

Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR)

Juneau Pilot Project Evaluation

September 2021



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Purpose of Report

The Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR) program is designed and administered by the Child and Family Research Unit (CAFRU) at Washington State University.¹ This program was implemented in Juneau, Alaska from 2017-2020 in three schools: Sít' Eetí Shaanáx-Glacier Valley Elementary School, Harborview Elementary School and Riverbend Elementary School. The project aimed to support school staff in mitigating the negative outcomes of childhood trauma. Anticipated outcomes of the pilot included better school climate, increased student educational achievement and connectedness in school, and reduced disciplinary actions resulting in the removal of students from the classroom. The project also informed staff working on the statewide trauma-engaged schools framework which was being developed concurrently.²

The project was funded by the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA), Alaska Division of Behavioral Health (DBH), the Juneau School District (JSD), Alaska Children's Trust, Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ABADA) and the Juneau Community Foundation.

Project Background / Need

Multiple organizations in Alaska recognize and partner to address the harmful impacts of childhood trauma on health outcomes, engaging in prevention work as well as working to support individuals with existing trauma. These efforts are significantly grounded in the scientific research focused on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Christopher Blodgett, former Director of CAFRU, worked in the areas of community violence, child maltreatment, and adolescent substance use. He stated that the CDC-Kaiser Permanente ACEs study³ "gave us the integrating language. It moved us from isolated, fragmented conversation to an organized, concurrent process."⁴

The ACEs study influenced many initiatives in Alaska including data collection about the prevalence of ACEs, efforts to build community knowledge about ACEs, policy to formally recognize and reduce ACEs, and the implementation of evidenced-based strategies to increase resiliency and improve outcomes for children. The findings in Alaska indicate that ACEs are

1. Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR)

<https://extension.wsu.edu/clear/about/>

2. "Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma-Engaged Practice in Alaska." State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2019,

<https://education.alaska.gov/tls/safeschools/pdf/transforming-schools.pdf>

3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>

4. Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities

<https://marc.healthfederation.org/advisor/christopher-blodgett-phd>

common and exceed rates in most other states.⁵ These experiences significantly impact the developing brains of children and their ability to do well in school.

Research shows that the most effective way to intervene with negative outcomes associated with childhood trauma such as challenging behaviors, is to improve a child’s ability to self-regulate. Outside of the home, schools are the ideal setting to develop this skill, given the amount of time a child spends there. Some schools in Alaska choose to focus on transforming how they approach children who have challenging behaviors, aiming to substantially reduce or eliminate practices that inadvertently re-traumatize children. When the CLEAR pilot project began, schools in Juneau were at various stages of becoming trauma-informed, including taking online training courses developed by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED),⁶ implementing restorative practices, and implementing the *Responsive Classroom* approach — a school paradigm also focused on student self-regulation.⁷

CLEAR Model

The Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience (CLEAR) model is a three-year process designed to transform school staff from trauma-aware to trauma-engaged practice. It is heavily ingrained with the concepts of the *Attachment, Regulation, and Competency (ARC) Framework*.⁸

CLEAR involves a series of monthly one-hour professional development presentations for all staff, consultation and coordination of implementation plans with the school principal, and voluntary consultation with other school staff and school district leadership. The model aims to shift the paradigm of how school professionals approach, interpret and respond to student behaviors and is designed to use existing community resources to build a unique and sustainable solution for each school.

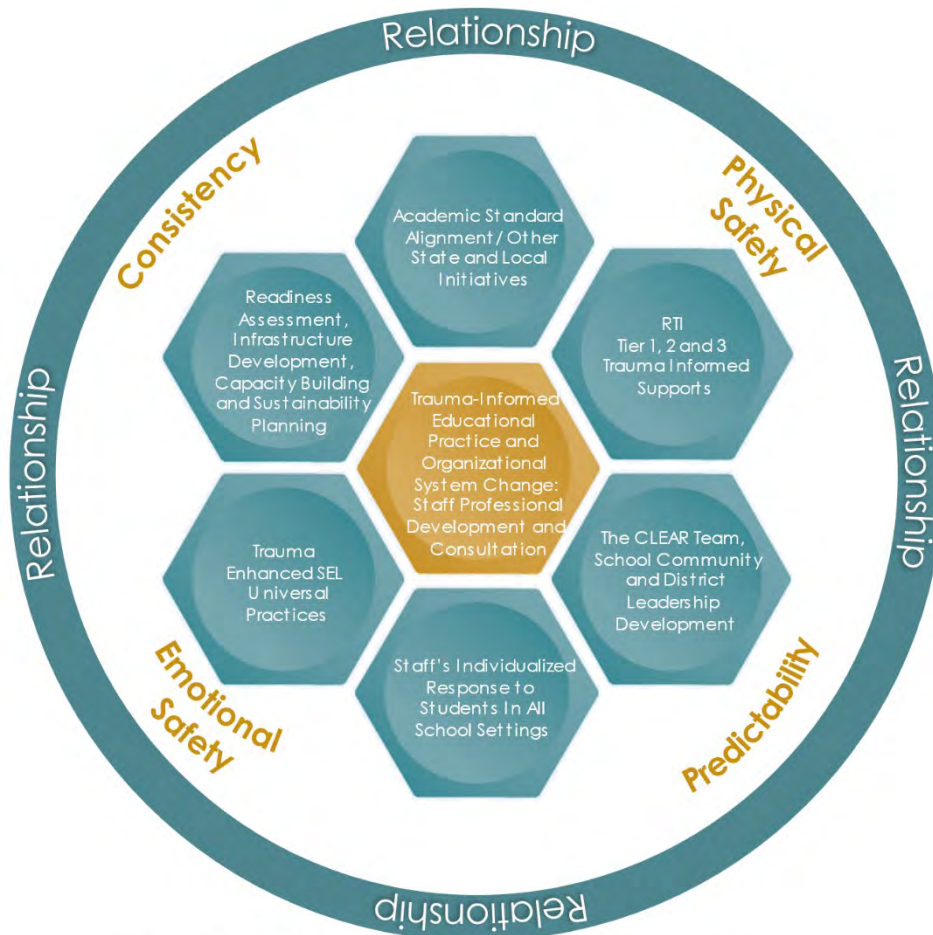
5. Adverse Childhood Experiences in Alaska <http://dhss.alaska.gov/abada/ace-ak>

