

# KI

# UUKTUUN IÑUPIURAALLANIKUN

2020-MIÑ 2022-MUN



2020-2022 IÑUPIAQ LANGUAGE SURVEY

UPINGAAQ 2023

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2020-MIÑ 2022-MUN

2020-2022 IÑUPIAQ LANGUAGE SURVEY

## Iñupiaqativut | *Our People*

1. Please indicate which community you represent  
(Choose one)
2. Gender
3. Age Group  
(Choose one)

## Uqausiqput | *Our Language*

4. Please choose your level of Iñupiaq fluency
5. Where do I use the language?
6. When do I use the language?  
(using numbers 1-5 as a scoring rubric,  
1 being most of the time, 5 being the least)

## Iñupialgusiniaqativut | *We Will Speak Iñupiaq*

7. Please checkmark the statements you agree with:
8. I learn best when...
9. Checkmark any that applies to your wishes/wants
10. Any other comments or questions, please leave them here:

# Iłisimaraksrat | *General Introduction*

The KI Coalition (short for **Kipigñiuqtit Iñupiuraallanikun** “those who are passionate through speaking our language”) was formed in 2018 as a coalition of language activists across **Iñupiat Nunaat** committed to the revitalization of the Iñupiaq language. The need for a comprehensive language survey was identified at the Alaska Native Language Revitalization Institute (ANLRI) in April 2018.

The goal of the survey was to gain a detailed understanding of the status of the Iñupiaq language in Alaska across **Iñupiat Nunaat** (Iñupiat lands) and beyond. The mission of the survey was to collect qualitative data about Iñupiaq language resources, attitudes, and needs, at near-full participation level (as many Inupiat as possible). The purpose of the survey was to understand the status of the Iñupiaq language so we can assess and build a language plan, to be the foundational document for the revitalization of Inupiaq language. A language plan document based on the results of this survey will be forthcoming.

**“Uktuun Iñupiuraallanikun 2020-2022”** is a qualitative survey to identify attitudes of the Inupiaq community, in addition to projections of approximate speaker count. Not only can we learn how many speakers we have but projections we will gain a broad insight into the attitudes, barriers, successes, and motivations of our Iñupiaq community, across **Iñupiat Nunaat** and wherever our community members now reside.

The survey was originally released in February 2020, with the support of the North Slope Borough Iñupiat Heritage, Culture, and Language Commission (IHLC), Aqqaluk Trust, NANA Language Commission, and Kawerak, Inc. In the Kawerak region survey, questions for Yup'ik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik were also included to reflect the language diversity of the Seward Peninsula.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the survey was extended through 2021 and again until April 2022, due to difficulties in reaching survey takers due to physical distancing requirements. The survey was closed in 2022, due to maxing out the number of survey participants without funding for door knocking or phone calling. A future more comprehensive survey should endeavor to do a full census of Iñupiat, however, this survey has valuable data about how to move forward to revitalize our Iñupiaq language and perpetuate it for generations to come.

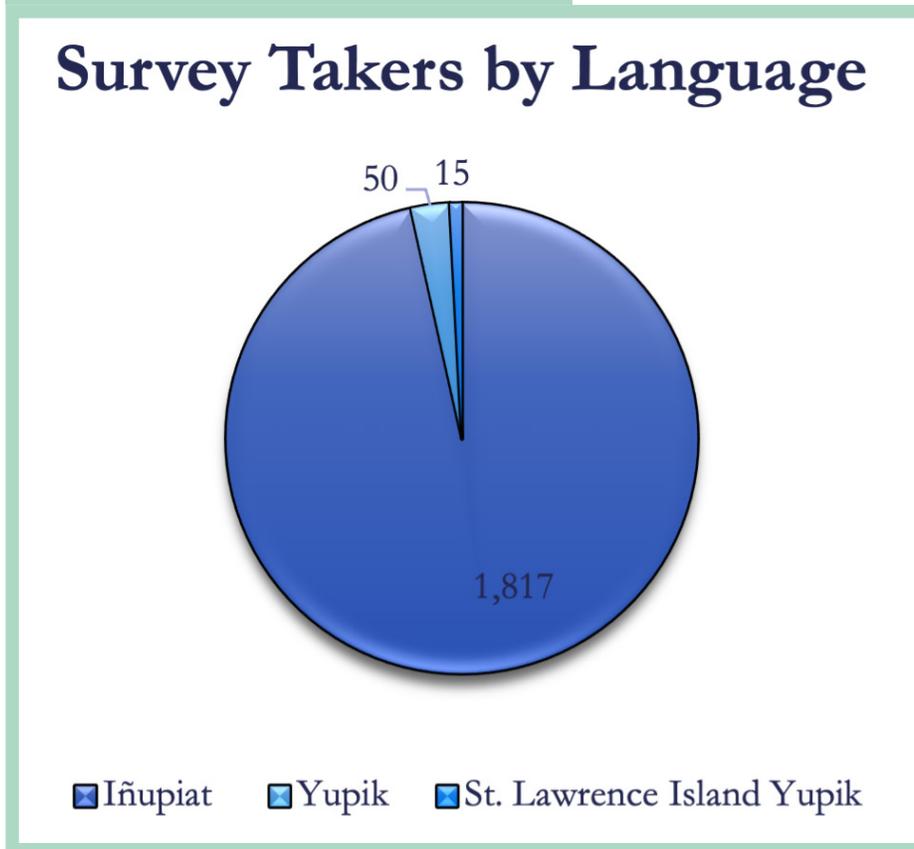
This report was prepared by Myles Creed, with input from other members of Kipigñiuqtit Iñupiuraallanikun. Report design was done by Jacquii with a Cue. Quyanaq to Aqqaluk Trust, Ayyu Qassataq, John Creed & Susan Andrews, Myles Creed, and Reid Magdanz for donations of Alaska Airlines miles to support the language survey. Quyanaqpak to Aqqaluk Trust for donating funds for the design of this report.

## Demographics

### 1. Please indicate which community you represent (Choose one)

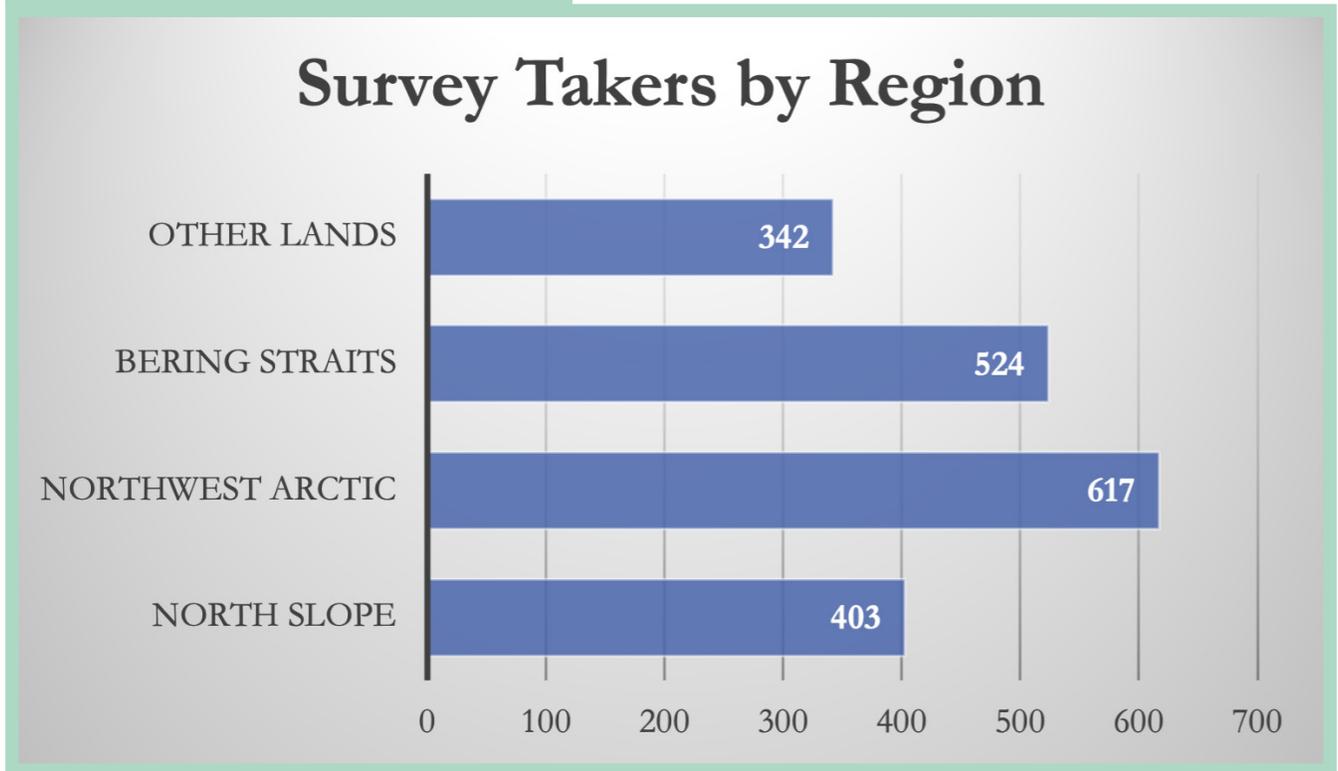
The total number of survey takers was 1,838 **Iñuit** (people). 1,817 survey takers were Iñupiaq, 50 survey takers were Yup'ik and 15 survey takers were St. Lawrence Island Yupik. Yup'ik and St. Lawrence Island Yupik were included in this survey to represent these communities in the Bering Straits region.

**Figure 1: Survey Takers by Language**



403 survey takers were from the North Slope Borough, 617 survey takers were from the Northwest Arctic Borough, 524 survey takers were from the Bering Straits region, and 342 survey takers were Iñupiat living on other lands beyond Iñupiat Nunaat<sup>1</sup>.

