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# Kodiak Alutiiq Language Revitalization

2011-2015 Collaborative Strategic Planning

February 28, 2011 • Kodiak, Alaska

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*Take care of the Elder you will become*

*– Akhiok Elder Mary Peterson*

**Long-Term Community Vision:** Alutiiq language spoken in the home, as supported through immersion education programs within all our communities

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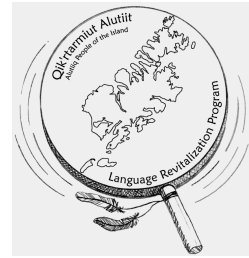
# Methodology & Findings

## Process & Summary of Community Involvement in Planning Efforts

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### Qik’rtarmiut Alutiit Regional Language Advisory Committee Planning

On a semi-monthly basis the regional Kodiak Alutiit language advisory committee convenes to discuss or review ongoing projects and to plan for the revitalization of the Alutiit language. The committee is made up of Elders, learners, community members, and stakeholder organization representatives, open to the public. This group has developed and approved a list of Community Goals that comprise the 4 core priorities for language revitalization as shown on the following section (January 2010). In addition, with the help of Alutiit Museum staff this group updated the list of Known Speakers from the 2005 Language Status study at an Alutiit Language Summit gathering in Old Harbor in June 2009. Together they have identified 38 living first language speakers on Kodiak Island and 17 living off island.



The Alutiit Museum supported strategic planning efforts from 2007-2009 at regular committee meetings. The group prioritized and ratified the top four needs to fulfill the ultimate goal to “bring back the sound of Alutiit to the voices of our young.”

**Priority #1:** We must aid our semi fluent speakers by providing opportunities for their “vertical development” so that they may aid others’ learning, create educational materials, and promote the goals of language revitalization in our community

**Priority #2:** We must continue language education and outreach to those who want to learn Alutiit, particularly descendants, continuing at current levels until second language speakers and program capacity can increase efforts.

**Priority #3:** We must create educational materials to aid the learning of second language and beginning students of Alutiit, for the sake of ensuring future language bearers.

**Priority #4:** We must increase public awareness of the importance of the Alutiit Language and its revitalization to the Alutiit people as well as the wider community.

Through the implementation of the above strategies we must remember that the ultimate goal of our effort is to bring back the sound of Alutiit to the voices of our youth. This can only be done through the words of our Elders.

*The above priorities were ratified on January 10, 2010 by the Qik’rtarmiut Alutiit Regional Language Advisory Committee.*

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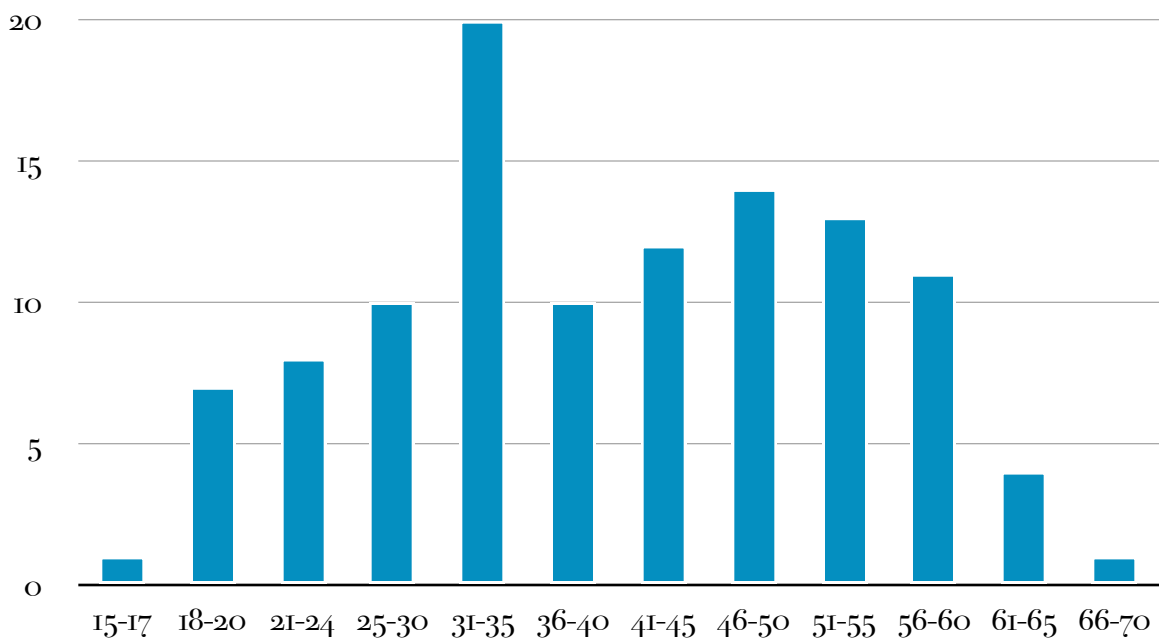
## Alutiiq Language Learners Survey