6. Alaska Department of Education & Early Development Health & Safety and Trauma-Engaged Schools eLearning Modules <https://education.alaska.gov/elearning/courses>

7. Responsive Classroom Approach <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/principles-practices/>

8. Attachment, Regulation, Competency (ARC) Framework <https://arcframework.org/what-is-arc/>

CLEAR Action Model



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School Demographics

The populations addressed by CLEAR are children and staff in schools where significant trauma and subsequent poor educational results are prevalent. The three schools selected for the CLEAR pilot project: Sit' Eetí Shaanáx-Glacier Valley Elementary School, Harborview Elementary School and Riverbend Elementary School, have many families with low socioeconomic status and are designated as Title I schools. Juneau was the chosen location for the pilot project to support collaboration with the Alaska Association of School Boards (AASB) and DEED on both the project implementation and evaluation.

Evaluation Methods and Considerations

This evaluation focuses primarily on qualitative information gathered in interviews conducted by AMHB/ABADA. Respondents were asked to include their suggestions for improvement especially for implementing a similar program elsewhere in Alaska. Those interviewed

include school principals (one who began the CLEAR pilot when they were a teacher), and school district, state, and CAFRU staff.

Several events occurred during the pilot project affecting the availability of quantitative program-related data. The pilot end-of-year survey was administered after Year 1, however, the Year 2 survey was not administered. Due to multiple changes in leadership at Riverbend Elementary School, including the unplanned departure of the principal in February 2019, their participation was discontinued prior to the end of Year 2. Midway through Year 3 there was a global pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) which paused in-school learning and impacted attempts to implement the CLEAR model to fidelity in the remaining two schools. The end-of-year survey for the third and final year of the project was administered a year late and during the last week of school and only seven staff responded.

The student-related data available for the time period of the pilot project includes the *Performance Evaluation for Alaska Schools (PEAKS)* which measures students' understanding of mathematics, English language and science. It is available for Years 1 & 2 but was not administered in Year 3 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁹ *The Compass* and *School Report Card* provide demographics, attendance and discipline data.¹⁰ Finally, the *School Climate and Connectedness Survey* is administered each year by the AASB and the results are available upon request.¹¹

Chronic absenteeism and overall disciplinary referral data are included in Appendix B with the caveat that data collection and entry are not consistent within individual schools or across the school district.

The difficulty of observing trends or making a connection between these data and the CLEAR pilot goals is that there are many variables occurring outside of the school environment. Multiple principals emphasized that leading up to the implementation of CLEAR, they were seeing more children in poverty, with more social needs and exponentially worse behaviors.

What Worked and Recommendations for Improvement

Topics that were most frequently discussed in the interviews with school district, State of Alaska and CAFRU staff include: school and community readiness and engagement, program design, sustainability and outcomes, and a significant appreciation of, and continued need for, education for the entire community on social-emotional development and what it means to be trauma-engaged. This report summarizes the main takeaways from the conversations.

9. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development Performance Evaluation for Alaska's Schools (PEAKS) <https://education.alaska.gov/assessments/peaks>

10. The Compass: A Guide to Alaska's Public Schools <https://education.alaska.gov/compass/>

11. Association of Alaska School Boards School Climate <https://aasb.org/school-climate/>



School and Community Readiness and Engagement

Many of those interviewed discussed the need for buy-in from the paraprofessional level to the school district superintendent. Ideally, there is cooperation with individuals at the state level and within the community to make the biggest collective impact on the system and at a societal level. To ensure buy-in from each school, the CLEAR program requires consent of close to 80% of the school staff prior to initiating the program and yearly thereafter.

