



AEIN Rural Visits



Who are we?

We are the preservice teaching program with the College of Education at UAA, partner schools who host teaching interns and AEIN which support the rural visits.

Who has been involved?

- AEIN Staff: Tim Jester, Ed.D., Nancy Boxler, Lisa Gonzales Ives, Meredith Curry and many students of teaching and mentor teachers
- Kodiak Island Borough School District
- Kashunamiut School District
- Lower Kuskokwim School District
- Lake & Peninsula Borough School District
- Pribilof School District
- Yupit School District

What was the focus of your AEIN school improvement work?

Provide opportunities for preservice teachers to participate in rural experience activities. One of the goals of the AEIN grant is to strengthen ties among partner districts to support culturally responsive teaching and learning for **all** students, with particular emphasis on Alaska Natives and a core strategy of preparing Alaska teachers to incorporate local knowledge and ways of knowing into their curriculum and teaching methods. The rural experience program supports the grant's goal through six desired outcomes:

- Enhance learning from and with Alaska's communities and people.
- Deepen knowledge of self and others as socio-cultural beings and understand the connections to teaching and learning.
- Increase understanding of the history, culture, and values of Alaska Natives.
- Apply culturally responsive teaching to better support Alaska Native students' learning.
- Incorporate local funds of knowledge into teaching and learning environments.
- Increase numbers of UAA graduates teaching in rural school districts.



What was your process or strategy?

Interns applied to participate in the rural visit program. Those selected worked in a village for two weeks in September, November, or February. The process included three stages:

- Before Visit: Participate in a Preparatory Meeting
- During Visit: Work in school; engage with community; maintain a personal journal
- After Visit: Debriefing Session

What further questions does your work pose?

What are benefits to the hosting districts? How can we integrate intercultural experiences, such as the rural visit, into our preservice programs? In what ways does the experience translate into classroom practice?

What are you learning & how do you know?

From the data being collected from our interns, we are learning:

- Intercultural experiences: Promising potential for preparing culturally responsive teachers
- Structure and organization: Very important to provide thoughtful structure and organization (e.g., preparatory work and guided reflection during and after visit)

ALASKA EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS NETWORK