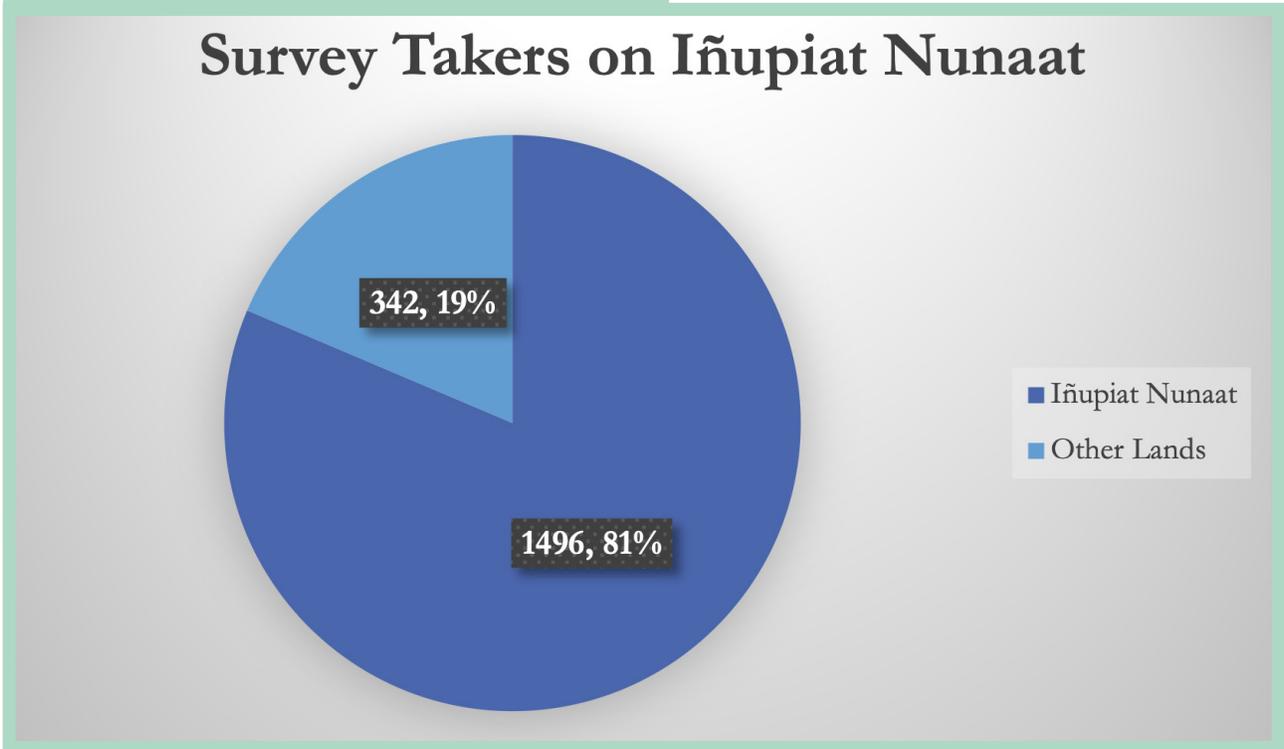
Figure 2: Survey Takers by Region



1496 survey takers were living on Iñupiat Nunaat (81%), while 342 survey takers were living on other lands (19%).

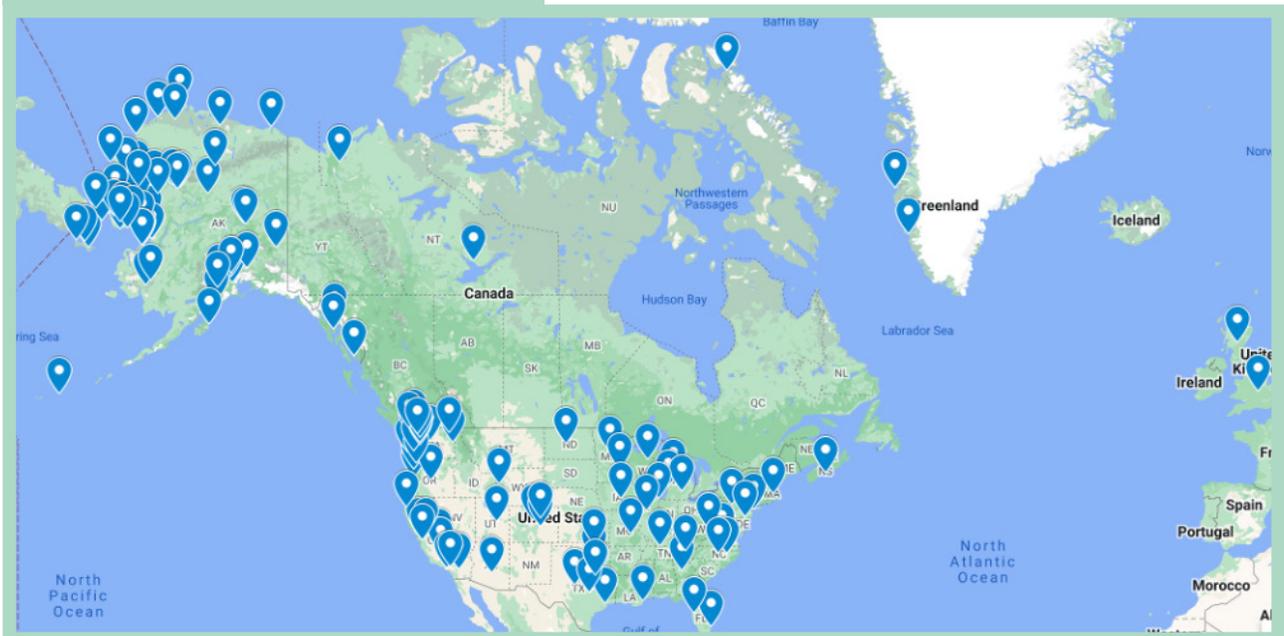
<sup>1</sup>Meaning Iñupiaq lands, the name can also be rendered as Iñupiat Nunaat or Inupiat Nunaat.

Figure 3: Survey Takers on Iñupiat Nunaat



Survey takers came from many communities across the globe, in **Iñupiat Nunaat**, **Yupit Nunaat** (Yupik lands), Anchorage, **Atqasugiksuaq** (Fairbanks), Juneau, other communities in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California, Texas, other states in the **Tannapta Nunaat** (United States), **Kanata** (Canada), **Kalaallit Nunaat** (Greenland), **Uruusiq** (Russia), and **Tannapta Umialgutaa** (United Kingdom). The map below shows all the place survey takers come from.

Figure 4: Survey Takers Locations



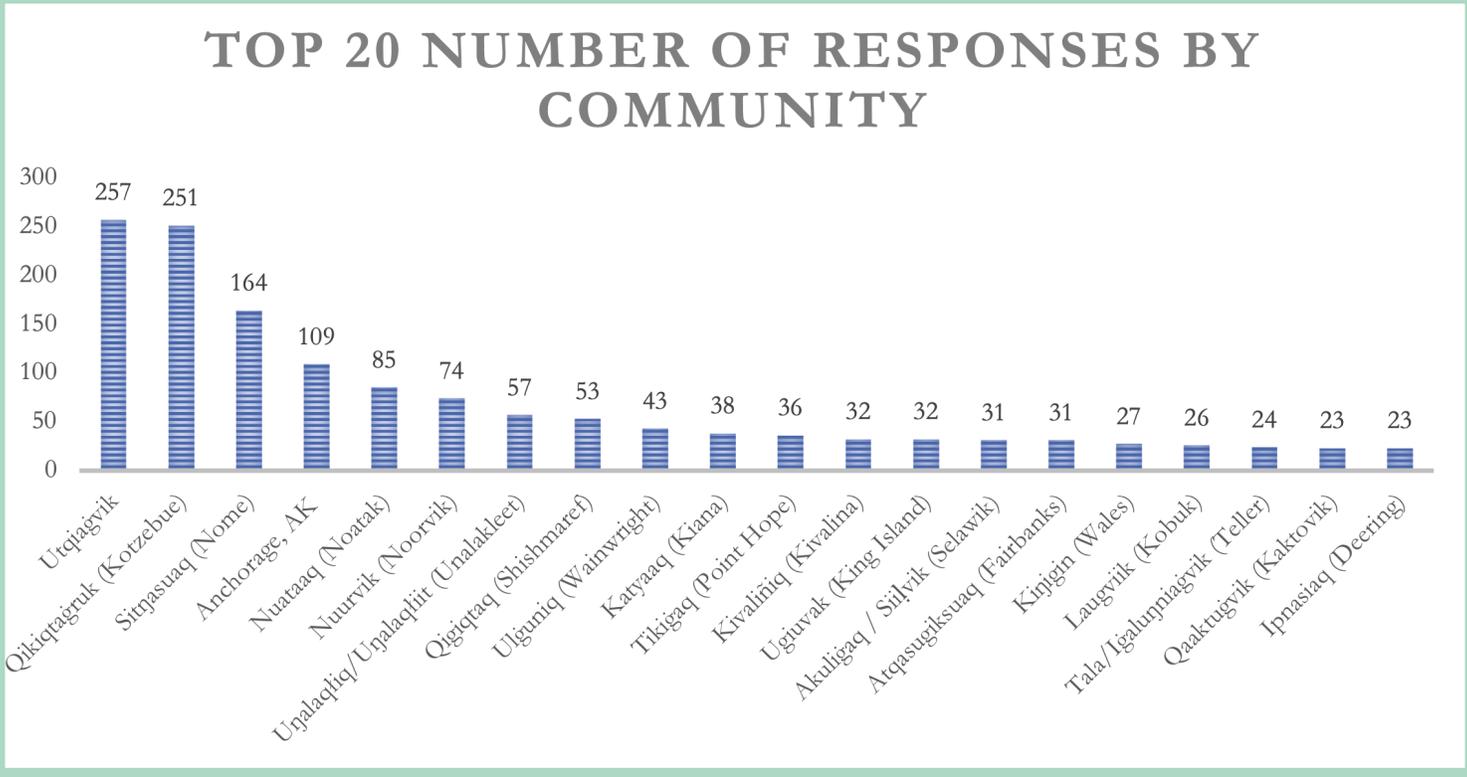
**Figure 5: Top Response Numbers by Community**