"When the consultant piece came up and they said you're going to sit down and get to talk about specific kids and problems that you're having as an educator right then and there, hearing someone was going to be there to help me, that's when I bought in."
— Juneau School District Staff

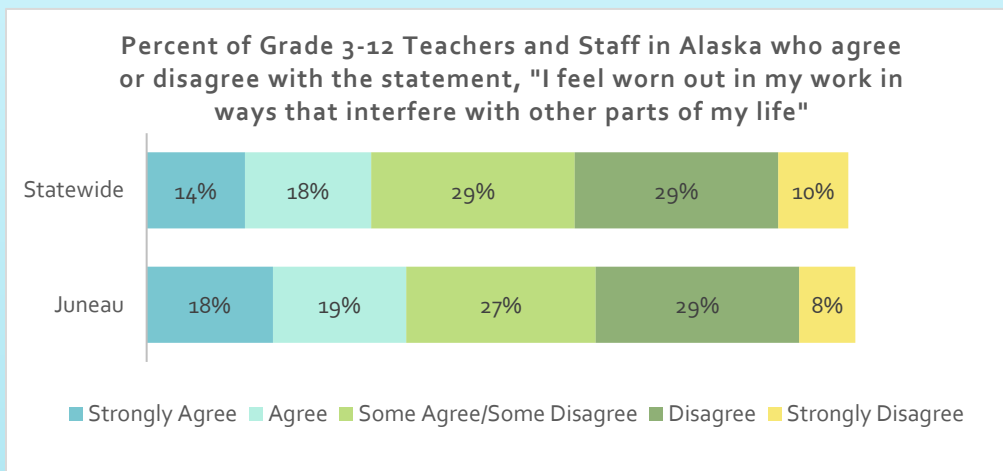
CAFRU staff communicated that the success of the program requires strong building leadership that understands the program's value, models practices which support staff growth, and that gives staff the permission to be innovative and creative and try new things without fear of reprimand. CAFRU staff request a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between staff and school leadership as well as the school district to ensure there is understanding and no competing interests.

Recommendations for Improvement

- ❖ **Plan to engage community partners.** A respondent commented that the CLEAR model refers to community engagement, however, engagement was limited to several community nights for parents. More engagement, outreach, and education to the systems outside of the school would assist with program impact.
- ❖ **Plan between funders to designate who is responsible for ensuring contract deliverables are met, particularly program data and evaluation.** Regular communication with these partners would assist with overall project success.
- ❖ **Examination of data already collected by schools, and assessment of school district staff capacity and commitment to data collection.** If school district staff will be responsible for program-specific data collection and entry, they need to be trained, and follow-up is important in the event of staff turnover.

- ❖ **Plan for the path to school readiness.** Questions that should be asked before launching the CLEAR program include: 1) What needs to be done to onboard schools to the point of readiness required to institute a program like CLEAR? 2) Should there be a professional development series prior to initiating consultations? 3) Should teachers' level of stress / their ability to implement self-care be assessed? As one respondent reflected, "the brain needs to be ready to learn, but the brain also needs to be ready to teach. How do you ensure teachers are being supported to do their work?"

Beginning in 2020, a new question was added to the *School Climate and Connectedness Survey* that asked staff and teachers how much they related to the following statement: "I feel worn out in my work in ways that interfere with other parts of my life." Below are the results from the 2021 survey within the Juneau School District and statewide.



Out of 303 respondents, 111 staff and teachers in Juneau, or slightly more than 1 in 3 agreed or strongly agreed with the statement and the results were similar statewide. Another 83 Juneau staff and teachers were in the middle. To build quality relationships necessary to meet the needs of children, it is essential school staff are skilled in practicing self-care. One idea put forth was to provide an initial professional development series addressing self-care, next educate on ACEs and CLEAR, and then begin to operationalize. A respondent stated, "By recognizing and honoring the stress teachers face, there is likelihood for more genuine buy-in. Ultimately, we want to treat teachers like we want them to treat their kids."

- ❖ **Upstream emphasis on social-emotional learning for teachers, making it part of the standard curriculum for all teaching degrees.** A respondent stated, "Trauma-informed needs to be the default rather than a decision or big stretch."



Program Design

The CLEAR program consists of a consultant delivering monthly one-hour professional development for all staff as well as mandatory consultation with the school principal, and voluntary consultation with individual staff and school district leadership. It is important that a consistent and skilled consultant oversee these efforts. When a school retains their principal and consultant, program direction is clear, and effectiveness is increased. Sít' Eetí Shaanáx-Glacier Valley Elementary School is the only school that had the same principal and CLEAR consultant for all three years of the project.

Professional Development & Consultation

Those interviewed found the conversations around trauma and behaviors to be important. Respondents appreciated that all school staff were included in the trainings, including the paraprofessionals who spent the most time with the children on the playground. Most who were interviewed agreed that an hour per month of training was reasonable and that regular, ongoing training was crucial. One respondent stated, "When CLEAR started — we had an uptick in behaviors. I think some were getting the message you're not supposed to discipline at all. It took us a little while to find what strategies to use and although we're giving the student time to self-regulate, we're still going to follow through with consequences that fit the situation. That was hard at first. At the time staff didn't think they were getting what they needed but by the end I think we realized we did."

