



We Work Together

Lower Cook Inlet: Pekllartukut Allingurtun
Prince William Sound: Pekllartukut Allingurtun, Gwangkuta

Chugachmiut Education December 2020 Newsletter

Inside this issue

Hello from Staff	2
Letter From Our Director.....	3
Community Voices	4
What the Data Shows.....	6
Parents' Corner	8
Parents Get Gold Stars Too! ...	8
Parenting During Covid-19.....	9
Sugt'stun Word of the Day ...	10
Our Guiding Values.....	11
Contact.....	11

Communities We Serve

- *Chenega*
- *Eyak (Cordova)*
- *Nanwalek*
- *Port Graham*
- *Qutekcak (Seward)*
- *Tatitlek*
- *Valdez*

Contact Us

Chugachmiut Education Department
1840 Bragaw Street, Suite 110
Anchorage AK, 99508
www.chugachmiuteducation.org
Email: andrea@chugachmiut.org
(907) 334-0128



What's New

Chugachmiut has received a multi-year grant called Accessing Choices in Education from the Office of Indian Education. The purpose of the grant is to team up with the school districts, parents/caregivers, and students to develop educational choices and services to improve academic success of Alaska Native and American Indian students within our service area.

Goals of the Grant

- ▶ Student success, confidence, and cultural connection are the highest priorities. With our partners, we will identify what services are needed that will support this.
- ▶ Develop a comprehensive web portal of support for supplemental education services based on parent/caregiver and student choice.
 - ⇒ Services to be determined through community conversations and surveys, and could include: tutoring, summer education programs, counseling services, cultural internships, Sugt'stun language, applying for college and financial aid, applying for apprenticeships programs, testing preparation, and after school programs. The selection of services will be based on the feedback from parents/caregivers and students.

We look forward to working with our communities to identify which options to focus on! Please watch our website chugachmiuteducation.org and our Facebook page for updates.

Hello from Staff

Laura Revels – Program Manager

We've been gathering educational data, risk behavior data, and community input to build a foundation of what education currently looks like, and what the educational needs are, within the communities we serve. We completed a report of the survey we conducted with the school districts within our service area and shared the report via email with school and Tribal administrators. If you'd like a copy, please feel free to email me and I'll email you a copy.

Currently, we are working on Education Community Profiles for each community. It is hoped the Profiles will open up discussions on how to strengthen academic successes and address challenges students face. It will also be used to start discussions that we are planning on having this winter with the communities on what a Chugachmiut Tribal Education Code should cover.

The other part of this data gathering is to help find funding to develop opportunities to help students succeed in their educational journey. As mentioned on the front page of this newsletter, we received a grant from the Office of Indian Education called Accessing Choices in Education and we are looking forward to working with parents/caregivers and students to identify what educational opportunities to offer!

Gunalchéesh. Quyana!



I like this quote because I believe when we can work together, we can make a difference.

*"We are people who matter, yes, it's true; now let's show the world what people who matter can do."
- Wab Kinew, Go Show the World: A Celebration of Indigenous Heroes*

Here's to discovering, learning, and sharing what education looks like for the communities Chugachmiut serves!

Andrea Floersheimer – Program Coordinator



Cama'i! Here at Chugachmiut Education, we have wrapped up our surveys and interviews. We also have compiled a lot of data from the State and other sources about education in the Chugach Region. This data will guide us as we develop services to help students and parents.

Personally, I will also be transitioning to a new role within Chugachmiut Heritage as the Department's Archivist. I am so excited to organize and digitalize the artifacts, documents and media files that are so important to the history of the region. Please contact me at AndreaF@chugachmiut.org with any ideas or pieces of history that you want to share!

Letter From Our Director

Mark Hiratsuka

Director of Chugachmiut Heritage



Cama'i! I am so delighted to reach out to you again. This Fall has definitely had its fair share of challenges for all of us. Given the unprecedented obstacles we are encountering, I am especially proud of the growth that the Chugachmiut Heritage Preservation Department is experiencing at this time.