To assess community need and gaps, Kodiak College and 4 collaborating tribal organizations (Koniag Education Foundation, Alutiiq Museum, Native Village of Afognak Tribal Council and Native Village of Port Lions Tribal Council) developed a 20 question community survey, specifically to gauge education access challenges for Alaska Native students and needs for preservation of the Alutiiq language. The online survey was posted via KEF's Zoomerang account ([www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22B933KV8QR](http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22B933KV8QR)) and received 118 respondents (see results reported below).

### Survey Responses

#### Question 1: Age

94% of survey participants responded, with an average age of 40 years old.



#### Question 2: Sex

81% of survey respondents were female (91) and 19% were male (22)

#### Question 3: Alaska Native Heritage

Most respondents were Alaska Native or Native American, 78% (91), compared to 22% (26) who are not Alaska Native or Native American. However, this result demonstrates that there are a significant percentage of community members who are not Native, but who feel they have a vested interest in preservation or learning of the Alutiiq language.

#### **Question 4: ANCSA Corporation or Tribal Membership**

For those respondents who are Native 70% are shareholders of Koniag, Inc., the regional ANCSA corporation for the Alutiiq Nation. 47% are shareholders of Afognak Native Corporation. 24% are members of Native Village of Afognak or Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak, and 15% are Native Village of Port Lions members. 13% are shareholders of Natives of Kodiak. 11% are members or shareholder of tribes outside the Kodiak Alutiiq region. Between 2%-7% belonged to the other village tribes or Native corporations.

#### **Question 5: Education**

Respondents to the survey were highly educated, with 37% holding an undergraduate college degree, and 18% with a graduate degree. 4% were Elders or culture-bearers themselves.

#### **Question 6: Primary Community**

In an effort to assess where respondents live, given the potential to support some learners via distance delivery, we asked which community they would be living in next year, if a class was offered. The majority live in Kodiak (44% or 50 respondents), with the next highest population in Anchorage (19% or 22 respondents). An additional 15% or 17 respondents live in other states besides Alaska (79%) and Washington(5%). Rural respondents included 5% from Port Lions, 1% from Larsen Bay, 3% from Old Harbor.

#### **Question 7: Purpose**

When asked "What is your goal in studying Alutiiq language and culture?" respondents agreed with survey statements as follows:

- 70% to preserve Alutiiq language, culture, traditions and/or arts
- 67% to better understand traditions and cultural practices
- 50% to understand Alutiiq language when others speak
- 40% to speak at home or for personal use
- 31% to speak in the work place or at community gatherings
- 27% to teach the language or develop materials in the language
- 11% responded their goal was for other reasons, ranging from curiosity to supporting their children in language learning.