"Staff learn it's important that the culture and community within their staff community is healthy. The relational aspects are so important. If you don't have a relationship you won't be creating the safety, predictability and consistency that you need to allow staff to be vulnerable to go where they need to create the conditions for change. Without that it's, 'Help me fix this kid, help me with this behavior' rather than 'Help me understand how my role as an adult and relationship with this child plays a part' and 'How do we think about more systematic shifts to promote positive relationships and regulation to promote healthy learning?'" — CAFRU Staff

CAFRU staff said that the fit of the consultant with the school is very important because this is relational work. Their data show when you have a strong relationship between the consultant and the school community and there are no changes, that's when you really maximize success. One principal reflected that it was nice to have a "thinking partner" and that consultations changed their management practices in some good ways. In the end-of-year survey administered after Year 1, 68% of staff rated their satisfaction with the CLEAR consultation positively.

The CLEAR model uses a consultant who is not a school employee in order to ensure autonomy and to support

teachers in being able to make mistakes without a supervisory concern. One respondent did not think this should be a concern, stating that prior to their involvement in CLEAR:

I never worried about seeking feedback. We want to do what's right for our students and coworkers — it shouldn't matter who you're getting it from or how, only that you do. I think that team approach works where we are always bringing these things up and it's part of our practice. I think that's how we were. If you had a problem, most staff were open to asking for help. We use our time that way, we call it, 'Students of concern'— it might be behavioral or academic. The hard kids are hard kids for everyone they aren't usually acting out just for one person. It's very much a team-oriented solution-based process. The principal is so busy, I think setting aside time and being intentional is important.

Trauma Informed Practices

School district staff were grateful for improved understanding of trauma-engaged classroom practices. Multiple respondents mentioned appreciation for the concept of a regulation room — a place for students to voluntarily go and self-regulate. Similarly, they appreciated the use of a buddy classroom where a student can go to another teacher's classroom instead of the principal's office — a nonpunitive strategy for helping children regain their self-control. One principal reflected that CLEAR helped them realize they were using their existing *Responsive Classroom* approach in a punitive way, as a method of behavior control versus relationship building. Another respondent concurred, stating "The shift to thinking about things in a relational way instead of a behavior control approach is the essence of trauma-engaged school work and I think CLEAR helped a lot of people get there."

"CLEAR built a structure where staff had to really think about, 'Why am I feeling so frustrated? Have I tried a calming corner? Have I tried a buddy classroom? Maybe the student just needs to run an errand for me and take a break from the classroom...It was because of CLEAR that staff started reflecting more on what they have tried prior to exercising extreme discipline.'" — Juneau School District Staff

"I think the information we got – trauma, how kids respond to trauma, how to self-regulate. All of that was super important and helped us rethink how to engage with kids and I think that was critical and needs to continue. We need reminders all the time." — Juneau School District Staff

Two different principals provided the following comments on how CLEAR changed their overall trauma-informed practice:

There were a lot of situations where someone needed help with a student, or a student gets sent to the office. I would sit down and give them a place to cool down, help them self-regulate and then we'd get back to a place where they were calm and ready to go back to the classroom. I realized that I was building a relationship with those students, but the teacher wasn't. I had all the time and would walk them back to class and they would go in and the teacher would have no follow-up time or conversation because I had already done it all. I realized I could help them self-regulate, but when I went back to the classroom, I needed to take the place of the teacher. I would teach the class and they could be with the student to repair the damage that was done in whatever the situation was.

I would say we had a close-knit staff prior to CLEAR but the three years of the professional development also helped us understand each other better as a staff. The same skills apply with colleagues as with students. For most staff, their approach to student dysregulation or misbehavior is completely different. We still do community building every morning, it's built into our master schedule. We still all have quiet corners and calming tools. I think we will continue to use all kinds of strategies that we learned through CLEAR without a doubt. I think people have really changed their outlook.

Recommendations for Improvement

- ❖ **Engage and empower teachers to become peer leaders.** One person noted, "I don't think we ever really empowered the teachers to be the intellectual leaders for CLEAR. Teachers are the best teachers of teachers. An outside consultant can work against that if they aren't plugged into the system at that school." With additional support and training, teachers could take on a larger role in designing monthly professional development sessions. Identifying school leaders in a strength-based approach can strengthen relationships and leverage resources.
- ❖ **Connect with additional subject matter experts on childhood trauma for professional development and possibility of consultation.** Two possible organizations in Alaska include the Alaska Child Trauma Center and the Alaska Training Cooperative. Of note, multiple staff expressed a need for education on how to identify children who aren't acting out but who are still experiencing trauma.