Chugachmiut Education has received a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education, called Accessing Educational Choices (ACE). This grant aims to support American Indian and Alaska Native communities in setting up a variety of education options, including additional course options, apprenticeships, tutoring and many other programs, from which parents or students can choose. You can learn more about it by going to our website: www.chugachmiuteducation.org.

This grant directly builds upon the work we have been doing this year under our We Work Together grant. Our team is adding finishing

touches on the data we have gathered, including the surveys we have completed with the school districts, and from interviewing Elders.

This data gathering allows us to develop educational services that best serve our communities and helped us to receive the ACE grant. As with our last grant, it will be important to hear from you as we develop the educational services and service providers to work with students.

Under ACE, we will be looking to hire part-time parent liaisons in Tatitlek, Nanwalek, Port Graham, and Valdez to start in February 2021. These positions are important to ensure that we have community input into developing the services and educational opportunities to be offered. If you would like to be kept informed about these positions and when they will be open for applications, or be added to our newsletter email list, please reach out to Laura Revels at laurar@chugachmiut.org.

Additionally, we will be hiring a new full-time Education Administrative Coordinator because Andrea has moved on to another adventure within our organization and is transitioning into her new role as the Chugachmiut Heritage Archivist. We are excited to see the work she will produce in her new position!

Your voices are always welcome. Please reach out to me directly any time and stay healthy and well. Quyana!

- Mark Hiratsuka



We are looking forward to working with you!

Community Voices - Elders

This is Part 2 of highlighting our interviews with a few of the Elders about their educational experience. Part 1 was in our last issue and is available on our website.

Education Doesn't Only Happen in the Classroom

Family time is valuable in countless ways: creating memories, celebrating milestones, and spending time with those we love. To the Elders that we spoke with, family time was also an important part of their education.

Pauline Demas from Nanwalek remembered, "I used to help my mom with the net, watch out for the birds that get in the way and go fishing with her and Dad. And picking out the right wood for the fish that you're smoking. It's got to be cottonwood from the beach."

Mark King from Cordova also remembered the importance of learning how to hunt and fish in his family. He told us "My dad was a trapper, hunter, guide, fisherman, and my mom worked in the canneries... we were always late getting to school because of silver salmon season and hunting season and stuff like that."

To Elders like Jean Huntsman, family was also where she became connected to her language. She told us that her family taught her "my Native language, which I am so thankful for today because I can speak with some of my brothers and sisters in my Sugt'stun language." Pauline Demas similarly shared how important it was that she learned her language from her family members. "I learned to speak my language a lot, that was my first language and now it's connected to everything that is in the village."

Elders also talked about the values that they learned through their families. "Sharing. That was the number one thing. Community members [from Chenega] shared flour, sugar, salt, pepper..." Dean Katelnikoff (Tatitlek) told us.

To so many Elders, this education from their family proved far more important than any education they received in school.



Mark King



Pauline Demas



Dean Katelnikoff

Community Voices - Elders



Diane Selanoff

“Most of what I know and do today was initially instilled by my Mom and by my community,” said Diane Selanoff (Valdez). “The plants she taught me was more valuable than the science I learned from a book. Molecules and cells didn’t help me provide a life, but the science she taught me on the beach, what to look for and how to look for it, and you know, how to dissect and clean a clam, that science was way more valuable than what I was taught in a book.”

Bill Smith similarly appreciated the lessons he learned from his mother. “I just wish I had listened to my Mom a little bit more when I was younger, just like everyone else. Because there were some plants that she was telling me about that grew along the road, little white ones that you used to pound up and put them into a plaster, and you’d be able to put them on for arthritis and everything else but I’m just trying to figure out which ones are which.”



William F. Smith Jr.

As we learned from the Elders, education doesn’t happen just in school, it’s our families, our cultural ways of knowing, and it also comes from our community. And passing knowledge to just one person can have ripple effects. “It’s one of those you teach one, and they teach one,” shared Patience Faulkner.

Do you have a story that you want to share? Do you know an Elder who we should interview? We want to hear what your story of education is. Please contact Laura Revels at laurar@chugachmiut.org if you are interested in sharing.