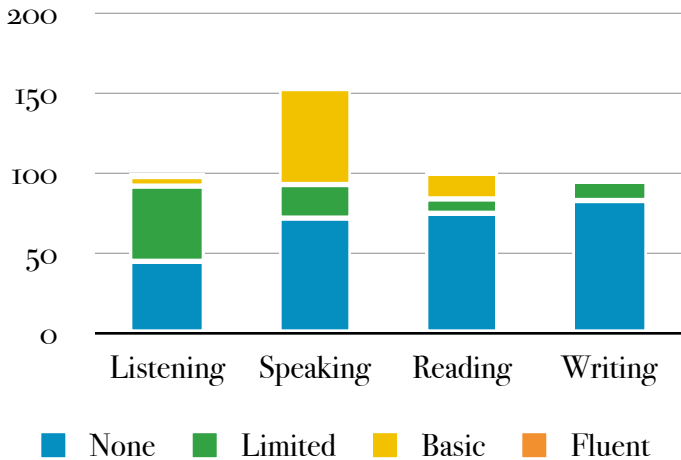
#### **Question 8: Need**

Survey respondents were asked what they felt was the greatest community need for the preservation of the Alutiiq language. Responses were then grouped by related topic as follows:

- 16% Regular, frequent opportunities to access Elders, intergenerational practice
- 15% Passage of heritage history, practices, & ancestral knowledge within families
- 12% More user-friendly language materials (including multimedia: computer, audio, video for accurate pronunciation)
- 9% KIBSD K12 School Immersion Programs
- 8% Accessible Adult Immersion Classes & Learner Support Groups (even at work)
- 7% More language teachers & awareness of availability
- 5% Immersion Preschool/Language Nests

- 5% More Youth Interest/Participation, Recruitment & Motivating
- 5% Wider commitment & cooperation to revitalize Alutiiq, More People involved to preserve it for all to enjoy
- 4% Cultural Pride in our unique language & Raising Interest
- 8% Other (Greater Accessibility of Materials, More Usage at Home)

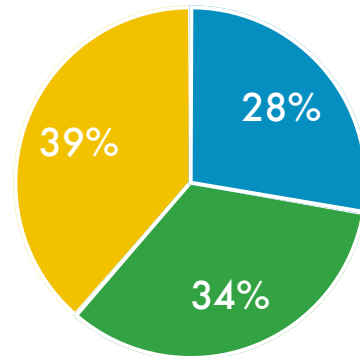
**Questions 9-12: Listening, Speaking and Reading Fluency**



- Visual
- Auditory
- Tactile

**Question 13: Learning Style**

In response to the question, “How do you prefer to learn language?” respondents responded as follows:



**Question 14: Technology**

The majority (85%) of respondents own a personal computer with high speed Internet. 21% only have access to a public computer. 40% have an iPhone, Blackberry or other type of smart phone. 15% own an iPad or a Ninetendo DS. Only 1% felt they did not have access to technological learning devices.

**Question 15: Comfort Level with Technology**

The majority (62%) were comfortable surfing the Internet, and 33% consider themselves very comfortable with technology. 4% only use computers to check their email account, and 1% responded that they are uncomfortable.

**Question 16: Time Commitment**

Most respondents felt they could only dedicate one (39%) or two (20%) days a week to learning the Alutiiq language. 17% felt they would do it every day, 12% every other day, and 12% only once a month.

### **Question 17: Potential Interest in College Classes**

We provided a list of potential courses Kodiak College is investigating offering to assess how many students would be interested in the courses. With only a minimum of 10 students needed to offer a course, the high response rate is justification for moving forward in development of curriculum and instructors to offer the courses.