- ❖ **Establish a regional partner center of trainers to support building the system from within.** This recommendation was suggested by school district staff and the regional hub concept is being piloted by CAFRU currently.
- ❖ **Provide online access to professional development trainings.** Staff expressed disappointment that they did not have access to the program materials as was proposed by CLEAR. A respondent stated, “We really need the foundation of the language and common understanding of where kids are at with trauma.”
- ❖ **Provide resources specific to significant disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic.** One respondent hoped that CAFRU staff would bring additional resources during their May 2021 visit. They stated, “It’s different to support kids who are in trauma when you are healthy but here we are experiencing the trauma together and having some really hard things happen in families and to staff members. I really wanted something to help teachers reflect.”
- ❖ **Spend more time discussing specific childhood and individual behaviors.** One principal suggested that more online community in between visits would be helpful. One respondent commented, “The initial presentation convinced me through the consulting and the fact that someone would be with us working on real problems. It wasn’t going to be here is this information now use it to the best of your ability – it was really going to be brainstorming with a professional who can help us determine some unique ways to address the challenging behaviors.”
- ❖ **Have school staff prepare case studies in preparation of the consultant’s visit.** One respondent suggested that case studies representing the various levels of difficult-to-manage behaviors could be presented ahead of time to the consultant which would allow more time for staff to deliberate and discuss their needs.



Sustainability

In assessing the sustainability of the CLEAR model program, this evaluation considered attention to readiness, community outreach and collaboration, staffing, program accessibility and flexibility, data, funding and positive impact over time. The significant and unforeseen impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was taken into consideration.

In terms of lasting positive impact, the value of the CLEAR model is that consistent instruction and consultation can embed the CLEAR trauma-engaged practices as a “way of being”.

Per the staff survey conducted after Year 1:

- 62% of staff reported that the consultation was “a great deal or completely helpful” in improving the positive nature of the relationship with the student who was the focus of the consultation;
- 67% of staff stated the consultation process changed their practice;
- 81% stated the consultation contributed to sustainable change;
- 56% of staff reported the professional development sessions helped with shifting practice; and
- 65% reported those sessions as contributing to sustainable change.

One school principal commented that CLEAR may have been effective in ways they did not notice. While the behaviors kept coming, they saw teachers change their engagement with students. “It was no longer about squelching the behavior — there was a shift to find out what’s going on with students. Teachers who tended to remove students too quickly from the classroom started to buy-in, giving cues to students, teaching hand signals, implementing techniques. Students were still sent to the office but not as quickly. There was a pause in our building-wide systems and in teachers’ first responses.”

Another principal noted that the CLEAR project refined the way discipline data was collected for their school. The school developed sheets with Tier 1, 2, and 3 behaviors with trauma-informed strategies identified on the forms that the teacher should be trying before sending a student to the principal’s office. The teacher keeps track of behaviors and strategies used which provides data on when

“CLEAR cemented the importance of ongoing professional development to make the shift. We can’t offer ACEs 101 at in-service and expect that to make a difference. We must fund staff time for ongoing professional development — it’s not a question anymore. I think there was push-back prior to CLEAR. It helped pave the way for structural changes.” — Juneau School District Staff

and where behaviors are occurring, what interventions teachers use regularly, and which interventions they may need more training or reminders on.

One respondent stated that CLEAR put the Juneau School District on a more solid trajectory of trauma-engaged schools, and that sustainability was secured with existing funding from the Juneau Community Foundation for school social workers, as well as the STEPS grant from AASB which supports a trauma-engaged schools staff position at the district level. When Riverbend left the CLEAR program, the school district supported them with a two-year contract with a local professional to provide ongoing monthly professional development as well as individual consultation with staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly affected the policy support that the CLEAR consultant typically delivers in Year 3. Per CAFRU staff, “When the pandemic hit everything shut down and there was no way to be intentional about decision-making and planning because everything was changing. I think we may have missed an opportunity for reintegration and review and teaching of the concepts to help staff move forward. There is such a level of stress on the system everywhere that [we did not revisit] some of the structures: how to use the CLEAR team for planning, how to connect with other CLEAR schools, how to talk to the district for resources, how staff understand the trauma-engaged schools position at the district and that individual’s role to be a support person.”

Many school district staff did not use the consultant in 2020. CAFRU staff commented, “I think staff were dysregulated and stressed and overwhelmed. The couple of people I spoke to said they would have reached out earlier but didn’t even know what to ask for — they were just trying to keep their heads above water.” The following two-part question was added to the end-of-year survey administered to all CLEAR schools in May 2021:

This past year please consider your experience while you and your school faced the COVID pandemic, school closures, and the shift to virtual learning. To what degree has your involvement with CLEAR shaped your approach to engaging the students during the pandemic and how have the experiences of the last year shaped your perception of the importance of being a trauma-informed school?

Out of 129 respondents polled from CLEAR schools around the nation, 48% said involvement in CLEAR shaped their approach “a great deal or completely.” Add in “somewhat” and it was 85%. 76% said the experiences shaped their perception “a great deal or completely” and another 18% said “somewhat.”