Patience Faulkner

Quyana and thank you for sharing with us!

In my life, the stories I have heard from my family, my friends, my community, and from willing strangers all over the world have been the true source of my education. They have taught me humor, compassion, and courage. - Holly Near, Singer/Songwriter

What the Data Shows

Suggestions for Chugachmiut Education to Help Teachers

A repeating suggestion was to add more cultural training for teachers and more cultural activities for the classroom and after school programs; these were seen as ways to increase student success. It was also suggested to have Chugachmiut involved in the Fall Teachers' In-service days and to develop a program that pairs teachers with families to be mentored in the local customs and culture.

Another suggestion that was mentioned more than once, was to have Chugachmiut assist with developing a parent engagement training program to help increase parent involvement with the schools. These suggestions were all seen as ways to enhance student success and we will work with the schools and communities, to explore these further.

What's Next

We view this survey as a starting point to working closer with our schools to ensure the success of Alaska Native and American Indian students within the Chugachmiut Service Area. We see the challenges and suggestions as areas that we can work together with our communities to address and help our students thrive within the education system.

The school district survey is one view of the education in our communities. We are also conducting a parent/caregiver survey and interviewing Elders to get their perspectives. Once these are complete, we will provide a report of those findings. It is also our goal to get the views from the youth in the 20/21 school year.

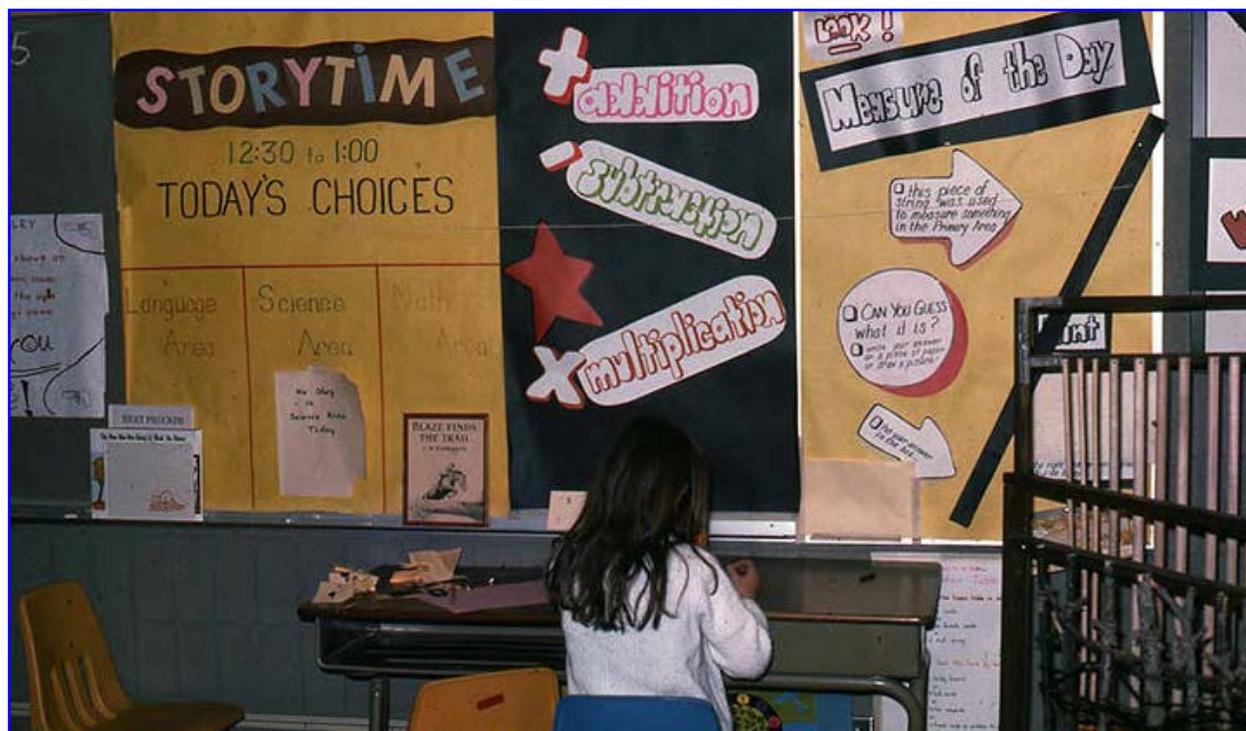


Image source: University of Alaska, Anchorage. Archives & Special Collections, 1975.