- 87 Alutiiq Language I (AKNS A101C - Humanities GER, 4 credits)
- 63 Alutiiq Language II (AKNS A102C - Humanities GER, 4 credits)
- 40 Alutiiq Language Orthography (AKNS A109 - Humanities GER, 4 credits)
- 26 Curriculum & Materials Development for Native Languages (3 credits)
- 32 Teaching Methods for Alaska Native Languages (3 credits)
- 26 Practicum in Native Language Education (3 credits)
- 38 Alaska Native Perspectives (AKNS A201, 3 credits)
- 28 Selected Topics in AKNS: Alutiiq Experience AKNS A290/490, 3 credits)
- 39 Music of Alaska Natives (AKNS/MUS A215, Fine Arts GER, 3 credits)
- 40 Introduction to Alaska Native Dance (AKNS A146, 1-2 credits)
- 40 Native Politics (ANCSA, ANILCA, Tribal Law & Policy) (AKNS A346, 3 credits)
- 35 History of Alaska (HIST A341, 3 credits)
- 44 Alaska Native Education (AKNS A420, 3 credits)
- 36 Natural History of Alaska (Ecosystems/Subsistence - BIOL A104, 3 credits)
- 43 Fundamentals of Carving (ART A104, 3 credits)
- 49 Skin Sewing & Beading (ART A101, 1-3 credits)
- 45 Fiber & Basketry Activities: Attu/Alutiiq Basketry (1-3 credits)

### **Question 18-19: College Class Cost & Potential of Scholarship**

It was a fairly even split between respondents, with 49% who felt cost of a college class was not a challenge for them, whereas 51% felt that it might be. However, 78% of respondents had access to scholarship resources to enable their participation.

### **Question 20: Potential Certificates & Degree**

There were a significant number of respondents interested in earning an occupational endorsement, certificate or degree in the Alutiiq language or Cultural Studies. Most were interested in a 15 credit Alaska Native Cultural Preservation Occupational Endorsement (35) or an Alutiiq Language OE (33). Next, there were 29 respondents interested in a 30 credit Alaska Native Studies certificate and 20 interested in an Alaska Native Education certificate. As an alternative means for obtaining a teaching license in a Native language, the State of Alaska offers a Type M teaching license, 19 respondents were interested in pursuing this credential. There were also 22 individuals interested in pursuit of an AA in Alaska Native Studies for 60 credits.

### **Question 21: Course Method**

Surprisingly, the majority (62%) wanted to take classes via the Internet or via interactive distance delivery (46%). A strong 37% wanted classes in person, or via correspondence (29%). There were 41% who felt they would go either way and take a class in person or via distance delivery.

## **Question 22: Distance Learning**

As distance delivery education comes with challenges often, we asked respondents if they were familiar with being a distance learning student. It was an even split, at 50-50. We collected narrative responses from most on their level of familiarity, with 40 responses.

## **Question 23: Challenges**

To allow respondents to self-identify the challenges or barriers they felt they might have in completing an Alutiiq Studies course or degree program, we collected narrative statement responses on what kinds of barriers might keep them from completing courses or a degree program. The top four identified challenges were 1) Work obligations or schedule (23%), 2) Child or family care issues (16%), 3) Financial constraints with few scholarships available for part-time students (17%), and 4) General time management challenges (14%). Between 3-6% also responded that housing, family support, inconsistent course structure or support, and other schooling commitments would also be a challenge for their pursuit of Alutiiq language studies.

58 people responded to this question with the following types of responses:

- 23% Work Obligations / Schedule
- 18% Child or Family Care
- 17% Financial Constraints (few scholarships for part-time students)
- 14% Time Constraints or Management Issues
- 6% Current Course Load for Other Schooling
- 3% Structured, consistent courses with support
- 3% Support (from family or others)
- 3% Housing
- 10% Other (Health, Distance Tech Issues, Past Negative Experiences)

## **Question 24: Type of Potential Learning Opportunity**

As there are many types of activities for promoting language learning, we asked respondents which types they were most interested in for themselves or their families. The majority responded with self-learning via multimedia tools (71%), but we did get good responses on a number of other formats, prioritized based on responses:

- 69 Self-Learning through multimedia tools (via Internet, apps, computer games)
- 55 Self-Learning through print and audio CD materials
- 46 Summer Camp (Immersion in the language and culture)
- 45 Family Language Games and Activity Gatherings
- 45 Weekend Language Classes
- 44 Adult Language & Culture Club (ages 18+)
- 25 Youth Language & Culture Club (ages 11-18)
- 25 After School Program (ages 7-10)
- 22 Preschool (ages 3-6)
- 16 Language Nests (ages 0-3 in-home language activities with Elder)
- 8 Other

## **Question 25: Scheduling**

Class and activity scheduling is always a challenging process, as coordinators are unsure what times work best for the most participants. The majority of respondents preferred

Independently (50%), Saturdays (47%), immediately after work (44%) or later in the evening (48%) on week days. Next, 28% requested Sunday, 21% lunchtime, 13% during work, 8% mornings, and 16% elaborated with specific requests or claimed they were flexible for any time.