Recommendations for Improvement

- ❖ **Formally assess staff and school readiness and need at baseline.** This would assist in tailoring a program to best meet the unique needs of individual schools and where they exist within the continuum of implementing and understanding trauma-engaged practice. Those interviewed thought that there was no inquiry or acknowledgment of the work they were already doing.
- ❖ **Perform outreach and engagement with the community from the beginning.** Implementing the CLEAR program should include dedicated and ongoing engagement of community partners to build local capacity. One respondent shared, “The CLEAR project was proposed and packaged that they would do community outreach but realistically more capacity is needed to bridge the gaps. Given the turnover in rural schools, it is essential that the community is the driver behind changes and central to directing their schools.”
- ❖ **Rely on a team versus an individual.** A team of local individuals designing and delivering professional development and consultation could be more supportive for engaging school staff and supporting ongoing program delivery especially if there are staffing changes. A team of individuals might also have more capacity to perform outreach.
- ❖ **Prioritize access to training modules.** Access to program materials is crucial for staff who miss a training or who are hired on after implementation of the program. The CLEAR program website with the model’s content and structure was taken down and remains down and no alternative was provided for participating school staff. Ideally, modules would be made available to the whole school district.
- ❖ **Create a template protocol or guide for teachers to discuss difficult behaviors and make reviewing these children a standard practice amongst school staff.** One respondent commented, “These behaviors are not going to go away – it just needs to be part of our thinking and part of the way we do things.”
- ❖ **Prioritize data collection and evaluation.** Sustainability is best measured when data is consistently collected and entered at baseline and throughout the duration of the project. Both qualitative and quantitative data is valuable for justifying ongoing funding and expansion. Persons responsible for collecting data should be identified, and regular follow-up should be provided to ensure data is available for evaluating the implementation and lessons learned.

- ❖ **Consider how to use funding efficiently and to expand reach.** The CLEAR program is expensive and this is one of the limiting factors for implementing statewide. To reach the most Alaskans, funding might be best directed to building infrastructure that supports data-driven systems, continuing support for training and education modules that are public domain, and train-the-trainer initiatives that build local capacity.
- ❖ **Create learning environments that support teachers with having the resources and time to implement restorative practices.** Smaller class sizes and additional staff would support teachers in taking the time to calm a child, bring them back into the classroom, and have a discussion with the class allowing the child to apologize and repair the relationship. Even the kids not acting out may have trauma and they benefit from observing restorative practice.

Final Comments and Future Direction

Although unanticipated factors impacted the delivery and assessment of the CLEAR model pilot program, Juneau School District staff commented that overall they benefitted from having the CLEAR program implemented at their school. The end-of-year 1 survey showed that Juneau School District staff report greater baseline distress from student trauma than their peers at other schools. After one year of CLEAR, those staff reported reduced trauma effects comparable to staff in other CLEAR schools. There was also a significant increase in the number of Juneau staff who reported that they held more positive views of students who struggle after participating in their first year of the pilot.

Some of the key lessons learned from the pilot project include the importance of:

- ❖ Assessing school district staff for need and readiness prior to project launch and checking in regularly to ensure staff needs and expectations align with project deliverables.
- ❖ Engaging project partners and the community before project launch and continuously throughout project implementation.
- ❖ Ensuring school district staff understand program goals and how to assess their progress.
- ❖ Continuing to offer more social-emotional development and trauma-engaged training and technical assistance to teachers as well as the community.

CAFRU is willing to readminister the final end-of-year survey, and this data would be valuable to compare with Year 1. An aggregate report of the 2021 end-of-year surveys from all CLEAR schools participating across the nation will be released by the end of 2021. It would also be beneficial to perform additional interviews with teachers, school social workers, paraprofessionals and school counselors, and the school district director of teaching and learning support.

CAFRU is creating video webinar recordings of the CLEAR training modules presented during the project and the schools who participated in the pilot program will have access to those trainings. They are also piloting two regional partner center hubs in eastern Washington and rural Illinois. Once they get through the 3-year pilot, CAFRU will have a training program packaged with CLEAR training manuals and supporting resources and would consider a new contract to establish the Juneau School District as a regional partner hub.

CAFRU staff mentioned that Alaska is in a unique situation where state program staff and grant managers have more interaction with schools than in other states. Moving forward, they encourage Alaska to capitalize on those partnerships to leverage people, information, and resources for future trauma-engaged work.

Currently in Alaska, there are comprehensive resources created by DEED that are available to all school districts statewide. *Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska* and the associated toolkit were developed in response to requests from concerned Alaskans across the state. This was a collaborative project of DEED, AASB, AMHB, First Alaskans Institute, Alaska Afterschool Network, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and the Alaska Child Trauma Center. The framework and toolkit are hosted on a DEED website dedicated to providing trauma-engaged resources to help Alaska schools and communities integrate trauma-engaged policies and practices into their everyday activities. In 2020, researchers at the American Institutes for Research published a working paper that included Alaska's framework as one of five case studies, exploring the role of the education sector in promoting well-being, learning, and positive educational outcomes for children who experience adversity and/or trauma.¹² In response to schools requesting assistance, DEED and AASB are working on a supporting document that will provide a scale so schools can reflect on their progress and where to direct future work.

In addition to the framework and toolkit, DEED offers 33 eLearning modules for school staff under the umbrella categories of health and safety and trauma-engaged schools. Topics include domestic violence and sexual assault, child abuse and neglect, opioids, adverse childhood experiences, childhood traumatic grief, trauma-engaged practice, suicide awareness, prevention and intervention, self-care, and more. These modules are posted online and accessible to anyone who registers for a free account.