<b>Communities</b>	<b>Number of Survey Takers</b>
<b>Utqiagvik</b>	257
<b>Qikiqtagruk   Kotzebue</b>	251
<b>Sitnasuaq   Nome</b>	164
<b>Anchorage, AK</b>	109
<b>Nautaaq   Noatak</b>	85
<b>Nuurvik   Noorvik</b>	74
<b>Uᅇalaqliq - Uᅇalaqliit   Unalakleet</b>	57
<b>Qigiqtaq   Shishmaref</b>	53
<b>Ulguniq   Wainwright</b>	43
<b>Katyaaq   Kiana</b>	38
<b>Tikiᅇaq   Point Hope</b>	36
<b>Kivaliᅇiq   Kivalina</b>	32
<b>Ugiuvak   King Island</b>	32
<b>Akuliᅇaq - Siilvik   Selawik</b>	31
<b>Atqasugiksuaq   Fairbanks</b>	31
<b>Kiᅇigin   Wales</b>	27
<b>Laugviik   Kobuk</b>	26
<b>Tala - Iᅇaluᅇniagvik   Teller</b>	24
<b>Qaaktuᅇvik   Kaktovik</b>	23
<b>Ipnatchiaq   Deering</b>	23
<b>Nuiqsat   Nuiqsut</b>	22
<b>Nachizrvik - Nasirvik   White Mountain</b>	21
<b>Ivisaappaat   Ambler</b>	20
<b>Kuuyuk   Koyuk</b>	20
<b>Isiᅇnaq   Shungnak</b>	18
<b>Saqtuliq   Shaktoolik</b>	18
<b>Nunatchiaq - Kaᅇiq   Buckland</b>	17
<b>Atqasuk   Meade River</b>	16
<b>Sitaisaq - Sinauraq   Brevig Mission</b>	15
<b>Anaqtuuvak   Anaktuvuk Pass</b>	14
<b>Iᅇaliq   Diomede</b>	13
<b>Palmer, AK</b>	11
<b>Chingik - Siᅇik   Golovin</b>	9
<b>Iᅇlu - Qawiaraq   Mary's Igloo</b>	9
<b>California</b>	8
<b>Kali   Point Lay</b>	7
<b>Seattle, WA</b>	7
<b>Mesa, AZ</b>	7
<b>Washington State</b>	7
<b>Kauᅇaq - Akautchak   Council</b>	6
<b>Niviarcaurluq   Elim</b>	6
<b>Soldotna, AK</b>	5
<b>Juneau, AK</b>	4
<b>Kalapuya Land   Salem, Oregon</b>	4
<b>Wasilla, AK</b>	4
<b>North Pole, AK</b>	4

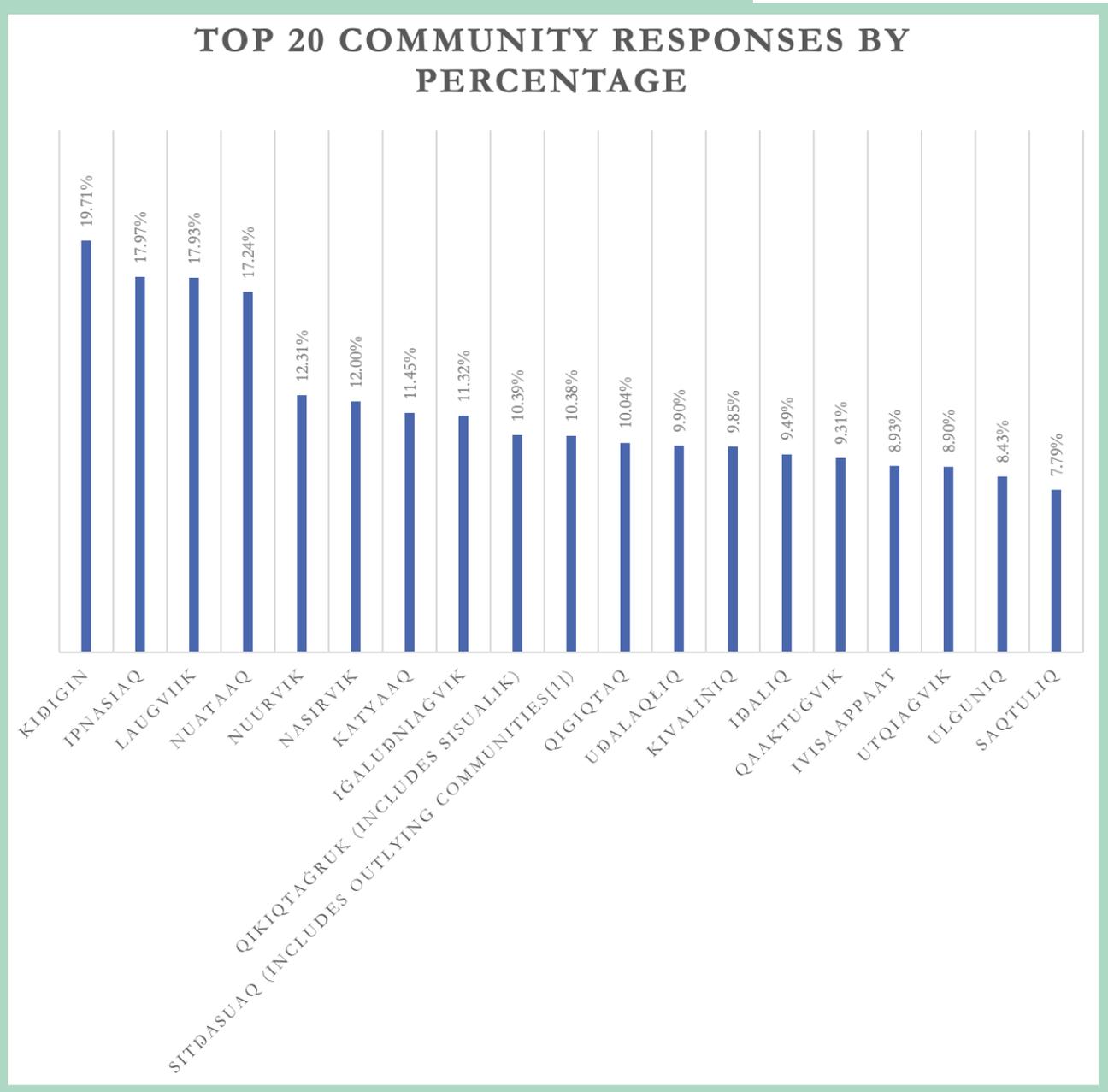
109 other communities or states across **Tannapta Nunaat** (United States), **Kanata** (Canada), **Kalaallit Nunaat** (Greenland), **Uruusiq** (Russia) and **Tannapta Umialgootaa** (United Kingdom) had 3 or less responses each.

In the diagrams below, you can see the communities with the most response rates (by community (A) and by percentage of Iñupiat in community who took the survey).

**Figure 6: Top 20 Number of Responses by Community**



**Figure 7: Top 20 Community by Percentage of Respondents**



<sup>1</sup>Ugiuvak (King Island), Aajuutaq (Solomon), Akautchak/Kauġaq (Council), & Signaq (Sinuk)

**Figure 8: Top 20 Responses by Community (Percentage) Table**

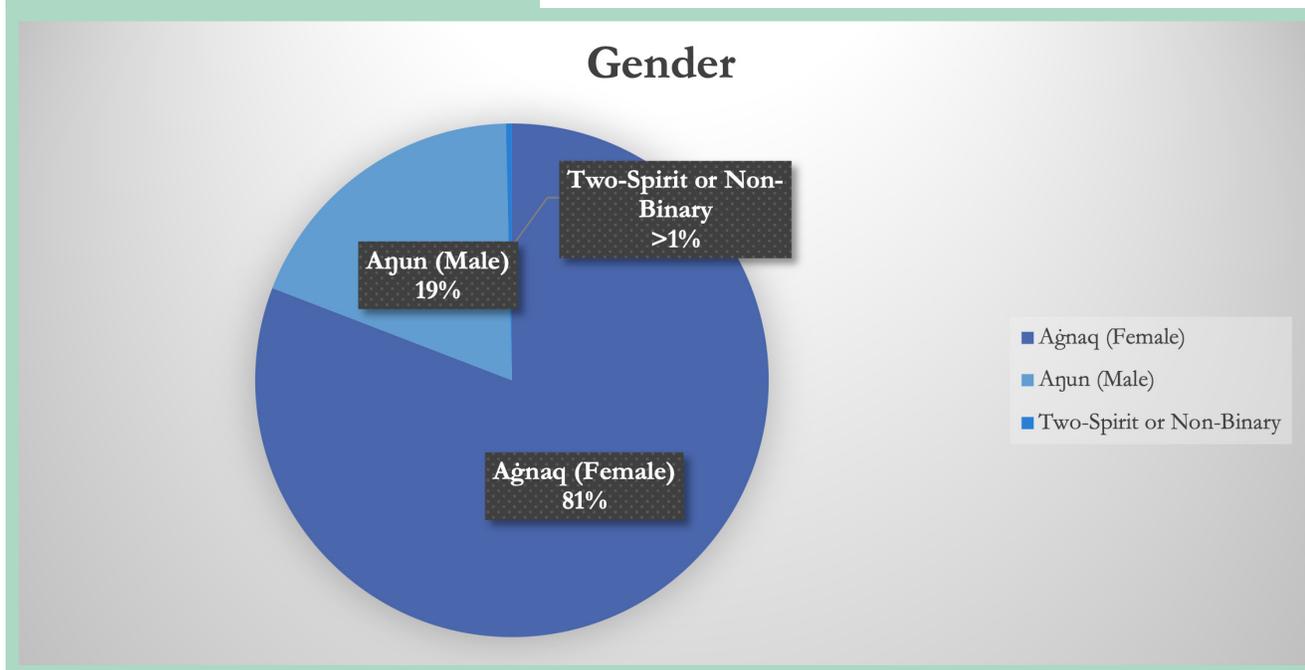
<i>Iñupiaq Name</i>	<i>English Name</i>	<i>est. Iñupiat population (Census 2010)</i>	<i>Survey Responses</i>	<i>est. percentage of Iñupiat in community taking survey</i>
Kinigin	Wales	137	27	19.71%
Ipnasiaq	Deering	128	23	17.97%
Laugviik	Kobuk	145	26	17.93%
Nautaaq	Noatak	493	85	17.24%
Nuurvik	Noorvik	601	74	12.31%
Nasirvik	White Mountain	175	21	12.00%
Katyaaq	Kiana	332	38	11.45%
Igaluṅniagvik	Teller	212	24	11.32%
Qikiqtaḡruk (includes Sisualik)	Kotzebue	2,465	256	10.39%
Sitṅasuaq (includes outlying communities )	Nome	2,071	215	10.38%
Qigiqtaq	Shishmaref	528	53	10.04%
Uṅalaqliq	Unalakleet	576	57	9.90%
Kivaliṅiq	Kivalina	325	32	9.85%
Iṅjaliq	Diomedea	137	13	9.49%
Qaaktuḡvik	Kaktovik	247	23	9.31%
Ivisaappaat	Ambler	224	20	8.93%
Utqiagvik	Utqiagvik	2,889	257	8.90%
Ulguniq	Wainwright	510	43	8.43%
Saqtuliq	Shaktoolik	231	18	7.79%