### **Question 26: Language Name**

The Alutiiq language has been known by several names in our region. When asked, “What word do you prefer to identify the language?” 64% responded they prefer “Alutiiq,” 17% had no preference, 11% preferred “Aleut,” 8% preferred “Sugt’stun” or “Sugpiaq.”

### **Question 27: Comments**

Most of the 34 comments provided were support for planning or existing efforts, as well as additional comments to follow up on their responses to other aspects of the survey.

### **Question 28-30: Contact Level & Release of Information**

Of 118 respondents, 102 provided their contact information and 90 of them requested ongoing communication via email or mail on Alutiiq language and cultural program updates. Most of the respondents released their information, either including their contact information (32%), anonymously (43%), or via generalized totals (8%). Only 1 requested that their information not be shared, and 13 requested they be contacted to discuss their responses.

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## **Alutiiq Language Planning Symposium**

On November 6, 2010, several Kodiak Alutiiq organizations collaborated to host a community planning symposium to expand on the Qik’rarmiut Alutiit Committee’s efforts to identify priority areas for revitalization efforts, and review survey results. It provided an opportunity for community members to voice their concerns and hopes, particularly for those who have not participated in previous planning efforts, including representation from Old Harbor and Port Lions villages via teleconference. Organizations who provide a variety of Alutiiq language programming provided updates on their efforts and their plans. Participants in four table groups worked together from 1:00 to 4:00 pm to respond to a series of key questions:

### **Partners: Starting Point**

*What is being done well to support revitalization that should be maintained?*

### **Needs: Barriers & Gaps**

*What are the biggest challenges for Alutiiq language revitalization?*

*What are the gaps, or what’s missing, to support language revitalization?*

### **Vision: Where do we go from here?**

*What realistic expectations do we have for Language Programs in 5 years?*

*How can I or my entity contribute to Alutiiq language revitalization?*



*Table Group Responses:*

**What is being done well?**

- Variety of Language clubs (5)
- Collaborations w/ Elders around Island
- Using modern technology to assist in learning Alutiiq
- Communication w/ other villages (4)
- NVA After School Program (3)
- Dig Afognak Camp (4)
- Development of educational materials
- H.S class (3)
- Recording Elders (3)
- Web portal at Alutiiq Museum
- Alutiiq word of the week
- Dance group (3)
- Encouragement & support for Elders (3)
- Elders willingness to teach (3)
- No Judgement
- Preschool efforts in Old Harbor
- Port Lions School Lesson
- Learning through song and dance
- Routine and dedication to time in school in Port Lions
- Work at Museum: materials, collaborations, Elders, Language Club, school (VTC) clubs, tribes, phrasebook

**What are the barriers or gaps needing to be filled?**

- Not spoken like it used to be
- Not many fluent speakers (3)/ teachers/coordinators
- Funding (3)
- Timing/schedule for learning (3)
- Incorporating into daily lives
- Classes offered to all ages and include k-12 (2)
- Mini lessons
- Support for Elders
- Speakers who won't speak
- Collaboration/ownership
- Too many considerations
- More opportunities to "get together" (2)
- Different village style (2) complicates the development of materials...etc
- Distance (location)
- Losing learners interest
- Interest from younger generation
- Need more learners
- Politics of sub-dialects (N vs S)
- Lack of teaching all dialects or words
- Tension between communities

- Loss of Elders
- More materials
- More teachers
- No family learning
- Lack of consistency to teach

