



# Iñupiaq Education Department



Director Qaggunna Tenna Pili



# HIGHLIGHTS

- **Uqautiluᅇa Iñupiatun Immersion Program Year 2 & Plans for Year 3**
  - Operating K3/K4 and Kindergarten classrooms at Ipalook Elementary School
  - Mapping Iñupiaq literacy plan & building plans for Grade 1 classroom opening
  - Waitlist large enough to open another classroom (barrier: hiring of more fluent teachers for another classroom)
  - Standards based curriculum development
  - Partner with State on development of Iñupiaq Language Literacy Screeners and Alaska Native Language Standards



# HIGHLIGHTS

- **Iñupiaq Language Program**
  - Scope & Sequence with Aligned Curriculum, Materials and Resources
  - IVALU (Iñupiaq Vocabulary Acquisition and Assessment Language Units)
  - Iñupiaq Language Textbook & Card Games publications
  - Compulsory Iñupiaq Language requirements in secondary education
- **Iñupiaq Learning Framework Book completion**
  - Formation of ILF started in 2006
  - Adopted by Board of Education in 2008
  - Based on work done by the Apqusiutit Iłiniagnikun
  - Local set of standards from the Iñupiaq worldview
  - Philosophy and Framework as the foundation in which we conduct operations at the NSBSD



# HIGHLIGHTS

- **Local Science, Social Studies, & Iñupiaq Language courses**
  - Repair, Rebuild, Revitalize Grant Initiatives to expand and grow North Slope Science, North Slope History & Culture, North Slope Government courses in three modalities
  - Build new courses Iñupiaq Grammar and Conversational Iñupiaq
- **Elementary Governance Unit Development**
  - Focus to ensure students are receiving local history, governance, and social studies starting in K3/K4
- **Early Reader Series**
  - Iñupiaq & English story books and informational texts for students K-Grade 3
  - Next steps after publication: audio/digital books



# HIGHLIGHTS

- **Iḷisaurriḡuqta Program**
  - Recruitment push for spring 2025 enrollment
  - NSBSD offered stipend for spring 2025 enrollees
- **Iñupiaq Fine Arts Program**
  - All sites have had an intensive implemented, and will do another round in the spring
  - Evenings have focused on community programming
  - Plans for continuation in SY25-26
- **Creation of Digital Iñupiaq “Bookshelf”**
  - All sites have had an intensive implemented, and will do another round in the spring



# HIGHLIGHTS

- **Iñupiaq Mentor-Apprentice Program**
  - Partnership with IHLC, funded through NPR-A Grant
  - Full time manager hired to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the program
  - Focus: opportunities for highly motivated teachers, staff, parents, and adult learners to increase fluency to ensure we can continue progressing in language teaching acquisition
  - Support NSBSD Mission & Strategic Plan



# CHALLENGES

- **Staffing**
  - filling all of our language teacher vacancies
  - increasing staffing and capacity within the department to support district-wide initiatives
  - Coverage to sites/immersion program
- **Language Proficiency of Program Staff**
  - Mentor-Apprentice Program focus to support language progression of staff
  - More support/time of language teaching staff to focus on personal language progression  
(note: Challenge/need to support goal to graduate bilingual students – dual language model, K3-12 mandatory language pullout, growth of immersion program, etc.)



## PRIORITIES OF FOCUS

- **Increasing language proficiency of our program staff** Iñupialgusisa! (*Let us become really good Iñupiaq speakers!*) – Iñupiaq Mentor-Apprentice Program
  - We need to increase the proficiency of our teaching staff to continue supporting student learning and language progression which leads to bilingual status
- **Filling Vacancies for K3—12 Language Teaching Positions**
  - In addition to increasing language proficiency of staff, we need to fill all vacancies to support K3-12 language programming at all sites





# PRIORITIES OF FOCUS

- **Uqautiluna Inupiatun Immersion Classrooms in Villages**
  - 2-3 Staff per Classroom
  - Additional program staff support
  - Community/Parent/Fluent Speaker support
- **Family & Community Partnerships**
  - Enhancing community-led cultural inservices and implementation of Classrooms on the Nuna at 1-2 additional sites in SY25-26



# PARTNERSHIP NEEDS

- **Time Release of NSB Staff**
  - NSB is a major employer in which employees can support Iñupiaq language initiatives through time release
- **Time Release from Private Sector Staff**
  - Collectively, all North Slope organizations are working towards the same goals.
  - Working collaboratively towards achieving these goals is what we need to explore.

