having students switch cards.

Wrap up: Students will be asked to do a drawing of one animal that is important to the community of Elim in their journal. Students will be asked to fill out the following sentence frame in their journal. “Hunting in our community is important because _____.” (Depending on ability, the student may answer the sentence frame orally and the teacher may fill in the blank for them.)

Unit 1 Week 2

Cultural Value: Hunter Success
Created by: Samantha Marchant

Students should have a good understanding about the value of hunter success from the previous week. This lesson will focus more on how important it is to learn by watching someone perform a traditional practice.

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn about and share their knowledge of animals and traditional Iñupiaq hunting traditions</i>	C. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to actively participate in various cultural environments. 1. perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate- ate to local cultural traditions;	See week one

Introduction: Hunting is an important aspect of life in Alaska Native communities. Students will revisit the question of why hunting and subsistence are important components to life in their

community. Students will be asked to do a quick whip-around question such as, “why do we hunt?” “Why do we celebrate hunting success?” Appropriate answers might be. “to provide our families and communities with food.” Or “when we catch something we celebrate because the food will keep us fed all winter long.”

Lesson: (Created by Samantha Marchant)

When we catch something what do we do with it? A part of being a hunter is knowing how to prepare the food we catch so that it can be stored and eaten all winter long. Many students will have already seen their parents or grandparents prepare food they have caught. Because it is fishing season, ask a parent to come into your classroom with a few fish. (you will have to prepare this ahead of time to be sure that someone will have fish) For this classroom activity I will be asking a local woman to come and show how she cuts fish with her traditional cutting knife, the ulu. Have students gather round as your visitor explains how they caught the fish, what they will do to the fish and why they are cutting it this particular way. The traditional way of learning for Iñupiaq children was to watch their parents or Elders. (In older classrooms, this activity could be modified to have children cut their own fish)

Wrap up: Have children draw a picture of what they witnessed during the fish cutting lesson. Walk around the room and discuss this with students to verify their learning experience.

Unit Two: Family Roles

Unit 2 Week 1

Cultural Value: Family roles

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn more about their families and gain a deeper appreciation for the network of relatives that are there to support them along the way.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.</p> <p>2. recount their own genealogy and family history;</p> <p>D. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.</p> <p>1. acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 2 “My Family and Me” Main idea: What do families do together. Cultural connection: Our families play intricate roles in our lives. Our families do things together, help one another and care for one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standards for all lessons:</p> <p>CC.K.W.8 with guidance and support from adults, recall information and experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer questions</p>

	<p>demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognize and build upon the inter-relationships that exist among the spiritual, natural and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others; 	<p>CC.K.W.3 use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to narrate a single event, tell about the events in order in which they occur</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places and things, and events and with prompting and support, provide additional detail</p>
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Introduction: Why are families important? Every student in your classroom has a family unit that surrounds their everyday life. Explain to students that families take care of one another and that being a part of a family means you have people that love and care for you.

Lesson: Who is in a family?

1. Read a family story
2. Make a list of the possible family members you could have. Be sensitive to the fact that each child’s family unit may not look the same. For this lesson students will draw a family picture and complete a family tree. To make this lesson easier, you may need to contact parents and ask them for information about their family tree or invite them in for the lesson so that they may be a part of helping their child with this project. A drawing of a family portrait would also work fine for this project. Parents could be invited in to join their students in drawing a family portrait while explaining to their child/ren the roles in which each of them carries in the family.

Wrap up: Students will share the picture of their family and the family tree or portrait that they filled in. Students may share an idea of why their family is important to them.

Unit 2 Week 2

Cultural Value: Family Roles

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn more about their families and gain a deeper appreciation for the network of relatives that are there to support them along</i>	<p>D. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and 	See week one

<i>the way.</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">meaningful interaction with Elders</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognize and build upon the inter-relationships that exist among the spiritual, natural and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others; 	
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Introduction: Each family has traditions that they share with one another. This could be anything from camping together in the summer to eating dinner as a family together each night. Share some example of traditions you have with your own family to start.

Lesson: What traditions does your family have?

Ask a parent or Elder to come into the classroom and share a family tradition with the class. The parent should be able to tell what the tradition is, why they do it and why it is important to their family.

1. Each student will create a page for a classroom book called “family traditions”.
2. Have students create a sentence about their family tradition “In my family we _____.” Then have them draw a picture of this activity
3. Collect the student sentences and drawings and combine them into a classroom book.

Wrap up: Read the classroom book to the entire class and discuss the traditions we have in common and why these traditions are important to carry on.

Unit 2 Week 3

Cultural Value: Family Roles

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn more about their families and gain a deeper appreciation for the network of relatives</i>	<p>D. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquire in-depth cultural knowledge 	See week one

<p><i>that are there to support them along the way.</i></p>	<p>through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <p>1. recognize and build upon the inter-relationships that exist among the spiritual, natural and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others;</p>	
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Introduction: Each family has defined family roles within it. In this lesson students will describe what each member of a family might do to be a part of that family. You might want to give some examples of what your Mom does in your own family or what you do to contribute to your family.

Lesson: Family Roles Game

You will need to make a card with the name of each family member on it. Example, Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother, Auntie, Uncle, Grandma, Grandpa

Have students take turn picking cards out of a hat and name something that the person they chose does for their family. Have a discussion about each one naming the roles that that family member plays. (again, be sensitive to the fact that not every family unit will be the same)

Example: Mom usually makes dinner for the family or Dad goes hunting for our family. It could be the case where family members share roles as well.

Wrap up: Now that we have learned what our family roles are we need to talk about what your role is. What do you do for your family? Have students find a partner and share what they do for their family.

Unit 2 Week 4

Cultural Value: Family Roles

Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
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<p><i>Students will learn more about their families and gain a deeper appreciation for the network of relatives that are there to support them along the way.</i></p>	<p>D. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognize and build upon the inter-relationships that exist among the spiritual, natural and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others; 	<p>See week one</p>
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Introduction: Families take care of one another. Did you ever notice that when you are feeling sad or when you get hurt that you have someone there to take care of you? Usually your Mom or your Dad are there to help you get through tough times. Sometimes we have an older sibling like a brother or sister that could help out. Sometimes we even have Aunties or Uncles who are there to care for us as well. Being a part of a family means that you care for one another.

Lesson: How do families take care of one another?

For this lesson, you will need to invite a local Elder or community member to your classroom to discuss the love and care that a family possesses. Ask the Elder or community member to bring in pictures of their family members and explain how they help one another. The Elder or community member should be able to express how important family is in their life and how thankful they are that they have family there to support them.

Wrap up: Each student will then complete a self-portrait entitled “Quyanaq Family” (thank you family) They can choose to have their picture taken or to draw a picture of themselves. Each child will then contribute one sentence as to what they are thankful their family does for them. Example. “Quyanaq family for taking care of me.” “Quyanaq family for giving me food to eat.”

Unit Three: Respect for Land, Nature and Animals

Unit 3 Week 1

Cultural Value: Respect for land, nature and animals
Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn why we respect the land we live on and describe aspects of the land we are grateful for</i></p> <p><i>Example: The tundra provides us with berries. I am grateful for berries that feed me all winter long.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>4. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>6. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 2: “Visit the Farm” Main idea: How are animals different</p> <p>Cultural value connection: Different animals live on different parts of our land. The kinds of animals we are learning about in school are not in Elim but we can still explore how we respect animals and the land they live on in Elim. Along with learning about farm animals we can explore animals in our part of the world as well as how we use them and why.</p> <p>Supporting Standard for all lessons: CC.K.W.8 with guidance and support from adults, recall information and experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer questions</p> <p>CC.K.W.3 use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to narrate a single event, tell about the events in order in which they occur</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places and things, and events and with prompting and support, provide additional detail</p>

Introduction: Everyone in the world should be aware that taking care of our environment will lead to a healthier world for all. Students in these lessons will make connections with the world around them (locally) to fully understand why we need to take care of our land and respect it.

Questions to consider might be: What does this land offer to me? How should I take care of it in return? What will happen if I do not respect the land that was given to me? What will it look like years from now if people continue to disrespect it? How can we teach others to respect our land?