12. Tanyu, M., et al. (2020), "Improving education outcomes for students who have experienced trauma and/or adversity", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 242, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/54d45980-en>

As part of ongoing collaboration, AASB partnered with the Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN) to host a free statewide social-emotional learning, trauma-engaged online community on the Alaska Professional Learning Network for Alaska school staff and community partners. Topics of focus include Deconstructing Trauma, Building Relationships, Family Partnerships, Self-Care and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Once registered, educators have access to recorded webinars, tools, case studies, and an interactive discussion forum.¹³

In 2021, DEED, AMHTA, and staff from divisions within the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services completed phase one of the *Mental Health in Alaska Schools-A Landscape Assessment* to develop an analysis of mental health supports and related efforts within school districts.¹⁴ Thirty-one districts completed interviews, representing 91% of all Alaskan students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 as of October 2020. The assessment appears to support the recommendations made in this evaluation and emphasizes that resources vary significantly across districts. Phase two will interview community behavioral health providers, seeking to learn how they interface with schools.

Many thanks to the staff at CAFRU for their assistance with this project and to the staff of the three schools involved in the CLEAR pilot program.

Some final words from the Juneau School District staff:

"So grateful for the investment in social-emotional learning and support. CLEAR was amazing because it was interdisciplinary — because it was kid's brain science which they like to learn about. Also, social in terms of learning to fit into and function within a group when you are feeling dysregulated and really having the vocabulary to say, 'Oh, I don't feel right, I recognize these emotions coming up and there is something I can do about it. It's not like a fever, I have some control over my brain's biology.' I really loved that the school district was investing in supporting us with social-emotional learning with a program where you could see the science behind it. It had the feeling like one of the best things going on in the school district really. It had good science, it respected teachers. No one was saying 'we're going to evaluate you based on your fidelity to the model.' It felt like they had hired an ally for us, and she has tapped into this powerful network and she recognizes how big of an issue this is that's killing us morale-wise. Behaviors are really getting bad and it's not just kids but parents too."

13. Alaska Professional Learning Network <https://asdn.org/akpln/>

14. "Mental Health in Alaska Schools-A Landscape Assessment." Stellar Group, 2021, <https://alaskamentalhealthtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Mental-Health-in-Alaska-Schools-Landscape-Assessment-FINAL-2021.08.05.pdf>

"I feel really fortunate to have been one of the schools chosen for engaging in CLEAR. Our staff and myself learned so much and I feel very fortunate the circumstances were consistent for us."

"What a mission critical. Just talking about it makes me feel passionate, thank god someone is trying to fill these spaces. Not voids, but teachers and a lot of kids are crying out for help in this realm right in between social-emotional counseling and discipline."

"The biggest message I'd like the district and the state and everyone in between to hear is we need to be doing this. There is an epidemic of dysregulated children in our schools and I don't imagine COVID made it any better. It's the real deal we must keep investing in this work and circle through what we know about brain science, communities of practice, power dynamics in schools. Having someone who can operate outside of those dynamics is really important."

This project was made possible by the Juneau Community Foundation, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alaska Division of Behavioral Health (DBH), Juneau School District, Alaska Children's Trust, Alaska Mental Health Board (AMHB) and Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (ABADA).

Further Readings:

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McCarthy, A. (2018, January 12). Program increases awareness of effects of childhood trauma. *Juneau Empire*. <https://www.juneauempire.com/news/program-increases-awareness-of-effects-of-childhood-trauma/>

Philson, G. (2018, May 24). Riverbend principal changed school, one hug at a time. *Juneau Empire*. <https://www.juneauempire.com/news/riverbend-principal-changed-school-one-hug-at-a-time/>

Appendix A: Juneau CLEAR Implementation Report Year 1 (9/7/2018)

Written by CLEAR Program Staff, Washington State University

In the 2017-18 school year, Juneau Schools in cooperation with the Juneau Community Foundation, The Alaska Children's Trust, and the Alaska Mental Health Board supported the launch of the three-year long CLEAR program in three Juneau elementary schools: Glacier Valley, Harborview, and Riverbend. The combined K-12 enrollment for the three schools was 972 students and 81 classroom teachers.

CLEAR (Collaborative Learning for Educational Achievement and Resilience) is an educator support model with the goal of shifting skills and attitudes among adults that produce more effective practices for all students but particularly for students struggling with trauma. CLEAR places a trauma specialist in a school for two days each month to provide formal training, consultation to individual staff, and consultation on systemic changes to adopt trauma-informed educational practices. While CLEAR is a P-12 education support program, the three demonstration schools in Juneau are all elementary schools.

CLEAR strongly endorses voluntary engagement with trauma-informed practice change as a core element of interventions addressing trauma. At the end of the first implementation year, staff in the three Juneau schools voted anonymously to have CLEAR return for the second year with an average consent vote percent of greater than 90%.

This report focuses on implementation of CLEAR during its first year to permit a comparison of Juneau's experience with other implementing schools.

End of Year Survey Methodology

As a matter of routine monitoring for implementation progress, staff in CLEAR schools are asked to complete an anonymous online survey addressing their participation in CLEAR, staff report of change in practices addressed in CLEAR, and CLEAR's perceived impact on student and staff school success.