**Where do we go from here? (Vision in 5 Years)**

<b>Develop Teacher/Learners</b>	<b>Develop Materials</b>	<b>Increase Contact Opportunities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have 5 new fluent speakers</li> <li>• More research on teaching &amp; learning</li> <li>• Fluent/semi fluent teachers in every community at least (2)</li> <li>• Developed adult learners who can teach</li> <li>• College speaker pool</li> <li>• Become a learner because everyone has different capabilities</li> <li>• Passing on the language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alutiiq Song &amp; Dance</li> <li>• More singing cd series</li> <li>• Know and memorize introductions to Alutiiq songs</li> <li>• Learn how to drum better</li> <li>• Cultural groups- Dancers more involved</li> <li>• Know regalia and head dress (representation)</li> <li>• More activities, games</li> <li>• Imagination Library model</li> <li>• Video with Elders</li> <li>• More video series with elder voices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool Immersion</li> <li>• More conversation</li> <li>• Expand Distance-learning Island wide</li> <li>• More opportunities to learn More involved/welcome Elders in school</li> <li>• More time talking with the younger generation</li> <li>• Family night around a book</li> <li>• Expand the interest</li> <li>• Alutiiq I/II in all schools</li> <li>• More community participation (not relegated to 1 week)</li> <li>• Weekly opportunity in every community</li> <li>• Alutiiq Facebook (distance/communication/network)</li> <li>• Language Booth at Crab Festival</li> <li>• More individuals supporting fundraisers</li> <li>• Family unit vs. school</li> </ul>

**What can I/organization contribute?**

- Time, effort, interest
- Get involved in existing activities
- Learn the language
- Keep teaching
- Help others learn
- Org: Translations, materials, audio cd's, work with Elders, teach,
- Advocate for organizations in role as a multi-board member.

# Alutiiq Language Symposium

## Guest List

Name	Phone #	Email address	Elder Learner	Community
Julie Knogin	<sup>486</sup> 5891	JKnogin@afognak.org	Elder Learner	Kodiak
Dennis Knogin	486-5891		+1	Kodiak
Futthy Drabek	<sup>206</sup> 227 6055	futhleendrabeck@hotmail		
<del>Florence Astorhoff</del>	<del>486 5434</del>	<del>florance_192@hotmail.com</del>	<del>elder</del>	<del>Kodiak</del>
Mary Kaakan	286-2233		Elder	Old Harbor
Denise May	454-2505	denise@camaj.com	Learner	Port Lions
Candace Branson	486-1393	candace.branson@kanawha.org	learner	Kodiak
Denise Malutin	6-6357	denise@afognak.org	learner	Kodiak
SUSAN MALUTIN	6-6216	smalutin@gci.net	learner	Kodiak
Rebecca Pruitt	942-11015		Learner	Kodiak
Patricia Kozak		PKozak@gci.net	beginner!	Kodiak
Nick Aokli	6-4326		Elder	AKHIOK/Kodiak
April Counceller			Learner	Kodiak
Sherry Cough	486 6060		Elder	(From) AKHIOK
Barb Hochwirth	942-5228		Elder	Kodiak
Fred Coyle	539-7160	clga boy@aakstka.net	Elder	Kodiak - NAK.
Trisha Pruitt	539-2711	trishawarrior@hotmail.com		Kodiak
Steven Pruitt	539-2362			Kodiak
Brea Dawson	539-1127		Student <sup>learner</sup>	Kodiak
Ruth Dawson	486-5261	ruth@camaj.com	Elder Learner	Kodiak
Lena Amazon			Learner	OH
Peogy Azuyak			Learner	OH
Kathy Nelson			Learner	Port Lions
Paul Kahutak			Elder	OH
Michael Alexandroff			Elder	Old H
Dorinda Kewan			learner	PU
Melissa Borton			learner	Kodiak
Kari Sherod			learner	Kd
Jacquelyn Sherod			learner	Kd