\*U.S. Census 2010 is used as a reference, since detailed demographic information is not yet available for U.S. Census 2020.

## 2. Gender

There was a large gender imbalance in the demographics of the survey takers, with 1,210 **aġnat** (women) taking the survey (81%) and 282 **aġutit** (men) taking the survey (19%). 7 **malġuġnik ðilitqusiqaquat** (two-spirit) or non-binary people took the survey as well.

Figure 9: Survey Takers by Gender



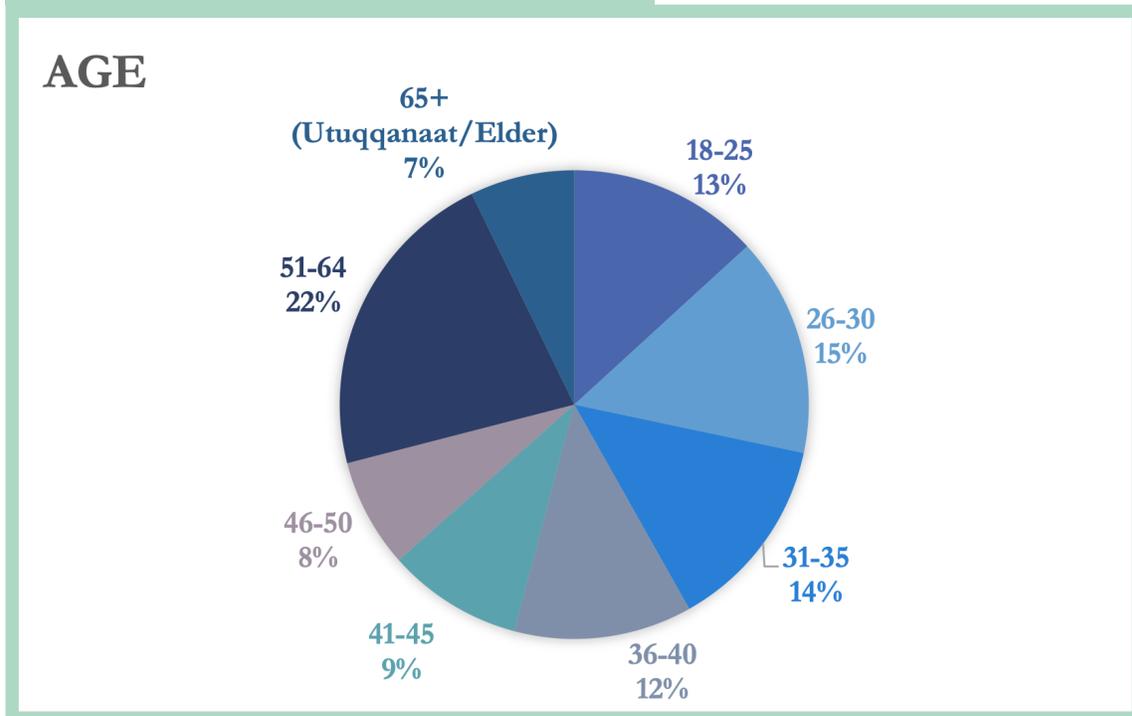
### 3. Age group (please choose one)

The survey was fairly evenly sampled by age, with the following numbers of responses by age group:

**Figure 10: Age of Respondents Table**

Age	# of Respondents
18-25	242
26-30	277
31-35	248
36-40	225
41-45	171
46-50	138
51-64	400
65+	132
Utuqqanaat Elder	

**Figure 11: Ages of Respondents (Pie Graph)**



## Fluency & Usage

### 4. Please CHOOSE your level of Iñupiaq fluency

Survey participants were asked to rate their level of Iñupiaq fluency on five levels:

**LEVEL A:** I am fully fluent with mastery of old and new vocabulary, and can function effectively when translating, speaking, understanding, and writing the language.

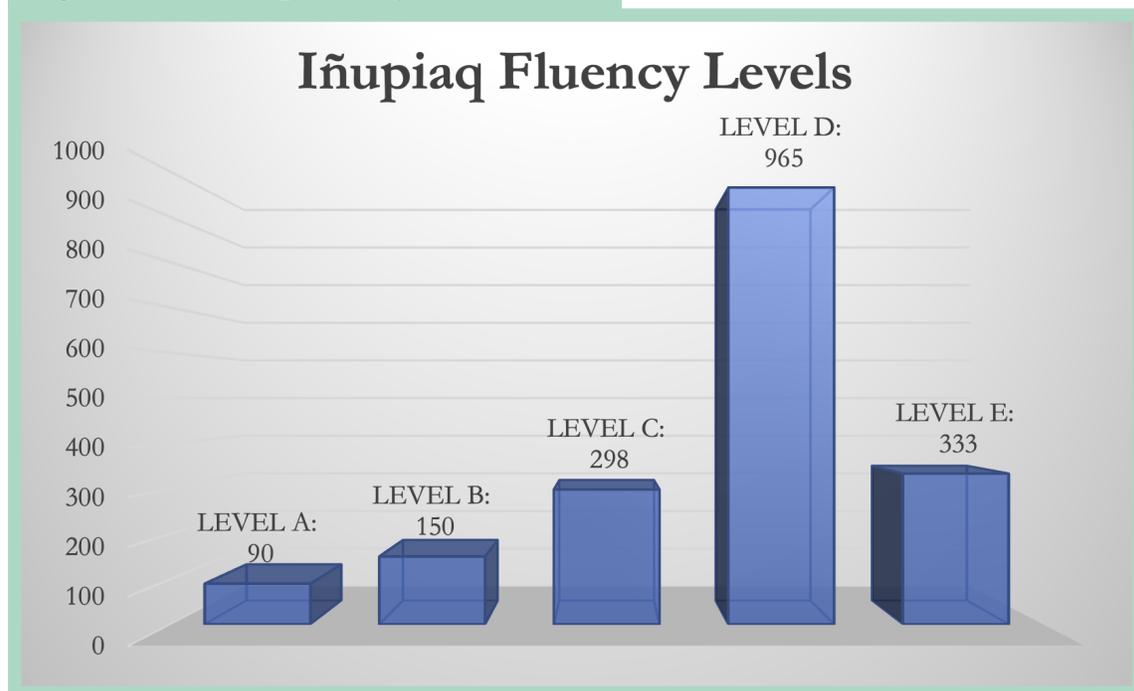
**LEVEL B:** I can somewhat converse in Iñupiaq but with difficulty; I have good grammar structure and can understand a lot of what is said in the language, a fluent speaker can understand me with few errors and corrections

**LEVEL C:** I have limited speaking ability, with restricted vocabulary, am considered a “broken” Iñupiaq speaker while using some errors but can understand a majority of the language.