Lesson: Showing we are grateful

In this lesson, students will walk around the village of Elim exploring the many advantages of nature that provide us with food, water and protection against the elements. As we walk students will get in depth conversation from an Elder or community member about why these specific aspects of nature are important to us and how we can use them. Students will hear the word grateful and gain an understanding that we are thankful for certain aspects of nature that are given to us. After our field trip students will be asked to draw a picture of an aspect of the land in Elim that they are grateful for. These pictures will be a part of the classroom bulletin board for the cultural value: respect for land, nature and animals

Wrap Up: During a group discussion students will be able to offer their ideas about why we should respect the land around us. Answers to look for: “because it offers us so much” “because it takes care of us” “because we need it” “because without it we would not have anything”

Unit 3 Week 2

Cultural Value: Respect for land, nature and animals
Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn about the rivers that surround the village of Elim, what the rivers provide for our community and how they are used.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>5. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>7. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	See week one

Introduction: Why is it important to have knowledge of our land and our rivers? This question will guide the lesson brought to students by a community member or Elder who is familiar with the rivers that surround the village.

Lesson: Students will look at a map of the tundra that surrounds Elim with a community member or Elder who is familiar with the land. This guest speaker will do a short summary of why we use the rivers in and around Elim and why it is important to know the land and river systems well. Throughout the discussion is important to remind students that one of the reasons we respect nature, land and rivers so much is because it provides us with so much. After the discussion students will draw a picture of one of the rivers in or around Elim that villagers frequent. At a K level students will need multiple examples and modeling of how to draw a river.

Wrap up: Students will share the picture they have drawn with the class and offer one sentence that references their understanding of why knowing what rivers provide is important or why knowing the land and river system is important.

Unit 3 Week 3

Cultural Value: Respect for land, nature and animals
 Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn how to give respect for animals</i>	A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community 6. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment; 8. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.	See week one

Introduction: For this lesson, you will need to find an avid hunter to help explain the ways in which community members who hunt give respect for the animals they kill. Students in this lesson will learn that animals provide food and hides for specific purposes. When we kill an animal we use as much of that animal as possible and be sure not to waste what we have killed. In this lesson students will understand that we do not kill animals for fun, but instead we kill them for a purpose.

Lesson: Using pictures of beluga killed in the past (note: teachers will need to find photos either from online or from local community members or teachers who have been around for a while) the teacher will display these photos on a large screen so that the classroom guest can easily explain how they use each part of the beluga for a purpose. Students who participate in this lesson will gain a better understanding of why it is important not to waste what we kill and that

we can use many parts of an animal for a purpose. By doing these things we are showing respect for the animals we kill.

Wrap up: Students will use dramatic play to put away a pretend beluga in the classroom. Teachers will need a large white paper that they can cut a beluga out of. Students will take turns cutting this beluga into pieces following the lines drawn for them that directly mimic the lines used to cut a real beluga carcass. Students will take turns explaining what they would use the meat for (share it, eat it, put it away etc.) Each student will have a turn to cut a slice of the pretend beluga.

Unit 3 week 4

Cultural Value: Respect for land, nature and animals
Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn ways in which we can protect our land and water from pollution.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>7. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>9. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	See week one

Introduction: By now students should have a rather good understanding of why respecting and taking care of our land/water/animals/air is important. In this lesson students will work with the teacher to decide if some of the things we have seen in nature truly belong there and what we can do to prevent things like this from happening in the future.

Lesson: Using a graphing chart and premade photos of objects and aspects of nature, students will decide if these photos belong in nature or not. Many of us have seen fishing line and nails out on the tundra near our water and we know it does not belong there. Have a discussion with students about what they can do to prevent these objects from having a permanent home on the land or in the water. (trash pickup, reminding those we are with out on the land to pick up after themselves) By the end of the lesson students will have a great understanding of what truly belongs on the land/water and what needs to be put in its correct place.

Pictures of things that belong in nature might include: Trees, water, berries, plants, birds, insects, fish, rocks, twigs, willows

Pictures of things that do not belong on the land might include: fishing line, tarps, nails, trash, glass, nets, empty cans, oil, boat parts (all things they might see on the beaches or land locally)

Wrap up: Students will draw a picture of something that belongs in nature and something that does not. They will share with the class when finished.

Unit Four: Hard Work

Unit 4 Week 1

Cultural Value: Hard work

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that hard work makes us who we are. Students will gain an understanding that hard work is a part of everyday life.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>2. assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well-being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 4: “All kinds of plants” Main idea: How are plants alike and different</p> <p>Cultural value connection: In our unit on plants we will be learning all of the hard work involved in planting a garden, tending to plants, processing the plants we grow and what we do to make them grow. Students can make the connection that growing plants is hard work and can relate to this by doing the below lessons with examples of hard work from their own lives.</p> <p>Supporting Standards for all lessons: CC.K.W.8 with guidance and support from adults, recall information and experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer questions</p> <p>CC.K.W.3 use a combination of drawing, dictating and writing to narrate a single event, tell about the events in order in which they occur</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places and things, and events and with prompting and support, provide additional detail</p>

Introduction: Working hard is not something that we can learn from others. Working hard is something we must learn how to do ourselves. We can only know the true meaning of hard work when we accomplish everyday tasks both in the community and at school. Hard work can mean many things. Can you think of something we do in our community or school that is hard work?

Lesson: Have an Elder come in your classroom and tell a traditional story about working hard. Many of our Elders can share things that they have done in the past to provide for their families and community members. Elders can offer stories about gathering food or preparing food for winter; fish, berries, plants, as well as hunting to provide food for the long winter ahead.

Wrap up: Students will create a poster of the ways in which they too can work hard to contribute to the community or to their families. Questions to ask students may include:

1. How can you work hard for your family in the summer?
2. Who do you know in your family that accomplished hard work? What do they do?

Students can draw or paint pictures of what hard work looks like for our classroom poster.

Unit 4 Week 2

Cultural Value: Hard work

Created by: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn what hard work looks like and what the results of hard work are.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member 6. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior. 	<p>See week one</p>

Introduction: During this lesson, we discussed many ways in which we can work hard in our community to provide for our families and community members. We do hard work because it makes us grow as people and helps us value what we need to survive. Hard work shows that we care about ourselves and others.

Lesson: Hard work and berry picking

Many of us have picked berries with our families. Picking berries is hard work. Why do we pick berries and how does this hard work help us? Students will go around the classroom picking berries (pretend berries since we are not in the berry picking season). Scatter paper berries all around the classroom and have students collect them in baggies. Show pictures of actual berry picking and videos of other kinds of berry picking as well for visuals.

Wrap up: Students will reflect upon their hard work discussing their experiences in a sharing circle. How did you feel while you work hard at work? Do you feel proud of what you accomplished? Each student will get a chance to share about their experiences.

Unit 4 Week 3

Cultural Value: Hard Work

Created By: Samantha Marchant

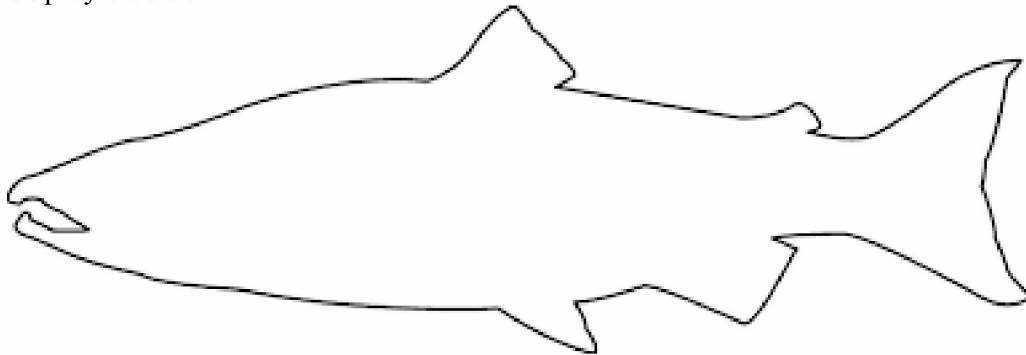
Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn that hard work teaches love and patience.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member 6. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior. 	See week one

Introduction: Sometimes people do not want to do hard work. Why do you think this is? When you do hard work, you show others that you care for yourself and your family. It shows that no matter how hard it is you do it because you do not want to give up. Hard work takes patience and love.

