Story Knife Studio

Funding Recommendation — RRR Initiative

To: North Slope Borough School District Leadership
From: Story Knife Studio
Date: October 27, 2026
Re: Culturally responsive animation for North Slope History & Culture

At the request of the District's Iñupiaq Education department, Story Knife Studio recommends that the District set aside supplemental funding to add **culturally responsive animated introductions** to the North Slope History & Culture course under the Repair, Rebuild, Revitalize initiative. This memo summarizes the request and the reasoning behind it.

What we're recommending

Story Knife Studio are animators from the region and are capable of producing short animated introductions for the units and lessons of North Slope History & Culture. Six scripts are ready to produce now, totaling roughly **21 minutes** of finished animation, supported by about 57 custom maps, infographics, archival images, and text cards. **Additional scripts are still in development**, so we recommend the District budget a not-to-exceed amount that covers the current scripts and leaves room for the next round without a second approval. We recommend funding this for one course now and evaluating the result as a model for the remaining four RRR courses.

Why it's worth funding

- **Culturally responsive by construction.** The animators are from the region — the visual language, place names, and framing come from within the community, not applied from outside.
- **It outlasts staff turnover.** Regional and cultural framing is embedded directly in the course, so it persists regardless of who is teaching in a given year — a risk the RRR discovery findings named directly.
- **It fits the content.** Units on epidemics, demography, and trade history rely on archival and sensitive material that animation handles more clearly and respectfully than live video.
- **The cost is modest.** The request is roughly 1.5–2% of the original project value, applied to a course the District has already paid to develop.

A note on scope

This work is **outside the executed scope of work** and the original USDA DLT grant and appropriation funding. It is a different production discipline than the live media capture that was budgeted, and it produces new, District-owned assets rather than substituting for any contracted deliverables.

Estimated cost

Current six scripts (~21 min)	Total (billed)
Low — lean	$15,937.50
Mid — expected	$18,262.50
High — generous	$20,087.50
Recommended set-aside — NTE	**$25,000.00**

The six current scripts bill between $15,937.50 and $20,087.50 by animation complexity. Because more scripts are still in development, we recommend a not-to-exceed authorization of $25,000 — covering the

current scripts at the generous treatment with headroom for the next round. Per-script and asset breakdowns are in the accompanying cost matrix.

Recommended action

That District leadership authorize the Iñupiaq Education department, in coordination with Story Knife Studio, to set aside supplemental funding on a **not-to-exceed basis of $25,000** to produce animated unit and lesson introductions for North Slope History & Culture — covering the six scripts ready now and additional scripts in development — with the results evaluated as a model for the remaining RRR courses. Further, LYNX recommends the set-aside be designated to be paid directly to the animation vendors, not through LYNX, unless otherwise desired by the district leadership team.

Questions may be directed to Bristol Lakshas, Lead Animator, Story Knife Studio.