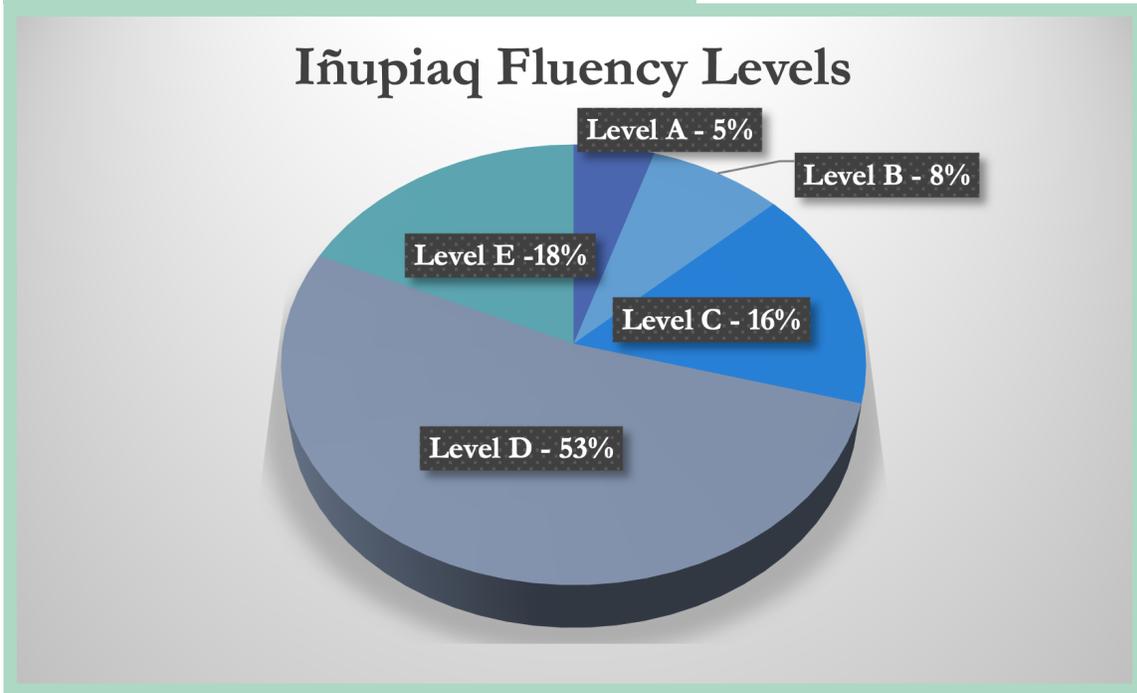
**LEVEL D:** I have little to no speaking ability. Can understand some. Greet others and use basic Iñupiaq language with others.

**LEVEL E:** I have heard Iñupiaq being spoken but I DO NOT speak or understand it.

**Figure 12: Iñupiaq Fluency Levels Chart**



**Figure 13: Iñupiaq Fluency Levels (Pie Graph)**



It is important to note that this survey is a **not** a scientifically representative sample (and the estimates below may be off significantly). However, based on these survey results, we would estimate the following numbers from the general public, assuming a total Iñupiat population of 25,000 (2020 U.S. Census estimate) .

- LEVEL A:** 1,250 Iñupiat
- LEVEL B:** 2,000 Iñupiat
- LEVEL C:** 4,000 Iñupiat
- LEVEL D:** 13,250 Iñupiat
- LEVEL E:** 4,500 Iñupiat

There is some good news and bad news from these numbers. Clearly, the number of fluent Iñupiaq speakers has declined in the last thirteen years from 2,144 speakers (Krauss 2009) to 1,250 highly fluent speakers. However, there are likely also many semi-speakers estimated at 6,000 (Level B & C) and the majority of Iñupiat have some knowledge of Iñupiaq, estimated at 20,500 Iñupiat (Levels A, B, C & D). Only 18% of survey takers had no knowledge of Iñupiaq, at 4,500 (Level E). These numbers show that we have much ground to make up, but also a wealth of opportunity and strong interventions already taken over the last several decades to revitalize Iñupiaq.

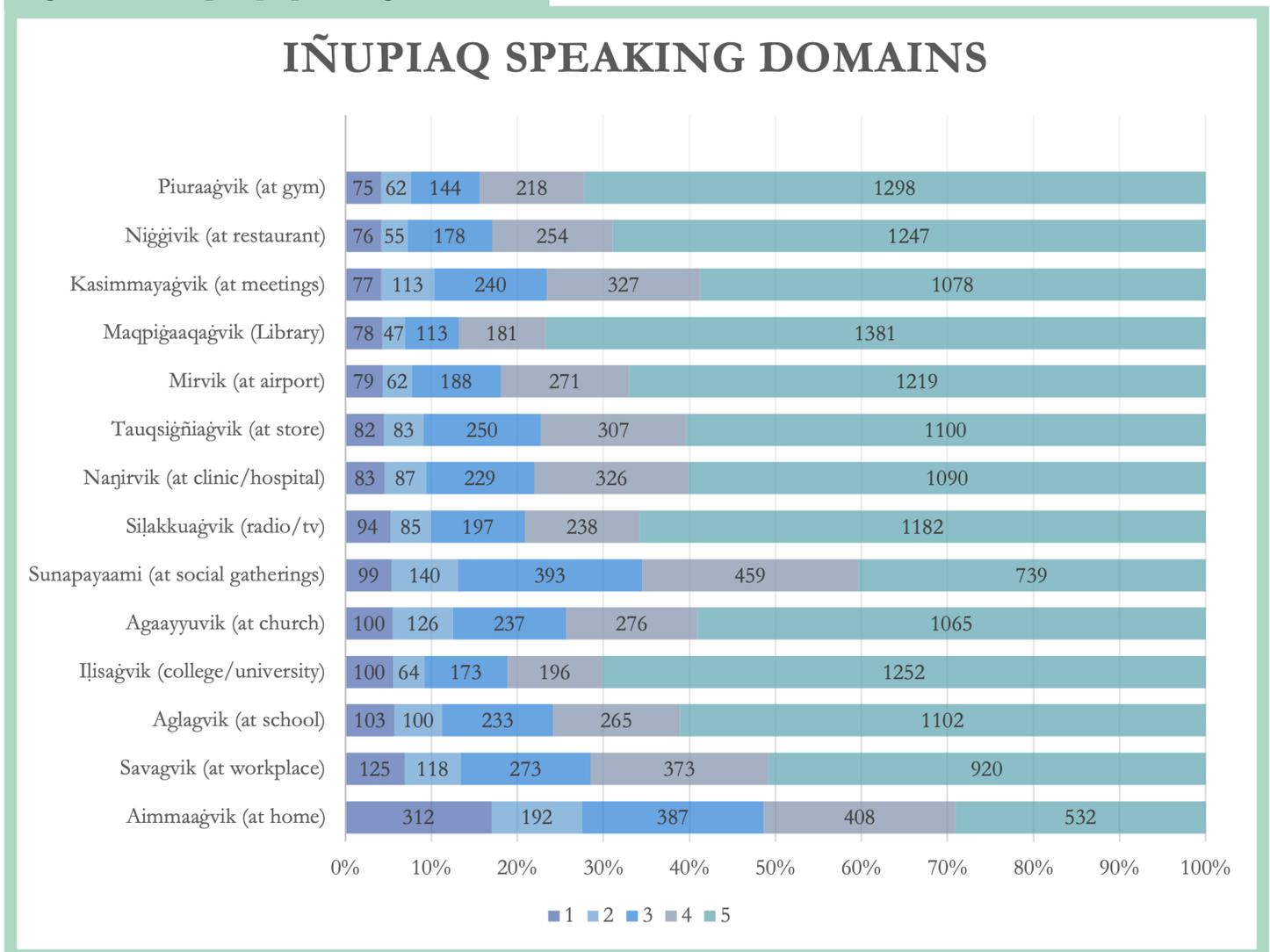
A future more comprehensive survey should do a census of all Iñupiaq fluent speakers to get a more accurate count of fluent speakers, rather than this vague estimate.

<sup>3</sup>Detailed numbers of Census data by ethnicity will not be available to the public until 2023, so these numbers represent a rough estimate based on approximate population growth since 2010.

## 5. Where do I use the language?

The domains where Iñupiaq is spoken vary, but the home is the place where it is being spoken the most, with it being sometimes also used at work, at school, at the university, at church and social gatherings. In no location did the majority of survey takers say they were speaking Iñupiaq most of the time.