Lesson: Cutting and hanging fish (dramatic play activity)

Students will watch a short video on how people in their community and surrounding communities work hard to prepare the food they have caught. When you catch a fish, you have to have patience because once you catch it the hard work comes after. Cutting and hanging fish to dry is hard work because it takes time. Students will do an art project that mimics the act of fish cutting and hanging fish to dry.

You will need: A makeshift fish drying rack (one pole) an outline of a fish that has been cut to hang (typically two sides of the fish connected at the tail end) A picture of the outline is on display below:



Students will color and cut out the fish. Students will use black crayon to pepper the fish tail before hanging the fish on the makeshift fish wrack in your classroom. (putting pepper on fish tails can prevent flies from laying eggs on their hard work). Students will hang the fish on the fish wrack “check on” or “flip” their fish daily until it is dried.

Wrap up: In a talking circle the teacher may ask the students if they have ever seen their parents or relatives do this activity in real life. Students will get a chance to discuss how this hard work makes them feel and why it is important to them.

Unit 4 Week 4

Cultural Value: Hard Work

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards

<p><i>Students will learn that working hard is an everyday life activity. Hard work is something we do for our entire lives.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>1. assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p> <p>6. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>See week one</p>
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Introduction: Reflect on the lessons from previous weeks. Discuss the meaning of hard work once more for children to think about. Allow students to turn and talk with a partner about something they do to work hard for their school, their community or their family. Regroup and ask students share what their partners said to them.

Lesson: We do hard work every day in many ways. Hard work is something we will do our entire lives to survive and provide. What will you do in the future that represents hard work? Will you hunt for your family? Will you fish for your family? Will you pick berries for your family?

Activity: Students will be provided with watercolor paper and watercolor paints. Explain to students that they will be painting a picture of something they plan to do for their families as they get older. Hard work shows that we care about ourselves and our families. You can give multiple examples of what students can paint and show them a painting example of your own if you wish. The end result should be a picture of the student doing hard work in a way that will provide or care for themselves or family.

Wrap up: Students will share in whole group what they painted and why they painted it.

Unit Five: Respect for Elders

Unit 5 Week 1

Cultural Value: Respect for Elders/Honoring our Elders

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn what the term Elder means and what respecting our</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 2: “Wind, rain and snow” Main idea: What happens in each</p>

<p><i>Elders means through real life example</i></p>	<p>1.assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p> <p>4.practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>5.reflect through their own actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them;</p> <p>6.live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>season</p> <p>Cultural value connection: Our Elders are very knowledgeable about the world around us. During the course of this unit we will be learning about weather and in order for students to make deeper connections they need to make real life connections that pertain to the weather around them. Students can learn more about the weather and other knowledge by respecting Elders and learning from their stories.</p> <p>Supporting Standards for all lessons: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>
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Introduction: What is an Elder and why should we respect them?

According to the Elim community, an Elder is anyone in the community who is 55 years of age or older. Our Elders are the people in our community or families that have knowledge. Our Elders are the ones who teach us all the things we need to know in life. Our Elders are our leaders and our foundation for life. Respecting our Elders means that we listen to them and take turns talking when they try and teach us lessons. Showing respect could be done in many ways. Sometimes showing respect means helping our Elders with tasks or sharing food with our Elders.

Lesson: Showing respect to Elders

Invite a local Elder to come into your classroom to tell a cultural story. Since we are learning about the weather, it would be nice to hear a story about weather. Before the Elder comes into your classroom you must prep the children to really understand how they will be respecting the Elder that comes to visit. Students may have different jobs when that Elder comes into the room. For example, assign students the role of taking the Elders jacket when they come in, escorting the Elder to a chair, getting the Elder a glass of water before story time or by giving the Elder welcoming messages when they arrive. One the Elder is in the classroom, students should

already be aware that while the Elder is telling the story listening is key. When the Elder is done talking students should be prompted to ask questions about the story and listen to why this story is important. Helping the Elder when the storytelling session is over and thanking them for their time is also very important.

Wrap up: In a sharing circle ask students to share with you one way that they can respect an Elder when they are teaching us something. Appropriate student responses might be

- We listen to our Elders
- We help our Elders
- We take care of our Elders
- We thank our Elders
- We answer questions to our Elders

Unit 5 Week 2

Cultural Value: Respect for Elders/Honoring our Elders

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn what it means to be a leader</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>1.assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p> <p>4.practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p>	See week one

Introduction: A leader is someone who helps guide people in life. Give many examples of leaders:

- Teacher, why is a teacher a leader?
- President, why is the president a leader?
- Elder, why is an Elder a leader?

Revisit the lesson on respect from last week. We also respect our Elders because they are leaders. Elders show leadership by passing on the traditions of the past. Without our Elders, we may not know how to do many things in our village. An Elder is a leader because they show us the old ways of life and remind us of who we are.

Lesson: Following our leaders (10 min)

For this lesson, it will require that students get into groups of about three or four. Each group will take turn being the leader of that group. The leader will be in charge of the activity at that table and will be in charge of teaching the group that activity. Each group will have the same exact activity. For younger grade levels such as Kindergarten, an adult to help at each table would be ideal.

Activity: Each table will have a few simple items on it. The leader of the group (take turns) will have to choose a picture and explain what they see to the rest of the group and any information that they know about that picture.

The pictures at the table are of: rain, snow, sunny weather and windy weather
 Each student at the table will get a chance to lead out on a picture. If a student chooses the rain picture it would be their job to explain to the students what rainy weather is and any other information they can tell about rain (what to wear, what happens to the ground etc.)

Wrap up: in a sharing circle ask students to answer various questions
 How did it feel when the people in your group did not listen to you? How did it feel when they did? When you are a leader, do you feel proud of yourself? Someday when you are an Elder you will get to lead young people and teach them all your knowledge.

Unit 5 Week 3

Cultural Value: Respect for Elders/Honoring our Elders

Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Value Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that Elders can teach us many things including hunting, fishing, subsistence activities, language, dance, history, legend and traditions,</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member 4.practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment; 5.reflect through their own actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them; 6.live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior. 	<p>See week one</p>

Introduction: Ask students if they have ever been taught something by an Elder. Remind students that it could be something simple like how to do the dishes or something harder like how to fish. Give students numerous examples of things that Elders can teach us.

Lesson: What the Elders have taught us

Each student will draw a picture of an activity that they learned how to do from an Elder in their community or family. Students can have their picture taken and stapled onto the description of their drawing. Students may write their own description using a sentence frame like _____ taught me _____. Or depending on ability, the teacher can take the information from the student orally and write down the description for them.

Wrap up:

When everyone is done with their drawings, students can do a show and tell of their pictures and share what they have learned from an Elder.

***An add on to this activity might be to have the Elders come in the next day to do a walk-through of the drawings that the children have completed. Students may even want to do another show and tell of their drawings for the Elders.

Unit 5 Week 4

Cultural Value: Respect for Elders/Honoring our Elders

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will revisit the term respect and learn about ways they can show respect to Elders in their family or community</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>1.assume responsibility for their role in relation to the well- being of the cultural community and their life-long obligations as a community member</p> <p>4.practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>5.reflect through their own actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them;</p>	<p>See week one</p>

Introduction: As a member of this community, you have a personal responsibility to take care of your Elders. When you are young, your Elders will teach you many things. Your Elders may provide you with the skills you need to be a successful hunter or fisherman. An Elder may provide you with information about the weather and climate so that you can be safe while out in the country. They may provide you with the ability to share stories of the past that you can tell your own children one day. But what happens when our Elders get older and older? Who will take care of them? You will! As you get older you will begin to show respect for your Elders more and more and to do this you will need to help them with many things.

Lesson: How will we show respect for our Elders?