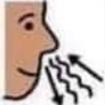
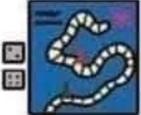
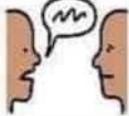
Parents' Corner

KUDOS to all the parents, teachers, and students, who are working to make learning happen during Covid-19!

Parents Get Gold Stars Too!

The Coronavirus pandemic continues to change how we live, learn, and interact with one another. Most of our schools have switched to online learning to keep students, their families, and teachers safe. It is a lot to adjust to!

As parents we try to do our best for our children and many times we forget to acknowledge or congratulate ourselves for all we do!
Parents! Give yourself a Gold Star!

Parent's Chart		M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
Hugged my kid for no reason 								
Helped my kid clean their room 								
Took a calming breath before talking 								
Played a board game with my kid and had fun 								
Apologized when I got upset 								
Showed GRACE to my kid when they got upset 								
Did something silly, just to make my kid laugh 								
Did something just for me, because when I am not calm neither is my kid 								

Resources

Parenting Tips

Parenting during Covid-19 Pandemic: <https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/parenting-during-pandemic#>

Parenting During Coronavirus: <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/parenting-family/parenting-during-coronavirus.htm>

Tips and Resources for Children and Parents During Covid-19: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/mentalhealth/children>

Parenting in a Pandemic: Tips to Keep the Calm at Home: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/COVID-19/Pages/Parenting-in-a-Pandemic.aspx>

If you need to find additional resources, there is 211.org (you can also call 211) to get information or referrals: <https://www.211.org/>



Parenting During Covid-19

Parenting during normal times can have its moments, but during a pandemic it can cause more stress on family relationships as our homes have now become the classroom, the gym, and possibly the place for recess. 😊

Here are some tips that can you as you continue to be a good parent during these times:

- * Acknowledge your emotions. Stress and anxiety caused by the pandemic are normal. Talk with other parents, relatives, and friends. If you'd like more support then they can offer, set up a telehealth consultation with a mental health professional or behavioral health aide. It's perfectly OK to do this as you are taking care of yourself so that you can best care for those who depend on you.
- * Set boundaries. Set areas for work; schoolwork and homework. If you do not have a separate room to set up for a home office and "school room;" set times when a certain area serves in these capacities.
- * Set a timer for 90 minutes of work, and then for 15 minutes, take a break with your children and do something fun! As your kids for ideas and then schedule fun into your daily schedule.
- * Routine. Keep one. Routines for children help their stress levels as they know what to expect when. It provides a sense of "normalcy" which in turn helps cope with the stress. Post a schedule (this is just an example - make it colorful, make it fun, create it with your children).

Resources

School/Homework Related

The Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) offers online tutoring in math, English, and history:

<https://lam.alaska.gov/sled/homework/>

Math can be a challenge, and this app can help out! Check out PhotoMath, for your phone or iPad to help with math homework:

<https://photomath.app/en/>

Is your child struggling? Here's a simple step-by-step tool to help you figure out the struggles you're seeing.

<https://www.understood.org/take-note>



8:00 am	9:00 am	10:30 - 10:45 am	10:45 am to Noon	Noon to 1	1:00 - 2:30pm
Rise and Shine! 	School and work day begins	Fun time! 	School and work	Lunch and physical fun! 	Last of the school day! 

Parents' Corner

- Parenting During Covid-19 continued

- * Figure out a schedule that's going to work for you and your children - don't expect to put in a "normal" Monday through Friday schedule. Be flexible. 😊
- * Another tip would be to include sharing household and child-care responsibilities. Ask for help. Work shared makes for a lighter load.