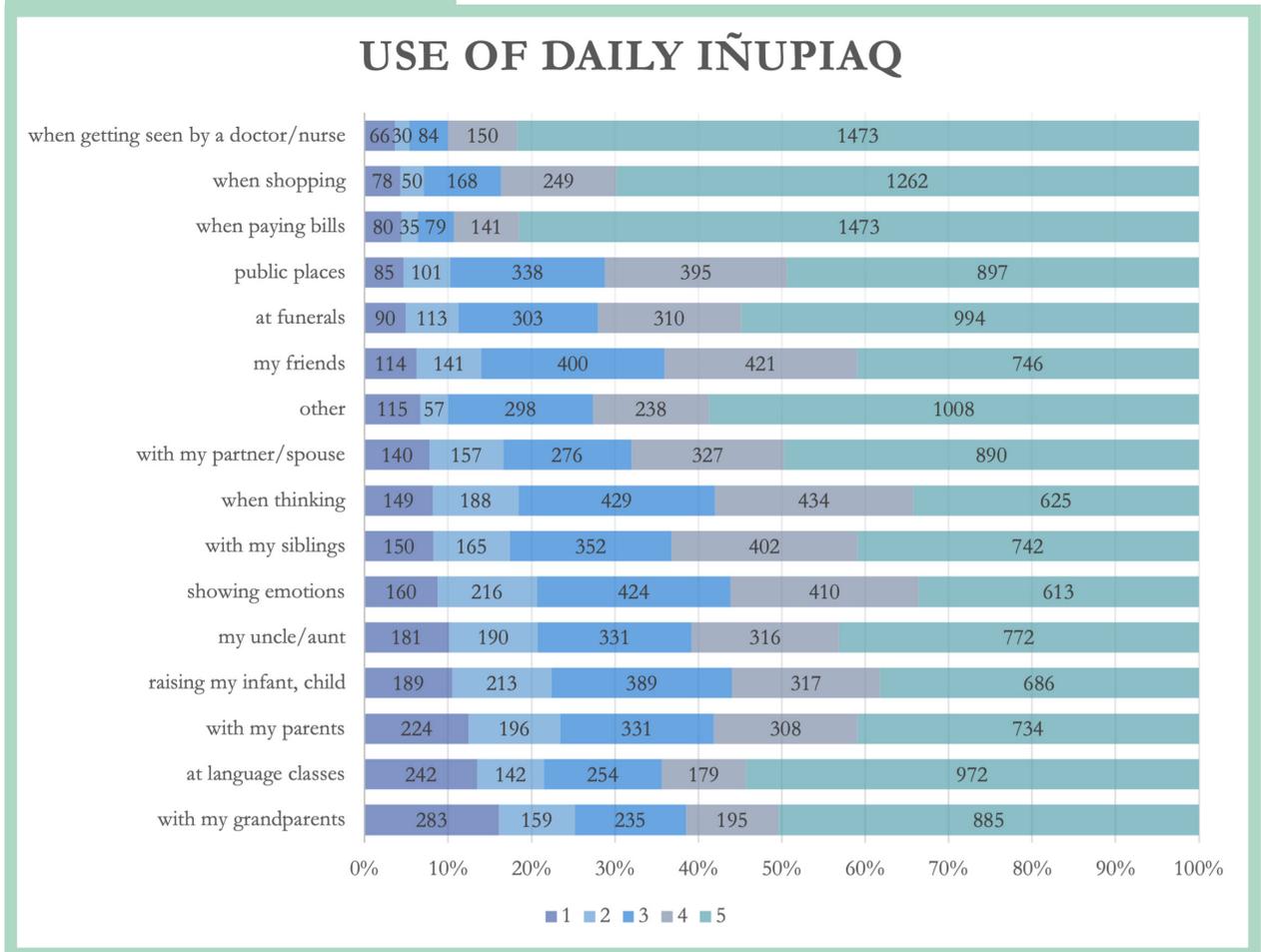
**Figure 14: Iñupiaq Speaking Domains**



## 6. When do I use the language?

(using numbers 1-5 as a scoring rubric, 1 being most of the time, 5 being the least)

**Figure 15: Use of Daily Iñupiaq**



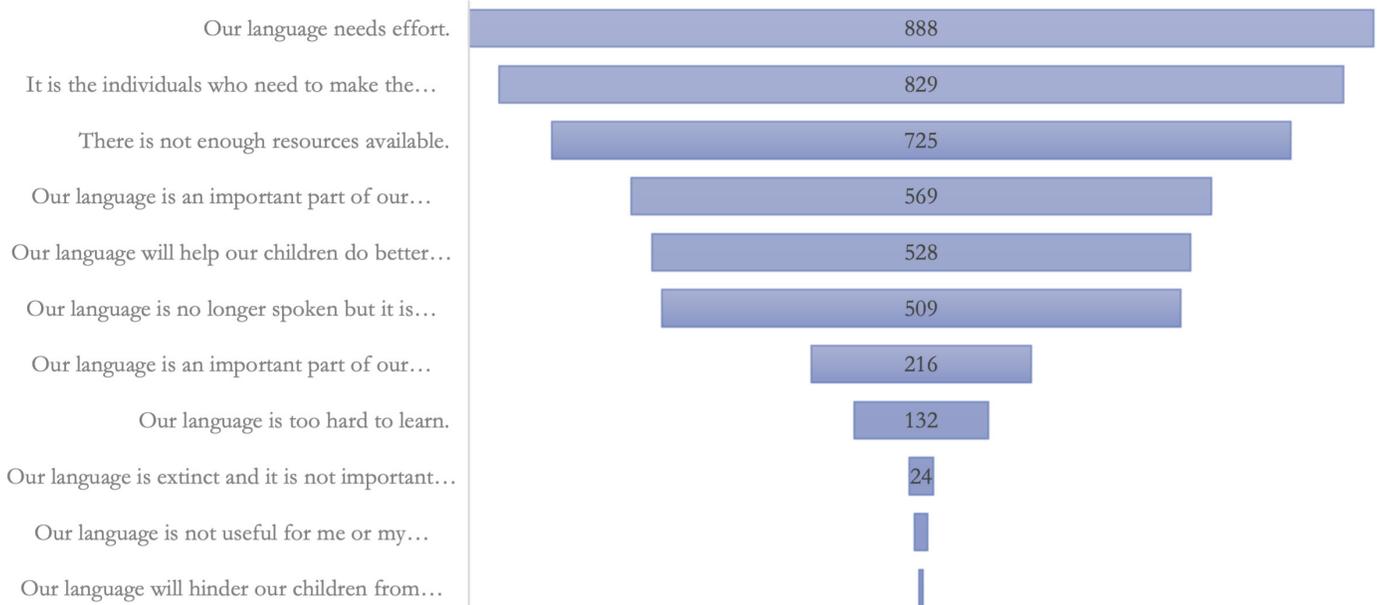
## Affirmations

### 7. Please checkmark the statements you agree with:

These are the top responses survey takers agreed with, in order of most agree to least agreed:

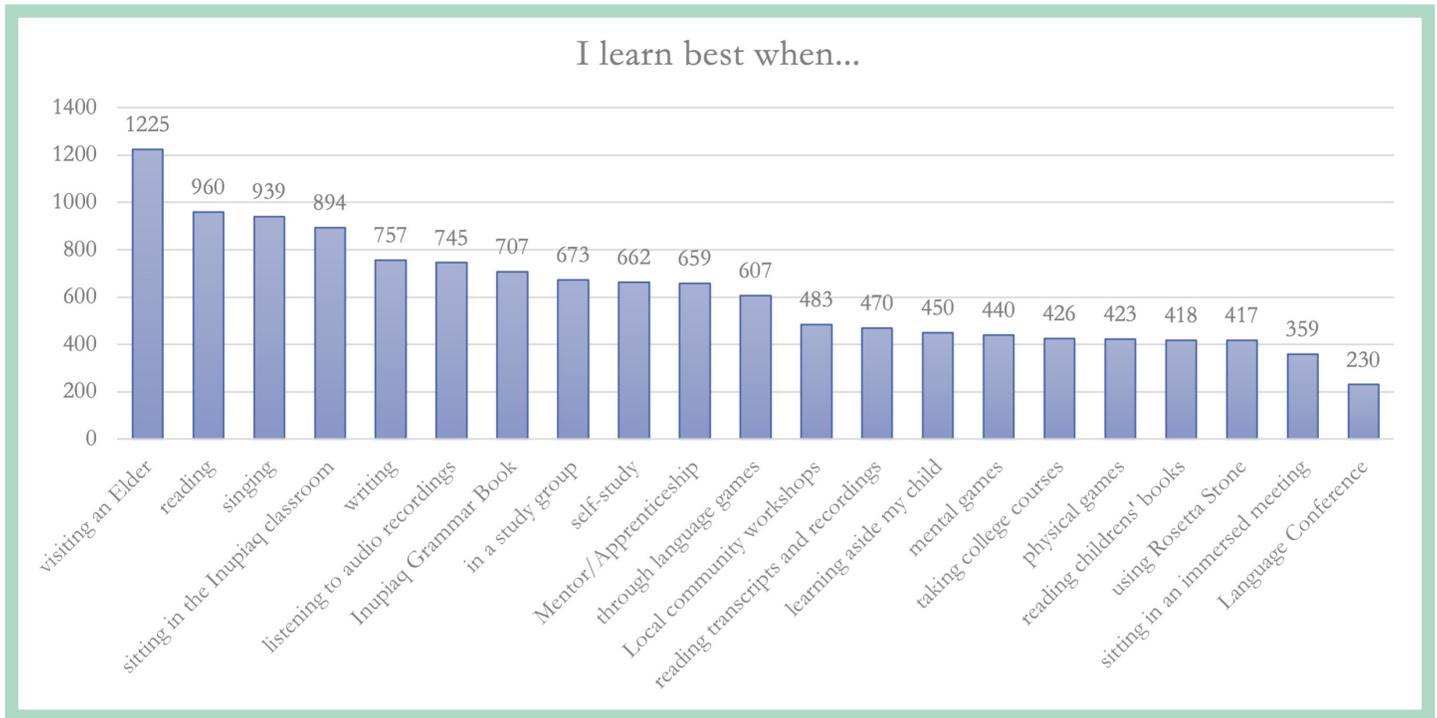
1. Our language needs effort
2. It is the individuals who need to make the personal effort
3. There is not enough resources available
4. Our language is an important part of our identity, and it should continue to be handed down.
5. Our language will help our children do better in school.
6. Our language is no longer spoken, but it is important to know something about it
7. Our language is an important part of our identity, but is too late to pass on.
8. Our language is too hard to learn
9. Our language is extinct, and it is not important to know about it.
10. Our language is not useful for me or my children/grandchildren to speak.
11. Our language will hinder our children from getting jobs.

### Please checkmark statements you agree with:



## 8. I learn best when...

These were the top responses for how people learn best. The top response was visiting an Elder. Other high responses were reading, singing, sitting in the Inupiaq classroom, writing, and listening to audio recordings. Lower numbers of responses were language conferences, sitting in immersed meetings, and using Rosetta Stone.