By now students should have a pretty great understanding of what this question means. For this activity students will make a class poster with multiple examples of how we can help Elders around the community. Students will make a promise heart that requires them to think of one thing they will do in the future to honor and respect their Elders. You will need heart shaped cutouts, markers, pencils, crayons and a scissors. The heart should be labeled, “I Promise” and students can come up with their own promise. Some examples might be,

- I promise to share caribou with my Elders
- I promise to listen when Elders talk to me

Students can finish the project by drawing a picture to go along with their promise. These promise hearts are great for display in your classroom, hallway or local community.

Wrap up: Why did we make promise hearts? Ask students to share in a circle why their promise is important.

Unit Six: Cooperation

Unit 6 Week 1

Cultural Value: Cooperation

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn what cooperation means and what cooperation looks like.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>8. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>10. live a life in accordance with the cultural values</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 6: “It’s our town” Main idea: How are communities different? Cultural value connection: communities may be different but in all communities, we have to work together and support one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standards for all lessons: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with</p>

	<p>and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>
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Introduction: Students will be learning about the communities they live in. Students will also be making the connection that there are many people who share this community with them. The main idea of this lesson will be: How do people in our community cooperate with one another?

Lesson: For this lesson, you will need multiple learning stations in the classroom providing small group work for about 3-4 students at a time. Each group will have an activity that forces students to cooperate with one another. All of the activities pertain to some form of community cooperation. For this activity invite in 2-3 community Elders to sit at the workstations with the students and help them cooperate with one another. I have 11 students in my classroom, therefore I will have three workstations each with an adult present.

Activities to prepare:

Workstation 1 activity: catching, cutting and hanging fish: Students will use tongs to grab paper fish out of a tub, (full pieces of paper with a fish cut outline) (pretending it's the water and they are fishing) students will work together to gather all the fish on the table. Students will then have to cut the fish outline on the paper (maybe 8 fish total) Students will then have to fold their fish in half and hang it on the makeshift hanging wrack (a string line you will have to hang somewhere near the workstation)

Workstation 2 activity: Building a house: will require Lincoln logs or blocks. Students will first come up with a plan of what they want their house to look like with help from an adult or Elder. Students will then have to work together to build the house using blocks or Lincoln logs.

Workstation 3 activity: Making a meal together: Each student will have a different ingredient to cut out for making a pizza at home for dinner. In a group of four, one student will color in a large round circle with red for the sauce, another student will glue on the (premade) cut up pieces of yellow cheese to glue onto the pretend pizza. Another student will color and cut out the pepperonis to add on the pizza and the final student will color and cut out the sausages to add on t the pizza. Students will all be working at the same time and may have to wait for other students to be finishing up their work before they can add to the pizza (cooperating together). Note: You can either have students pretend to make a modern meal, or a meal from their culture such as agootuk or caribou stew.

Wrap up: Students go in the gym together and play a game together. Students must use one another to make a tunnel that goes all the way across the gym to the other side. They have to work together by cooperating with one another in an orderly fashion. Students stand facing one another with their hands up in the air touching the person's hands across from them forming a

tunnel that goes through the middle of all the students in line. The students in the front of the line go through the tunnel and reconnect at the end of the tunnel by rejoining the line, each pair of students that goes through will make the tunnel move slowly across the gym until they reach the end.

Unit 6 Week 2

Cultural Value: Cooperation

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that cooperation means no one is left out.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>9. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>11. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 6: “It’s our town” Main idea: How are communities different? Cultural value connection: communities may be different but in all communities, we have to work together and support one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Review the word cooperation with students. Lead a discussion in which you explain that we cooperate with others every single day in our lives. We even cooperate when we are having fun. Explain to students that they will be making something together today and they will have to work hard with one another to complete their activity.

Lesson: It’s winter time and students will use what they have plenty of, SNOW! In this lesson students will have to work together to build a snowman. A simple and fun activity that allows students to work as a team to complete. Explain to students that no one will be left out and everyone will be actively involved in making the snowman. All you have to do is explain the process of building a snowman (three round balls, stacking the balls and then decorating the

snowman) Teachers will have to distribute the pieces for the eyes, nose, mouth and scarf at the end.

Wrap up; After the snowman is finished, bring students in for hot chocolate and a discussion. What would happen if we did not cooperate with one another outside? How would you feel if you were left out of that activity? Check for understanding by questioning students about cooperation.

Unit 6 Week 3

Cultural Value: Cooperation

Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that cooperation means working together.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>10. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>12. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 6: “It’s our town” Main idea: How are communities different? Cultural value connection: communities may be different but in all communities, we have to work together and support one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Have you ever tried to do something and could not do it because you needed a person to help you? When someone helps you do something that is hard for you, it’s called cooperation. Cooperation means we work together to get something done.

Lesson: In this lesson, you can either take kids outside or in the gym. For this lesson, you will need something very heavy that slides or can be carried, some ropes to tie to that heavy something and a good speech about safety. Students in this lesson will work together to pull a heavy object across the gym or across the land outside. If it is winter time, students may pull a very heavy sled using ropes across the snow. If you do it inside, students may pull a very heavy cart across the gym. They might also try to carry something heavy together or in groups across

the gym. Have the students try to do it by themselves first to recognize they cannot do it alone. The goal for this activity is for students to work together to complete the task.

Wrap up: After the lesson have students describe what they experienced in the lesson. How did they feel, how did they work together, what would happen if just one person tried to do this alone? This reflection session will give you a great idea of student understanding about cooperation.

Unit 6 Week 4

Cultural Value: Cooperation

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that cooperation means helping our home and community.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>11. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>13. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 6: “It’s our town” Main idea: How are communities different? Cultural value connection: communities may be different but in all communities, we have to work together and support one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Review the word cooperation with our students. Have a brief discussion about ways in which we cooperate with one another in our community. Make a list of the different answers you get.

Lesson: Invite parents to come into the classroom to help their students think of something they do every day that contributes to their family or community. Parents will have to help their child

draw a picture of something they do to help at home or in the community. Together they will write a sentence about how they help.

Wrap up: Students and parents will present their ideas to the classroom audience.

Unit Seven: Honesty

Unit 7 Week 1

Cultural Value: Honesty

Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn what the word honesty means.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>12. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>14. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 6: “On the Job” Main idea: What jobs can people do?</p> <p>Cultural value connection: There are many different jobs in our community and with each job there is a very important thing to remember, honesty. In everything we do, we always have to remember to be honest so that we can all continue to work together and trust one another.</p> <p>Supporting Standard for all lessons:</p> <p>CC.K.L.4.a Identify new meanings for familiar words and apply them accurately.</p> <p>CC.K.L.5.c Identify real-life connections between words and their use</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups.</p>

Introduction: What is honesty? Make a list of the answers that students give you and keep it to compare with the end of this unit and their answers. Have a discussion with students about honesty and watch the YouTube video (song) All about honesty.

Lesson: After watching the video and song about honesty, play a scenario game with your students and practice being honest. Explain that sometimes being honest is scary because sometimes we think that we will get in trouble for doing something we did not mean to. For this activity, you will need one premade scenario card for each student. In Kindergarten, they will have pictures. For example, one of my students might have a card with a broken vase on it. Another student may have a picture of someone stealing a toy. Each student will come forward with their card in this game. You can make it fun by being enthusiastic about each student's card "uh oh, Peter broke a vase! What will he do?" It's up to the student to decide what they will do about the card they have. Teachers should be looking for students to come forward using language to explain the truth to them. Example "I'm sorry for breaking your vase." Do several examples with students before you play the game.

Wrap up: Does it feel better to tell the truth or to lie? How does being honest make you feel?

Unit 7 Week 2

Cultural Value: Honesty

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn what it feels like to have a person be dishonest with them.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>13. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>15. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	See week one

Introduction: In a whole group discussion review the word honesty with students. Talk to them about what it would be like if a person was not honest with them. How would that make them feel? The reason we are honest is because it makes us have great relationships with others and it shows we respect one another. Review the word respect from previous unit if need be.