Don't forget to make time for self-care. Everyone in your family needs alone time. Take it easy on yourself and each other. If your kids see you coping in good ways during the pandemic, it will help them to feel safe and learn how to cope during stressful times.

Sugt'stun Words of the Day: "Snow falling"

Lower Cook Inlet: Qanirtuq
Prince William Sound: Qaniq



Sugt'stun Word of the Day source:
Chugachmiut Sugt'stun Language
Teachers.

Resources

Chugachmiut Heritage Preservation

Llangarlluni: Becoming Aware has cultural classroom materials available for free about the Chugach Native People. These materials are based upon Elders' knowledge and experience.

Resources include:

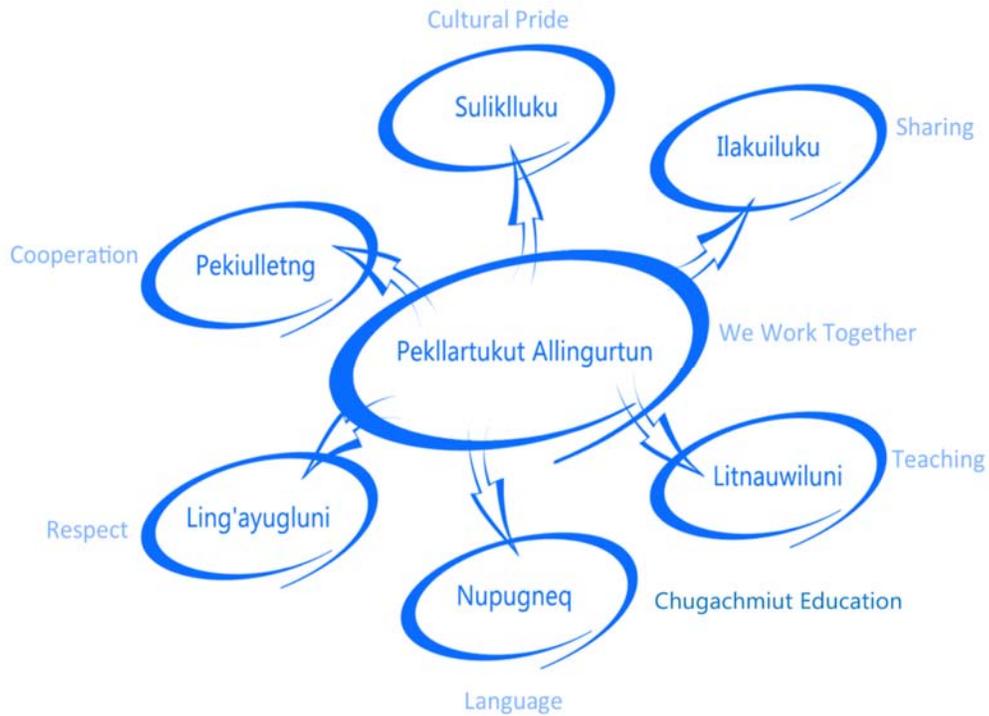
- Lesson Plans
- Heritage Kits
- Sugt'stun Language Teaching Tools
- Artistic Craft Activities
- Video Stories and Demonstrations

The materials are online:

[https://
chugachheritageak.org/](https://chugachheritageak.org/)

Guiding Our Work

We acknowledged the cultural values of the seven Tribal communities within the Chugach Region and we have adapted six of them to guide our work in education. We think these values below are important to the work we are doing.



Contact Us

We welcome your ideas and suggestions! Feel free to reach out to our team with ideas, opinions, or suggestions. We look forward to connecting and talking about how to help our children succeed!

Mark Hiratsuka, Director
markh@chugachmiut.org

Find us online:

Laura Revels, Manager
laurar@chugachmiut.org

Website: chugachmiuteducation.org

Facebook: facebook.com/chugachmiuteducation

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, State Tribal Education Partnerships (STEP). STEP's purpose is to promote increased collaboration between the Tribal education agencies, State educational agencies, and local educational agencies that serve Tribal students.

Pekllartukut Allingurtun, We Work Together | Grant Award: S415A190005 | State Tribal Education Partnerships 84.415AA
United States Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202