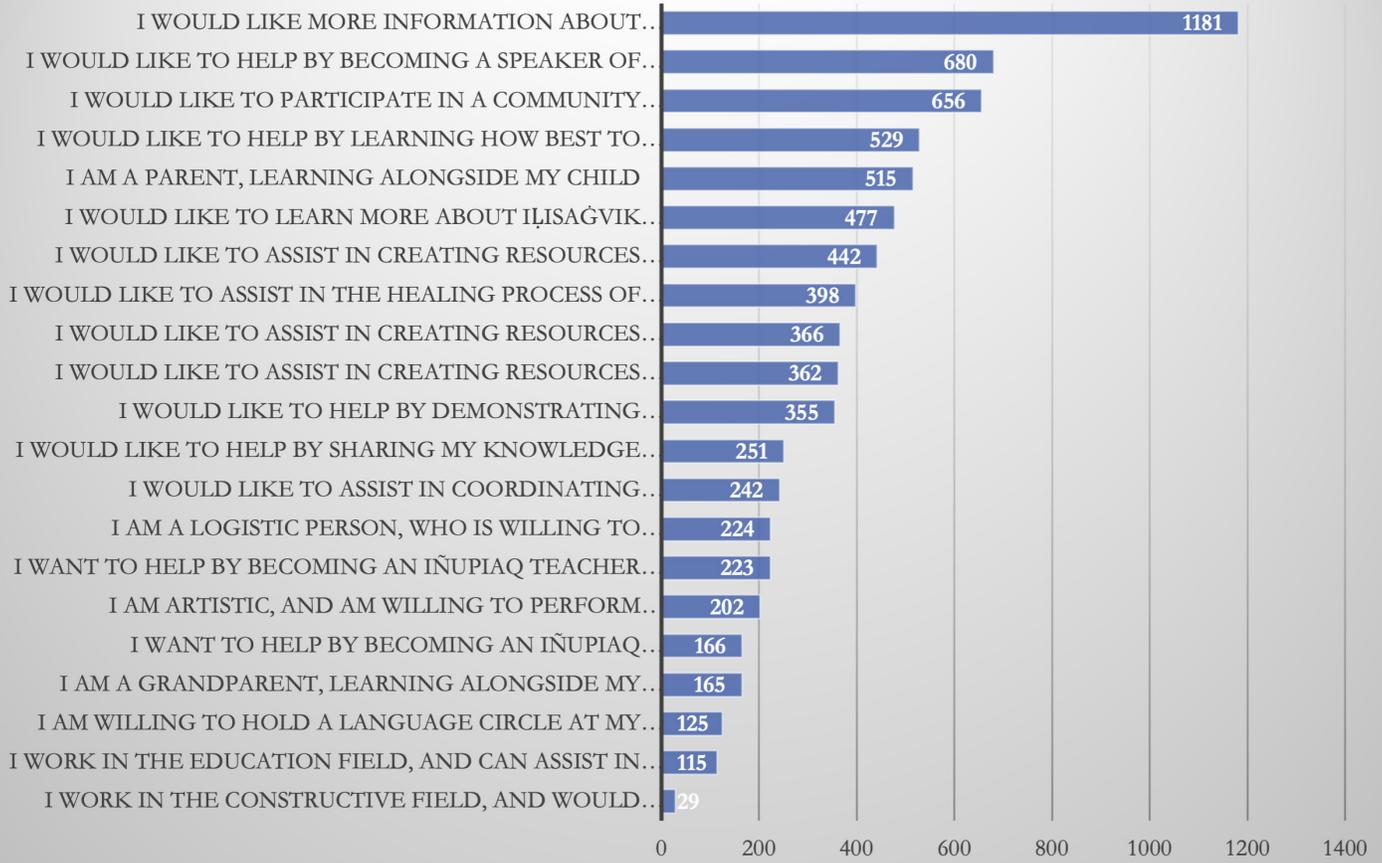
## 9. Checkmark any that applies to your wishes/wants

Many people would like to get involved with language revitalization offers and shared the ways in which they would like to get involved. This survey collected names and emails of those interested in staying involved by subscribing to a KI newsletter.

### # Wishes/Wants

- 1181 I would like more information about revitalization of the Iñupiaq language
- 680 I would like to help by becoming a speaker of Iñupiaq
- 656 I would like to participate in a community wide discussion about the status of the Iñupiaq language
- 529 I would like to help by learning how best to begins speaking to my children and grandchildren
- 515 I am a parent, learning alongside my child
- 477 I would like to learn more about Iḷisaḡvik College's Iñupiat Studies program (Utqiagvik)
- 442 I would like to assist in creating resources for children
- 398 I would like to assist in the healing process of our elders
- 366 I would like to assist in creating resources for adults
- 362 I would like to assist in creating resources for teenagers
- 355 I would like to help by demonstrating games/traditional tasks/language learning
- 251 I would like to help by sharing my knowledge and expertise in the language
- 242 I would like to assist in coordinating workshop/conferences
- 224 I am a logistic person, who is willing to perform duties to help coordinate workshops
- 223 I want to help by becoming an Iñupiaq teacher aide
- 202 I am artistic, and am willing to perform artistic duties where needed
- 166 I want to help by becoming an Iñupiaq Language teacher
- 165 I am a grandparent, learning alongside my grandchild
- 125 I am willing to hold a language circle at my house for a small group study
- 115 I work in the education field, and can assist in the best practices for teachers
- 29 I work in the constructive field, and would like to implement language in carpentry

## Wishes/Wants



## 10. Any other comments or questions, please leave them here:

Survey takers provided many comments that will be invaluable for language planning and understanding the needs of the Iñupiaq language community.

### **Language Trauma:**

*Many survey takers spoke to the intense struggles that have come with learning and speaking Iñupiaq because of the history of ongoing colonization, the legacy of physical and mental abuse at boarding schools, and the language trauma that exists in our language speakers and learners today:*

“My mom was from the day when we weren't allowed to speak at school, and she never spoke to her own children. Therefore, we never learned the language.”

“When my mother was in school in the 1950's, the teachers untaught her language and made her use English strictly. Being shamed for her Eskimo language, she strived to use only English. Enough so that she understood Eskimo but continuously used English until she couldn't even teach us, her children, Eskimo.”

“My parents didn't speak our language because their teachers forbid it and they thought it would hinder our education.”

“When our cultural traditions of hunting, trapping, gathering, camping, dog mushing, and education are outlawed like they are today, that is why we lose language. The state of Alaska and Federal government have destroyed our life and consequently destroyed our language.”

“I feel very sad I never learned my language. I'm 51 and can barely speak or understand my parents' language. I'm

ashamed of not knowing more than I should have. Growing up in "the big city" affected my way of speaking my native tongue. That makes me embarrassed in front of my relatives and makes me sad.”

### **Discouragement when learning:**

*Furthermore, several survey takers spoke to being discouraged when learning for being harshly critiqued when making mistakes or for being made fun of for having an American accent when speaking:*

“I've been discouraged to learn Iñupiaq because I have an American accent, and I struggle pronouncing the language. I also don't have any close family members that speak Iñupiaq.”

“We need to be able to come together as Iñupiaq people to heal as one and tell each other it's okay to learn, make mistakes and that our “Westernized” accent was brought to us by colonization and not because of who we are. There is a lot of shame for young adults who attempt to speak Iñupiaq but have a strong English accent with it. We need to not perpetuate lateral violence and tell each other it's okay to start from square one and learn what we can.”

“I once attended a three day class to learn Inupiaq, but because I'm awkward and shy, I chose not to attend the second and third day when one elder kept laughing at me pronouncing a word, and another kept grilling me over and over. I felt humiliated and singled out on the first day I had ever tried to speak the language. I

want to learn, but that experience has left a lasting mark that sadly steers me away.”

“Too many people criticize people when you say it wrong and it discourages young people.”

“It is important to listen to the younger folks. They are the ones who may feel the most anguish with this topic.”

### **Language Healing:**

*Many survey takers therefore spoke to the importance of language healing that needs to take place in order to revitalize Inupiaq language:*

“I think there needs to be a lot of healing around our language for us to move forward. There is a lot of hurt when it comes to speaking Inupiaq. Growing up I would feel embarrassed as elders and adults would tell me I sound so white, or when I spoke to non-native people with broken English, I was told I was too native. In addition, our elders have a lot of trauma associated with our language.”

“I feel that if we learn our Inupiaq language and bring it back that would help bring peace and give our youth more sense of belonging. Maybe our suicide rates would go down along with drug and alcohol problems would also decrease. Our people would feel more connected and as one (united).”

### **Access to Resources:**

*Several survey takers spoke to the challenges involved in accessing resources to learn Iñupiaq or Yupik, particularly Rosetta Stone. Others spoke to wanting more books, audio resources, classes, and study groups.*

“I appreciate that Rosetta Stone has a learning guide, but when asking my Corporation or the college I get shut down so I’ve never tried it. There aren’t enough resources for those of us willing and wanting to learn but needing to do it on our own time.”

“Rosetta Stone is a good place to learn but it’s hard to without translations, especially when trying to string together a sentence.”

“What type of programs or resources do you have for St. Lawrence Island Yupik?”

“Access to social media has helped a lot.”

“I want to know where I can take classes or join study groups of other Natives.”

Survey takers made the important point that people should not have to pay to take Iñupiaq language classes.

“I do not believe our language should be for profit college courses.”

“The Inupiaq language movement would be most successful if language learning was free and open to every Inuk who wants to learn.”

### **Living in Urban Alaska:**

*Several respondents spoke to how they live in urban Alaska (Anchorage, Fairbanks, etc.) and therefore have very little access to learn Iñupiaq.*

“We live in the city and it seems almost impossible to learn the language for us.”

“Where to start? Young adult grandchild wants to learn Inupiaq and we live in Fairbanks, not in an Inupiaq community.”

“It would be good to have more classes in Anchorage available.”

“I would love a full-immersion program based in Anchorage, where I can be immersed in a classroom/home setting and learn the language!”

“I’m disappointed i was never given the opportunity to learn my language regardless of where i had been born and raised.”

### **Living Outside:**

*Furthermore, several respondents live in the lower 48, Canada, or even outside of Turtle Island (North America) and have an even harder time accessing classes, resources, or speakers in order to learn Iñupiaq.*

“I wish there was an easier way to learn in distance learning since I no longer live in Alaska.”

“There’s not a whole lot of Inupiat where I live. Learning, re-learning and teaching my children my culture is important to me.”

“Part of my barrier to learning the language is that I live in Washington State, so it feels as if I have no one to practice with or learn from.”

“ I never had an opportunity to learn from my Mom about our culture and the language. I wish I could learn more so I can expose my son to an invaluable part of who we are and our beautiful culture and the language that is part of it.

### **Best Ways to Learn:**

*Many respondents spoke to what they thought was the best way to learn the language, many saying that learning directly*

*from Elders and fluent speakers is the best.*

“Learning for me is to be with a fluent Iñupiaq speaker whether it be man or woman.”