Lesson: Invite an Elder into your classroom to share a story of a time someone was dishonest with them. This lesson will include a real-life story of something that happened to the Elder so you will have to ask them ahead of time to think of a story they want to tell. This story will also

have to be age appropriate. By having an Elder explain how it feels to have someone be dishonest with them, students should also gain an understanding of what this feels like. Maybe students have stories to tell in relation to the Elders stories. Allow for a question or commenting time during this storytelling session. The Elder should be able to express how important the cultural value of honesty is. Most people in the community of Elim feel very strongly about the value of honesty and trust.

Wrap up: have students draw a picture of an emotion they might feel if someone lied to them or was dishonest with them.

Unit 7 Week 3

Cultural Value: Honesty

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will understand that being honest makes people trust us. Students will learn what the word trust means.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>14. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>16. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>See week one</p>

Introduction: In a whole group discuss the word trust with your students. What does it mean to trust someone? If someone lied to you all the time would you trust them? Explain to students that trust means believing in a person. If you tell someone a secret you would want to trust them, right? You would want to believe that they can keep that secret. If you give someone a toy to borrow, you would trust them to take care of it right? We feel better when we are with the people we trust the most.

Lesson: For this lesson students will play a trust game with their teacher. You can use a mat in the gym for this activity. This game is called, who do you trust? After showing the students an example of the game using another adult to help you out, students can then choose someone they trust to try the activity with. First find another adult who is willing to help. Stand in front of them with your back to them. When the person behind you says, “you can trust me” you will free fall into their arms trusting that they will catch you. It is important to remind students that we need to

stay safe in this game and that anyone who drops a person on purpose will not be permitted to play. This game is to show that we are all friends and can all trust one another. Have one pair of students play at a time with the rest of the class watching on the sidelines. Students can pick their own partners and ask, “can I trust you?”

Wrap up: How did you feel before your partner caught you? Were you scared or afraid to trust them? What if your partner decided not to catch you? How would that make you feel. Students should gain an understanding of what it looks like and feels like to trust another person.

Unit 7 Week 4

Cultural Value: Honesty

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn the consequences and benefits of being honest or dishonest.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>15. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>17. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	See week one

Introduction: Make a chart for students to look at while you make a list of consequences and benefits of being honest or dishonest. One side should say Not honest and the other would say honest. If you are not honest one consequence would be that people would not trust you. Another might be that people would not want to be your friend. One benefit would be that people would trust you or that people would think you are a good person. See how many students can come up with.

Lesson: Why do you want to be an honest person? Students will come up with an idea about why they want to be an honest person or a trusting person. Some student answers might be “so I can have a lot of friends” or “so people think I’m a good person” and so on. Have students draw a picture that represents their answer. This lesson is best done in small groups of 3 to 4 students for a deeper understanding and reflection. A student who responds with “I want to be honest so I can have many friends,” might draw a picture of them with many friends. A person who responds with an answer like “I want to be honest because it makes me happy,” might draw a picture of themselves in a happy mood.

Wrap up: Combine student’s drawings into a classroom book and show off the work during an end of lesson story. Read the students their responses in a whole group and allow for student discussion.

Unit Eight: Sharing

Unit 8 Week 1

Cultural Value: Sharing

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn what it means to share in our community.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>16. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>18. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 8: What is in the sky?</p> <p>Main idea: Exploring the sun, moon, stars and weather</p> <p>Cultural connections: We are all sharing the world around us. We can share in many different ways. Just as the sun shares its light with us and the weather shares its elements, we too can share what is important with our friends, families and communities.</p> <p>Supporting Standards: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Every day of our lives we share in some way or another. Ask the students to come up with examples of ways that we can share either in school, at home or out in the community. Make a list of student's ideas.

Lesson: Invite an Elder in to tell a cultural story about sharing. There are many ways in which people in the community of Elim share. Elders may have stories about subsistence and sharing food that we catch. Encourage students to ask and answer questions during this story time.

Wrap up: Students should draw a picture that goes along with the Elders story. When we are done it can be made into a classroom book. One for our classroom and one to share with the Elder who helped us understand sharing in our community.

Unit 8 Week 2

Cultural Value: Sharing

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<i>Students will learn what it feels like to share.</i>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>17. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>19. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 8:</p> <p>Main idea:</p> <p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Have you ever shared something with someone and felt really good after? This is because sharing with others makes other people happy and in doing that we feel happy too! Can you think of a time when you shared with someone and it made you feel happy to do so because that other person was happy? Allow students some think time.

Lesson: For this lesson students will be making muffins. In small groups allow students to help you make the muffins and explain that when they are done we will be sharing them with the Elders in our community. Why would we want to share these? Why don't we just gobble them up ourselves and not share with anyone? These questions will get students thinking about why it is important to share with others and how that makes us feel.

Wrap up: After muffins are baked (you might have to do this at separate times during the day) take your classroom on a field trip to several Elders houses close by and deliver the muffins. When you get back from the field trip ask the students how they felt about sharing.

Unit 8 Week 3

Cultural Value: Sharing

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that by sharing with others we are helping our community.</i></p>	<p>A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community</p> <p>18. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;</p> <p>20. live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 8:</p> <p>Main idea:</p> <p>Supporting Standards:</p> <p>CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Invite a community member or Elder to read a story about sharing in your classroom. There are many resources available that provide cultural connections to student's real lives. Take a look in your school's library to find a cultural story about sharing. There are many to choose from. One of my favorite lessons about sharing is using the children's book *The Eye of the Needle*.

Lesson: After reading *The Eye of the Needle* or any other lesson on sharing book that you have chosen, have a brief discussion about the book’s meaning with your students. Ask questions like, “what will people think of you if you don’t share?” “How would you feel if someone did not share with you.” Review the list of ways in which we can share with one another created in a previous lesson and add to it if you have new ideas.

Wrap up: Students create a classroom poster together and draw pictures of all the things they can share with one another both at school and in the community

Unit Nine: Love for Children

Unit 9 Week 1

Cultural Value: Love for Children

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that there are people in their lives who love and care for them.</i></p>	<p>B. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">2. make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">8. Identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 9: What do we learn at school?</p> <p>Main idea: What have we learned throughout the year? Cultural connection: We have learned many things in school throughout the year. Our parents and family members have been with us along the way, helping us learn and do our homework too. Families care for us and help us grow and learn. Throughout the Kindergarten year we have all loved and cared for you.</p> <p>Supporting Standards: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Have a discussion and make a list of people who live with us or are in our lives that care for us. Today’s focus will be about women in our lives that care for us. Some of the children I my class identify their Grandmother as their mother so to be sensitive to the fact that not everyone has a Mother, make sure ahead of time that you are preparing in accordance to children’s actual lives.

Lesson: Invite Mothers, aunts or Grandmothers into the classroom for one on one reading with their child or relative. Some students might have an Aunt come to read instead of a Mother and that is perfectly fine. Make copies of the story *Mama, Do You Love Me?* By: Barbara M. Joesse. Invite Mothers, Grandmothers or Aunties (whoever plays the role as mother (might even be a father) (adjust accordingly) to read this story to their child. This story is all about reassuring the child about a parent’s unconditional love for their children. When the story is over, instruct parents or guardians to cut out the large heart outline provided for them. On this hear students will draw pictures of what they’re mother (or other) do for them or how they care for them.

Wrap up: Students share what their mother or (other) does for them to show they care to a classroom audience.

Unit 9 Week 2

Cultural Value: Love for Children

Adapted from NSBSD Iñupiaq Values Curriculum

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn that they can show compassion for one another.</i></p>	<p>B. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.</p> <p>3. make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 9: What do we learn at school?</p> <p>Main idea: What have we learned throughout the year? Cultural connection: We have learned many things in school throughout the year. Our parents and family members have been with us along the way, helping us learn and do our homework too. Families care for us and help us grow and learn. Throughout the Kindergarten year we have all loved and cared for you.</p> <p>Supporting Standards: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p>

	<p>awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <p>9. Identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.</p>	<p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>
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Introduction: Just like people care for us at home because we are children, we also care for others. Just because we are children does not mean that we do not have to care for one another. Showing compassion means that we show that we care for one another by helping or by being a friend, brother, sister, son or daughter. There are many ways in which we can show we care.

Lesson: Play a game with the students to show how they can care for one another in school.

Have the students role-play being kind and compassionate. Give them opportunities to be on both sides of the action. Ideas for role-play situations:

- ✓ Someone walks into a classroom and drops their books or papers
- ✓ Someone spills the crayons on the floor
- ✓ Someone is making fun of another person
- ✓ Someone made a mistake on their homework
- ✓ Someone looks sad.
- ✓ Someone has no one to play with at recess
- ✓ Someone cannot find something important to them
- ✓ Someone is hurt and crying

Wrap up: Have students reflect on the activity by forming a sharing circle at the carpet. Each student can share a way in which they will help someone at school.

Unit 9 Week 3

Cultural Value: Love for Children

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
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<p><i>Students will learn that a family provides for them because they are children. They will learn that when they are cared for, they are loved. What do children need from their families?</i></p>	<p>B. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.</p> <p>4. make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <p>10. Identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 9: What do we learn at school?</p> <p>Main idea: What have we learned throughout the year? Cultural connection: We have learned many things in school throughout the year. Our parents and family members have been with us along the way, helping us learn and do our homework too. Families care for us and help us grow and learn. Throughout the Kindergarten year we have all loved and cared for you.</p> <p>Supporting Standards: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>
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Introduction: Without our families and people to care for us we would not have what we need. Imagine if you did not have love and care from anyone. Every child needs to be cared for in certain ways in order for them to be healthy. Today we will celebrate the ways in which our parents care for us.

Lesson: Have students use construction paper pieces to build the outline of the house they live in. Inside the house work together to write the names of things that our families provide for us. Some examples might be food, clothing, heat, laughter, love, a place to sleep, hugs etc.

Wrap up: Everyone has people in their lives that love and care for them. Children need these things to help them grow and learn how to live. Encourage students to go home and show their families the activity they completed that day and explain what they learned. When we are cared for, we are loved.

Unit 9 Week 4

Cultural Value: Love for Children

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Learning Goal	Cultural Standard for students	Corresponding Cengage National Geographic unit and standards
<p><i>Students will learn who the people are in their lives that care for them.</i></p>	<p>B. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.</p> <p>5. make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;</p> <p>E. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.</p> <p>11. Identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.</p>	<p>In correlation with our literacy unit 9: What do we learn at school?</p> <p>Main idea: What have we learned throughout the year? Cultural connection: We have learned many things in school throughout the year. Our parents and family members have been with us along the way, helping us learn and do our homework too. Families care for us and help us grow and learn. Throughout the Kindergarten year we have all loved and cared for you.</p> <p>Supporting Standards: CC.K.SL.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups</p> <p>CC.K.SL.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings and ideas clearly</p> <p>CC.K.SL.4 Describe familiar people, places, things, and events with prompting and support, provide additional detail.</p>

Introduction: Have a discussion about children and how children need people to care for them. For this activity, you will need pictures of family members from home or students can draw their own family members. Explain to students that they will have to come up with a list of family members who care for them.

Lesson: On individual cards students will draw a picture of each person in their family or community who cares for them. Example, Mother, Father, Sister, Brother, Grandma, Grandpa, Uncle Aunt, Cousin, Teacher, Neighbor. When they are done making their pictures on the cards they will partner up with another student and go through the cards explaining a way in which each person cares for them. Example: My Mom makes me dinner every night. You will have to do modeling for your students before they can complete the activity.

Wrap up: Students will staple their cards together as a book and take them home to share with their families. Students can share their books with one another in a sharing session (10 min) walking around the classroom showing their picture books to one another.

Unit Ten: **Review of Elim's Cultural Values**

Unit 10: Review Our Cultural Values: This is what makes me!

Created By: Samantha Marchant

Introduction: A final project to review Elim's Cultural Values. Go over the list of cultural values that students have learned during their Kindergarten year. Remind them and ask questions about the values as you go through them. You can remind them of activities they did and look through the classroom books they made during the units. After reviewing the values jump into the lesson.

Lesson: This art project will take 2 weeks to complete (make it the first week, share it the next). Students will need a large piece of paper with a circular pattern drawn on it for a place to glue their labels, labels of all the cultural values to cut out and glue on in the designated spot, crayons and watercolor paints. The first week students will cut and glue their cultural value labels on the outside of the circle leaving the middle open for them to draw a picture. In the middle of the circle students will use crayon to draw a picture of themselves and the world around them (be sure to make your own example to model). Students will then water color paint over the top of their crayons. The final product will look like a person standing in the middle surrounded by all of the cultural values of Elim.

Wrap up: the next week students will share their drawings with the class, community members, parents and Elders. This will be a teacher lead discussion about how our cultural values make us who we are. If we use our values in our everyday lives we will grow to become successful people and be ready for the world!

Living Curriculum Discussion

I have only just begun to pilot these cultural value units in my classroom. The results I have seen so far have been very positive. In this discussion section I have decided to include the lesson reflections from the thematic units and lessons I have implemented thus far.

Unit 1: Hunter Success 8-24-17

Lesson One:

Lesson one included the incorporation of storytelling with Elder Sheldon Nagaruk. Sheldon told a story about hunting with his Dad as a child. He discussed the many variables that come into play as hunters go for a successful kill. Students were engaged in Sheldon's hunting stories, vocabulary lessons and humor. Interacting with Elders brings a much deeper connection to cultural lessons with students. After learning from Sheldon, we did the hunting scavenger hunt. Students were shown pictures of animals and Sheldon and the teacher discussed how the animals would be caught or killed. Students had a great time finding the correct tool in their scavenger hunt and Sheldon was actively involved in discussing why certain tools are used to kill specific animals. We played the scavenger hunt game twice and students were able to switch cards with one another to find the tool that matched a different animal. I made one addition to this lesson and it was the inclusion of animal hides. Students were really interested in touching and feeling the hides as we passed them around in the circle. Students were able to guess which animal they thought the hide came from. These artifacts included, polar bear ruff, seal skin and hide, fox hide, caribou antlers and beaver pelts. After the activity was over Sheldon explained the many uses for animal hides as well as discussed, the importance of hunting in our community. His knowledge helped our students to understand why we celebrate hunter success and what hunting does for our community and families. Sheldon also guided students to the kayak used for hunting that is displayed in our school building. Students were more than delighted to go on a mini field trip. Overall, this lesson was wonderful. It was fun and interactive for students at this grade level. I would definitely use this lesson again in the future.

Unit 1: Hunter Success

Lesson 2: 8-29-17

Lesson two took more time than I thought to complete. This lesson took time to prepare as we needed to make sure there was a fresh fish on ice to cut and it had to be timed out perfectly. With the help of another teacher I was given a fresh Silver Salmon which I kept on ice for two days until I found a person from the community that was willing to do the lesson with my students. Students ended up going in to the bi-cultural classroom to watch the salmon cutting with the traditional women's knife known as the ulu. Before the lesson, Kim (the bicultural teacher) discussed the parts of the fish. Together we discussed why preparing food the way we

like it is important and how preparing food that we catch will help us all winter long. Students gathered around the table to watch and listen as Kim cut the fish. Students were very interested even though they had most likely seen this happen before in their daily lives during subsistence summer fishing. Overall, this lesson went very well. Students were able to draw a picture of what happened during Kim's lesson and explain to me why we celebrate when we catch or kill an animal. I truly believe the students in my classroom benefited from the lessons in this unit as well as the other teachers and Elders involved.

Unit 2: Family Roles

Lesson 1: 9-7-17

Students in my classroom are currently participating daily in conversations about family. Our curriculum unit in Cengage National Geographic outlines specific learning objectives for each of the four weeks in the family unit. I have aligned the cultural value units to go along with the four weeks in my curriculum units. This lesson was very exciting for the students because each of them had a parent or family member come to the classroom and sit with them as they drew a portrait of their family. During the course of the week we had been discussing what the people in our families do for one another and the roles we play in one another's lives. It was a great honor to be able to watch parents help their children create a portrait of their own family unit. Parents/guardians who participated in this activity were able to be actively engaged in the learning process that takes place in our classroom each day. Instead of the teacher educating students about what to draw in their portraits, the parents took on that role and were able to communicate the importance of family with their child/ren. I found that parent involvement is truly a helpful component to add to any classroom lesson, particularly when added to a cultural theme in which the teacher may not have knowledge of. This activity was so perfect for our education unit as well as the cultural value unit. It was truly a great intro!