“Fluent speakers need to use the language more often whether the person spoken to understand or not.”

“I firmly believe that elders should be teaching their grandchildren Inupiaq language, values, and skills. Keep the traditions alive by teaching them to your children/grandchildren.”

“I believe the best way to ensure our Inupiaq language carries on is to bring elders and those who speak fluently to get together with families and individuals who are of our heritage and start communicating with each other on a regular basis. This doesn’t even cost any money to do. I have 6 children and my youngest is 7 months. I would love for them to know more than “alappaa.”

Furthermore, several respondents spoke to the importance of learning the language at home and at community meetings.

“Our language needs to be taught first thing in our homes. Our children/grandkids need to be hearing this at home every day. If we do, they can pick it up as we did.”

“It’s important that we go back to speaking fluent at home and in the community and during meetings. Young people have to learn how to speak it, they’re Iñupiaq too.”

“Learning begins at home. Make the effort.”

“We need to help our young people learn our language there is not enough time at school.”

“Learning starts at home, then they go to school and forget it. We need the schools to have Yup’ik classes.”

*Furthermore, many spoke to the importance of learning in a communicative way in classes, rather than just learning words.*

“Iñupiaq classes need to start teaching students to speak the language instead of just saying words.”

“I would love to see more group settings with conversational learning vs. just words and phrases.”

### **Ideas for Moving Forward:**

*Many respondents had very good ideas for how to forward with Iñupiaq language revitalization.*

“I do try and teach my children/grandchildren at home. I write words and have them pronounce the word and tell them the meaning. We always start off by learning their Inupiaq names, correct spelling, etc. I write the names of things and tape them on, so that they are visible to my children. “talū: door, killaiyaġvik: sewing machine, taġġaqtu-un: mirror, etc.”

“If/when Iñupiaq language accompanied classes or workshops come to action, include teenage internships to enlighten high schoolers the importance of our native tongue and encourage them to take pride in where we came from.”

“Idea: an Iñupiaq language guide, like a dictionary. One that it easier to read

and understand how grammar is affiliated, preferably one for each major dialect?”

“Iñupiaq Educational Conference needs to be held in Utqiagvik sponsored by Iñupiat Communities of the Arctic Slope to address State of Alaska’s assimilation policies with the Iñuit Circumpolar Conference.”

“The language needs to be HEARD to learn it. I barely ever hear it outside of the language group that I participate in. We are trying to create a podcast so people can repeatedly hear what is being taught. I’m interested in doing research to help keep our language alive.”

“They need to have the Iñupiaq language taught as a foreign language class and be credited.”

“Offer Elders to translate meetings.”

### **Building Upon Existing Programs:**

*Several respondents spoke to the fact that while there are some resources for beginning learners, there needs to be pathways to fluency beyond the beginning stages. Some also spoke to being open to learning a different dialect than their own or the need for additional funding.*

“I want to learn and am so grateful to have been able to take a class at Iḷisagvik. How I can build on that learning is a challenge. Thank you for your efforts to help revitalize our language it is important.”

“I would like to see a sequence of Native language courses at the local

university, designed for children and parents/family to take together; beginning with basic language and slowly advancing to more advanced language structure.”

“I use our language occasionally and am currently taking, for my first time, an Iñupiaq language class from Iḷisaḡvik College. It’s not my dialect but it’s our language, so I am resolved to learn.”

“We need funding to build an Iñupiaq school.”

“We need Nikaitchuat Iḷisaḡviat in each village.”

*Some respondents mentioned how we could look to other communities’ language programs to draw inspiration:*

“We need early childhood immersion programs; my grandsons are learning German. I am happy to see, our language being offered.”

“I would like to attend Pirurvik [in Nunavut] to become fully immersed. I would bring back the fluency and alter the dialect to fit Utqiagviḡmiu. This needs to be offered to us Iñupiatun.”

“Looking at other areas of the state where Native languages have been revived should also be strongly considered. The Yup’ik programs have produced proficient speakers and are leaps and bounds a head of the Northern efforts for example.”

### **Moving Towards Action:**

*Many respondents spoke to the need to move towards action, rather than talking about what needs to be done.*

“All community discussions become the

same. We know the problem. We just need to go out and do. We need solutions that are Iñupiaq, not colonized.”

“The reality is, you will need people who are committed to help revitalize our language. We have some people who walk the talk and others who talk but do not walk their talk. It is important to find those people who are committed and are afraid now to see the language dying.”

“We don’t need more conferences to talk about what needs to be done but we do need resources to support those who are willing to take action now. Revitalizing Iñupiatun can only be achieved if NANA and ASRC create competitive grants that creative Iñupiat can apply for and use to develop learning resources and initiatives for others. Governments will never provide the financial support required to do this work. Collectively we have millions in the bank to do this work but it’s a matter of priority setting.”

### **Iḷisaḡuktunja – I want to learn:**

*By far the most comments for the survey explained that survey takers want to learn the language and they want their children and grandchildren to learn the language.*

“I would like to learn our Iñupiaq language so that I can teach my children and grandchild. Thank you.”

“I want to become fluent so I will be able to pass this language on to my children (when I have them). This is an important part of who we are as Iñupiaq people, and I want to keep that language alive and thriving.”

“I am interested in learning/speak-

ing our language and hope to pass our culture language down to my boys and hopefully to their kids one day.”

“I want to learn our Iñupiat language and would like my boys to learn. I am proud to be Iñupiat.”

“I speak 50/50 of English and Yup’ik and would like to become fully fluent. I would like to be an effective bilingual and bicultural teacher for my students.”

“I want to learn my language that I was never taught.”

“I just want to learn but I can’t do it alone!”

“I want to transcribe the Iñupiaq language. Big part of language revitalization is written language. I would be interested in transcribing Iñupiaq.”

### **Gratitude:**

*Many respondents spoke to the thankfulness for this survey and for language revitalization efforts. Many left comments that simply said: Taikuu, Quyanaq, or Quyaanna.*

“With the new superintendent at NWABSD, I’m excited for revitalizing the language and culture, Pilluataqtutin! Taikuu!”

“I am happy efforts are being made to keep Iñupiaq language alive. Aarigaa Iñupiatun uqatlaruni suli kanjqsitlaruanun uqaqtuni.”

“Glad that there is a survey! Needed to happen a long time ago but now that it is going, keep going!”

“Thank you for trying to get our language out there. Appreciate it.”

“I am excited about our language revitalization, keep it up!”

“Thank you for the survey. Made me think of many things.”

“Your revitalization efforts are appreciated.”

“Quyanaqpak for this thoughtful survey. The set of questions helped me identify and reflect on the spaces I use the language and the spaces I do not. I would not have otherwise thought there was such a division.”

### **Importance of Iñupiaq language:**

*Finally, many respondents gave their thoughts on the importance of the Iñupiaq language and many gave words of wisdom to keep moving forward.*

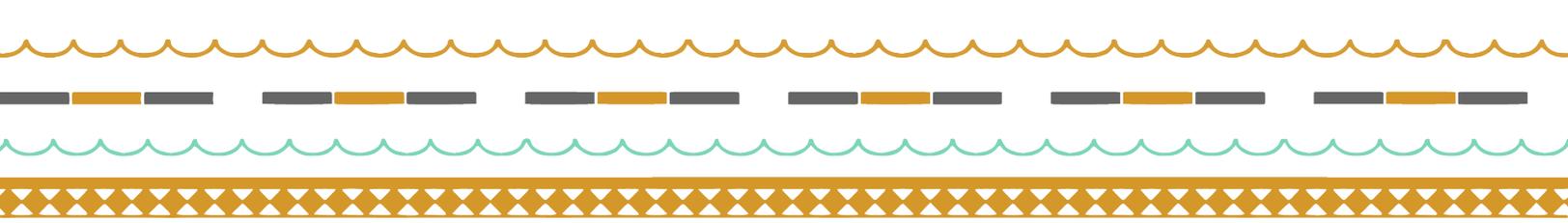
“Our Iñupiaq language is important enough to keep alive. It’s much better to be Iñupiaq than to be a descendant of Iñupiaq.”

“I hope more people get interested in our languages. I think it’s important and honorable to our ancestors!”

“Please continue this important work.”

“Keep it up. Don’t give up.”

“We need to emphasize that language revitalization will make us stronger as individuals and as communities – helping us to stand strong and do what is best for all people in all areas of our lives.”



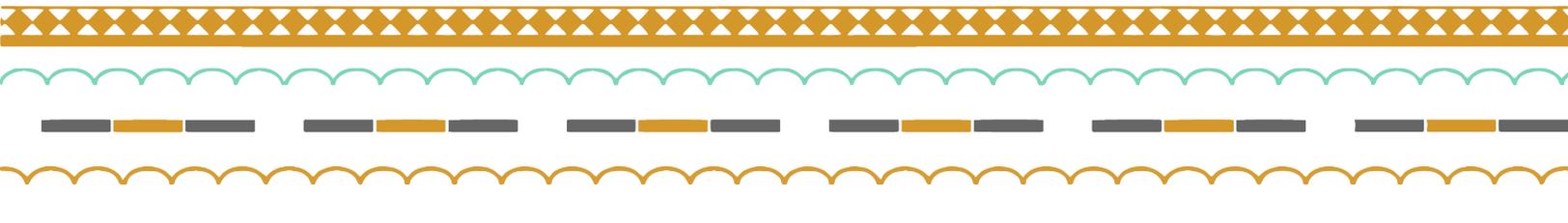
To everyone who made this survey possible:

**Quyanaqpak**

**Taiikuullapiaq**

**Iliganamiiik**

**Quyaaanavak**



# KI

## KIPIĠNIUQTIT IÑUPIURAALLANIKUN

“Speaking our language, we are passionate”