Unit 2: Family Roles

Lesson 2: 9-14-17

As students continued to learn about our unit on families they were beginning to become more and more aware that families do many things together. Students were able to come up with ideas very quickly today during the discussion on family traditions. I used an example from

my own family. I explained that a family tradition is something that we do with our families over and over again. Sometimes the traditions happen only once per year like something special on Christmas, other times these traditions happen many times in a year like a feast or camping. After asking parents and Elders to come into the classroom to help their children discuss and draw a picture of their own family traditions, we ended up with a big turnout for parent attendance. It was so nice to see them actively involved in their students learning and explaining how important family traditions are. As a whole group (parents and students) we discussed Elim's cultural value of family roles and explained that family traditions play a large part in our lives. Once parents had a good understanding of the task they went off with their students to draw and write a sentence with their child about their own family tradition. The end of the task was the most fun. We lined all the chairs up in our classroom for an audience to sit and listen. Each child had a chance to present their drawing and sentence to the classroom full of students and parents. The children were able to meet their learning goals by explaining in their own way something their family does together. I feel that the students in my classroom are gaining a much deeper sense of family and how family supports one another. I also feel that by having parents and community members present they are able to form new ideas that I otherwise would not have known to teach them. I was able to take all of the drawings and make a classroom book out of them which the students are now enjoying daily. This lesson was simple, yet unique in that normally parents and community would not have been involved at all. I was able to gain a better understanding of student's cultural traditions as well as their family units during this activity. Overall, a great lesson for everyone!

Unit 2: Family Roles

Lesson 3: 9-21-17

This cultural values lesson was all about family roles. In today's modern society most families share in the roles and responsibilities at home. I used this lesson as a small group activity with 3-4 students at a time. I prepared ahead of time many pictures of activities that families in Elim might do at home or out in the country such as cutting wood, cutting fish, fishing, boating, hunting, doing the dishes, feeding the animals and so on. The learning goal or objective for this activity was for students to understand that while some members of our family have specific roles like hunting or cutting wood, there are also many roles in our

families that we share. Students loved this activity of matching roles to people in their family. In the end students were able to recognize that each person in a family has many roles, including themselves. Students were able to understand that within each network of relatives there are unique roles we each play and roles that we share in together. I liked this activity because we had a smaller group and the discussions were much deeper than in whole group activities. If I could change one thing I would invite a community member or Elder to sit with our group so that they could add to the conversation or discussion. Unfortunately, I was unable to find anyone to participate in this week's activity. I realize that these things may happen from time to time, however the lesson would have been much richer had someone from the community been involved.

Unit 2: Family Roles

Lesson4: 9-28-17

This lesson was my favorite lesson so far. I invited Sheldon Nagaruk to come and share pictures of his family with the Kindergarten students. He seemed happy to do so and excited to share with the children. Sheldon sat in a circle on the carpet with the kids and went through his photos. Sheldon explained the roles that each family member in his family played. Sheldon explained that each person played a unique role in their family and that each role was interrelated to the fact that they all had to take care of one another. When Sheldon was a child his family asked him and his younger siblings to help out his Mother with chores. As he got older he joined the boys in fishing, catching herring, hunting for seal and beluga and chopping wood. He explained it in a way that five year olds could truly understand and the students were really engaged with his stories the entire time. I really enjoyed knowing more about an Elder in our community and I enjoyed watching the children relate to him with their own experiences. Sheldon could easily relate family roles to hard work and love for children in his short 20-minute conversation. This lesson truly shows how all of the cultural values of Elim are interconnected.

Conclusion

The thesis project: *Elim's Cultural Values: Reaffirming and Implementing Indigenous Values in Education*, has made a large impact on me as an educator of Alaska Native students. I feel that the curriculum project and units I have created will enhance the learning of students by helping them to make connections to the world around them. I also feel that this curriculum project will help future educators in the Bering Strait region to consider teaching more culturally responsive lessons to their students. I have created these units as a guideline for all educators in the region. I hope to lead by example and motivate others to contribute to the overall well-being and education of the student in this region and beyond. There are many factors that come into play when discussing the implementation of cultural values and culturally responsive lessons in a school setting and surely there will always be things that stand in the way of meeting our student's highest needs. My hope is that more educators will chose to educate themselves about how they can help their students achieve in school. The students of the Bering Strait region and all Alaska Native students for that matter need to know who they are, where they come from and how they can educate their future children about their own personal heritage. By implementing culturally responsive lessons and cultural values in a school setting, we are ensuring that students gain the knowledge and skills they need so that they may develop a stronger sense of self and moral compass for generations to come.

Final Reflections

This M.Ed. project has made me a better educator. The things I have learned throughout my graduate program will stay with me for the rest of my career. I cannot express how grateful I am to have had the experience of research in the village I live and work in. Not only have I gained a significant amount of knowledge from the people who live here, but I have also been able to utilize that knowledge in ways that make an impact. I do feel that this project was necessary and relevant. I feel that the cultural value curriculum I have created has the potential to expand throughout Bering Strait School District. The units I have created have also made an impact on the educators at Aniguiin School. It has been my prerogative throughout this research project to increase awareness of teaching culturally relevant lessons in our school. By making others aware of Elim's cultural values, and the resources available to them, it makes it that much

easier to implement them in the classroom environment. My hope is that more teachers will move forward with the inclusion of lessons like those I have created. I look forward to continuing the use of the cultural values curriculum I have created and intend to share it with our school district. In the end, I am proud to say that I have made a positive impact on the education of Alaska Native students. The implementation of cultural values in our Kindergarten classroom will surely make a lasting impression on their lives.

I have asked several community and staff members to review the curriculum I created and write their opinions on such. I have also asked community members and Elders who have been involved in Elim's cultural value lessons to write their thoughts on my project. These comments are included below:

Excerpts from Elim School Staff and Community

I have asked several community and staff members to review the curriculum I created and write their opinions on such. I have also asked community members and Elders who have been involved in Elim's cultural value lessons to write their thoughts on my project. These comments are included below:

"I believe the more relevant a curriculum is to student's experiences and life skills, students are better able to relate, learn and internalize the materials covered. With that said, along with Bush Alaska populated by mainly Alaska Natives, and in BSSD most of the teachers are Non-Alaska Natives having little experience and knowledge of the cultures and environment, a curriculum involving cultural standards, community, Elders' and parents' knowledge is vital for students to anchor new knowledge onto existing and homegrown knowledge. Community involvement is important to help educate new teachers about their culture and environment, so students have the greatest opportunity to learn and grow. Community involvement also gives the community members a more realistic idea of what occurs at school, student behavior, events, etc. The curriculum Samantha has created surely can be used by other kindergarten teachers in

BSSD. With a little modification and imagination, the themes and ideas can be used throughout the school grades. Speaking as a veteran teacher, I plan on using portions of this curriculum in my middle and high school science classes. As educators, we have to constantly look for ways to improve our teaching and methods. Excellence is the goal we want in ourselves and our students.” – Mark Vachavake MS/HS Science Teacher

“Samantha Marchant has been working on a curriculum project which implements Indigenous values in Education and connecting them to BSSD's curriculum. I have been very impressed with her passion to align her project with district goals to teach more culturally relevant lessons to our students. Furthermore, the second goal and objective in the districts strategic plan aligns with what Samantha is doing. I am very excited to see how well these lessons are received by the students and community. If they are successful, she will be another resource for teachers on how to teach more culturally relevant lessons so we can better meet the needs our students and community.”-Jack Kingsford, Principal of Aniguiin School

2. We will develop and promote family, community, and regional partnerships and implement programs that promote culture and heritage and provide student support.

- Recognizing and utilizing local expertise, incorporate local culture, heritage and traditional values into curriculum.
- Involve students in local, regional and state cultural events.
- Involve students in documenting, publishing and archiving local culture and history (past and present).
- Improve communication between school and community.
- Partner with regional organizations.

“My colleague, Samantha Marchant, has been implementing projects in her classroom that highlight Indigenous values and correlate with our school district’s curriculum units. Her projects have been very helpful to other teachers at our school who wanted to

incorporate more cultural elements into their lessons but didn't know where to start. Because the projects are aligned with the Language Arts curriculum that we are already teaching, they are easy to implement in the classroom, even for teachers with limited time available to devote to anything "extra." Many of the teachers at Aniguiin School (myself included) have been inspired by Samantha's work. A visitor at our school would now be likely to see evidence of lessons that incorporate Indigenous values and culturally responsive lessons (such as posters that feature Indigenous values, Inupiaq word walls, and various culturally-inspired art projects)." -Richelle Lindula 1st/2nd grade teacher

"My name is Brittany Scanlan and I currently work as a fifth-grade teacher at Elim Aniguiin School, in Elim, Alaska. I've worked at the school with Samantha Marchant for the past three years. Once she started her Master's program, we had several discussions about integrating the culture of our students into our school. These conversations forced me to look at my own teaching and I realized that even though I had intentions of integrating cultural values, I never had. As an educator in an Alaska Native Village, I did not know what the cultural values of my community were, where to find them, or who to contact in order to find out. I have always had intentions of bringing in my students' culture into the classroom but I did not know where to start. I've done a few activities here and there, but there has not been a consistent connection with the content I teach and Elim's cultural values. At the beginning of this school year, I reached out to Sammy and asked her for some culturally relevant resources that I could use in my classroom. She was so excited that I was reaching out and she gave me a few websites with lessons aligned with Elim's cultural values, and helped me create a bulletin board with the values (so students could view them). We even worked with our bicultural teacher to record some words in Inupiaq and Yup'ik, and posted these words along with pictures around our classrooms. Her project on implementing indigenous values in education and connecting them to our district curriculum is changing the way our students our learning for the better. I have seen firsthand how excited my students get about learning a new word, or just talking about hunter success and what that

means for their family. The community is becoming more involved in our school, and it shows that they have an appreciation for what Samantha is trying to do. She has been a wonderful resource and is responsible for this huge shift that is slowly changing the way our students learn.” – Brittany Scanlan

“I have known Ms. Marchant for the past 3-4 years here in Elim. 1st casually as a friend

and later as a teacher to my Son. Ms. Marchant has conducted herself in the classroom setting in the highest professional manner. I later gave lectures to the 11th grade on traditions and cultures of the native people of the Northwest regions here in Alaska. Ms. Marchant has been also incorporating cultural values to students of her classroom. The students accepted her teaching warmly and sometimes sharing it with parents like me and my wife. We have no reservations of what she is teaching our children, in fact we embrace it. I give my highest recommendation for Ms. Marchant and wish her success in her endeavors for higher education.”

–John Jemewouk, parent and President of Elim Native Cooperation

“Samantha has used Elders and community members to help teach our cultural values in her Kindergarten class. I am happy to help with this. Thus far she has had Elders talk about family, extended family, and how we work together to gather our food from the land and sea. She also had the Elders tell the class our seasonal schedule and how our food depends on the seasons. I am helping her talk to the children about respect for land, animals and nature. I have heard her talk to her students about names and places of Elim, family names, animal names in Iñupiaq and Yup’ik. She has had Elders speak in her classroom about these things as well. Thank you, Sammy.”

–Sheldon Nagaruk Elder, parent, and retired bi-cultural teacher at Aniguiin School

“I have known Ms. Marchant for about 5 years and she has definitely been an asset both our school and community. She teaches from her heart and is sensitive to our

native culture. With the curriculum, she has created they are aligned with the Alaska standards for culturally responsive schools. She not only values our community but also values how she teaches native students in connection with their own way of life. She recognizes that teaching culturally relevant lessons will enhance the learning of Elim students. I believe Samantha's project is vitally important to meeting the educational needs to our native students because it not only addresses the cognitive processes of how our students think but she helps makes the connection between the Western and Native worldview."

-Emily Murray Aniguiin School secretary and parent

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Appendix

IRB APPROVED: March 2, 2017

IRB ID: 995737-1



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Institutional Review Board

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March 2, 2017

To: Charles Topkok, PHD
Principal Investigator
From: University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re: [995737-1] Participatory Action Research in Elim, Alaska: A Focus on reaffirming and implementing cultural values within the school

Thank you for submitting the New Project referenced below. The submission was handled by Expedited Review under the requirements of 45 CFR 46.110, which identifies the categories of research eligible for expedited review.

Title: Participatory Action Research in Elim, Alaska: A Focus on reaffirming and implementing cultural values within the school
Received: February 17, 2017
Expedited Category: 7
Action: APPROVED
Effective Date: March 2, 2017
Expiration Date: March 2, 2018

This action is included on the April 5, 2017 IRB Agenda.

No changes may be made to this project without the prior review and approval of the IRB. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in research scope, research tools, consent documents, personnel, or record storage location.

Informed Consent

Informed Consent Form (for participation in)

Elim Participatory Research: A focus on reaffirming and implementing cultural values within the local school

Project Information:

You are being asked to take part in a research project about Elim's cultural values. The goal of this research is to identify a set of known Iñupiaq or Yup'ik values of this mixed Native community. The second goal of this study is to see if Elim's cultural values are being used at Elim Aniguiin School and are used in the everyday lessons. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are an Alaska Native, a member of this community, a teacher or Para in Elim Aniguiin School; and you are eighteen years old or older. If you decide to take part in this project I will speak with you about Elim's cultural values. I will take notes, and if you agree, I may record interviews with you on a digital voice recorder. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you agree to be in the study.

Pros and Cons of this Project:

There are no major risks to you if you take part in this study. Some people do not like being observed or interviewed, and I will try my best to make you comfortable. Your help with this project will help us create a better understanding of the cultural values here in Elim and to find out if these values are being taught to our students at Elim Aniguiin School. If you are a part of this project, there may not be a benefit to you. However, being a part of this project will help make a change in your community. If you would like to see the whole project, it will be stored with Sean Topkok. <cstopkok@alaska.edu>, (907) 474-5537.

Confidentiality:

Because I am doing this study as a part of my research through the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), the results will be free to other people. I will not gather any identifying information about you in this study, and will try to protect your privacy. Any information about you that you give to me while speaking to me or in interviews will be kept private. This signed release form will be stored safely. Only I will listen to any audio recordings that I make, and I will put in writing the parts that I need, and then erase the recordings after the project is done. You may ask for any copies of recordings of you for your own use. I may ask to record interviews during conversations, interviews or focus groups.

I would like to have your name on this project giving credit to you for any results from my research project. However, you have the choice to not have your name used when data from this study are published; if this is the case, please say so on this form.

Voluntary Project:

Your decision to take part in the study is your choice. You are free to choose not to take part in the study or to stop taking part at any time.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions now, feel free to ask me. If you have questions later, you may contact me at 990-880-1102 or smarchant2@alaska.edu or my committee chair Dr. Sean Asiqluq Topkok at 474-5537 or cstopkok@alaska.edu

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Coordinator in the Office of Research Integrity at 474-7800 (Fairbanks area) or 1-866-876-7800 (outside the Fairbanks area) or fyirb@uaf.edu.

Statement of Consent:

By signing this form, you agree that you understand the plans explained above, your questions have been answered to your happiness and you have been provided a copy of this form. You agree to participate in this study in the specific activities initialed below.

_____ I consent to participating in a group meeting **AND** being recorded.

_____ I consent to participating in a group meeting but **NOT** being recorded.

_____ I consent to being recorded while being interviewed.

Signature and Printed Name of Subject & Date

Signature of researcher, Samantha Marchant & Date

Please indicate whether you agree to have your full name used alongside your comments in the final dissertation that results from this research.

__ **YES** (If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know)

__ **NO**

__ **ALTERATION:**

Name or pseudonym to be used: _____