The survey addresses level of participation in CLEAR, perceptions of CLEAR's value, and staff's self-report of dimensions such as work stress, relationships with staff and students, and school climate. The practice and staff adjustment questions were chosen to reflect characteristics of teachers and schools that are intermediate predictors of academic success in schools.

Change over time is assessed by a retrospective baseline change strategy. We have found that until people are introduced to trauma-informed practice concepts, they cannot use the concepts to describe their practice. In a retrospective baseline study, the respondent reports where their practice was before the start of the intervention and compare it to where their practice is now using what they have learned. In a previous CLEAR end of year survey report, we examined the

risk of a response bias using this reporting strategy and concluded that there was no evidence of a response bias among survey participants.

Ninety Juneau staff (60 certificated staff, 30 classified staff) completed the anonymous end of year survey through an online portal. This reflects a high completion rate among staff and as a result supports the representativeness of the findings in this report. For purposes of this report, the responses of staff in the three Juneau schools were pooled and compared with the combined responses from 195 staff in six other elementary schools implementing Year 1 of CLEAR in the 2017-18 school year. The six comparison elementary schools represent a mix of urban and small town schools. We do not report comparisons across implementing schools given the purpose of the survey is to look at overall progress of CLEAR. When Juneau staff responses differ significantly from reports by staff in other CLEAR schools, the findings are detailed. When Juneau and other CLEAR school staff are comparable, we only report the overall finding.

Engagement with CLEAR

Three types of engagement with CLEAR are open to staff in each visit: individual or small group consultation supports, participation in the monthly professional development (PD) trainings, and participation in the 'CLEAR Team' which is a staff/leadership team that advises the principal and the CLEAR consultant on progress and needed areas of work. The monthly PD sessions are mandatory for all staff, but other elements of the intervention are voluntary. For this report, we focus on: (1) the perceived value of the PDs and (2) participation in and perceived value of the CLEAR coaching. While the CLEAR team is a key program component, it is typically an administrative assignment and the principal value is for CLEAR's smooth and targeted implementation rather than individual staff change.

While attendance at the professional development presentation is mandatory, attendance will vary. With up to nine PD sessions possible in the first year, 80% of respondents reported they attended six or more sessions in the year compared to 20% attending less than six sessions. Juneau staff were significantly more likely to attend six or more PD sessions (88% Juneau staff v. 77% comparison school staff, $\chi^2(1) = 4.6, p < .03$).

Juneau staff who used the CLEAR consultant at least once during the year did so at percentages comparable to the other CLEAR schools (74% Juneau, 63% comparison CLEAR schools, $\chi^2(1) = 3.3, p < .07$). In contrast to the comparison CLEAR school staff, classified and certificated educators in the Juneau schools engaged the CLEAR consultant at equivalent levels (77% certificated, 70% classified) whereas in other sites classified staff engaged with the consultants is less (69% certificated, 55% classified). Classified staff often encounter barriers to participating with the consultant because of work schedules and assignments. For the staff who did not use the consultant, either no perceived need or lack of confidence on how to use the consultation were the principal reasons reported not to engage the consultant.

Consultation requires an invitation from the involved staff and in Year 1 often requires time to become established. In both Juneau and CLEAR comparison schools roughly one-third of staff using the consultant did so 1-2 times in the year while approximately one-quarter of the staff

used the consultant five or more times. For both Juneau and other CLEAR schools, staff who used the consultant 1-2 times report significantly lower benefit from the consultation. Fifty-three percent of staff with 1-2 consults report the CLEAR consult as 'a great deal or completely helpful' compared to 79% of staff receiving three or more consults ($\chi^2(4) = 17.4, p < .002$).

Among the staff who utilized the CLEAR consultant, 68% of respondents report that the consultation was either 'a great deal' or 'completely' helpful. Juneau staff using the consultant were significantly more likely to rate the consultation as 'a great deal or completely' helpful compared to staff in other CLEAR schools (79% in Juneau, 61% in comparison schools, $\chi^2(4) = 9.6, p < .05$).

Asked about the nature of the benefit from the consultation, Juneau staff were comparable to other staff in reporting that the consultation was 'a great deal or completely helpful' in improving the positive nature of the relationship with the student who was the focus of the consultation (62% Juneau staff v. 49% comparison staff, $\chi^2(4) = 5.7, n.s.$). However, Juneau staff were significantly more likely to rate the consultation process as changing their practice (67% Juneau staff 'a great deal or completely helpful' compared to 47% of staff in the comparison schools, $\chi^2(4) = 9.4, p < .05$). Additionally, Juneau staff were significantly more likely to rate the consultation as contributing to sustainable change (81% Juneau staff 'a great deal or completely helpful' compared to 44% of staff in the comparison schools, $\chi^2(4) = 9.4, p < .001$). Using the same reporting scale, Juneau staff were comparable to comparison school staff in reporting the PD sessions helped with shifting practice (56% Juneau staff, 42% comparison school staff). However, Juneau staff were significantly more likely to report that the PD sessions significantly contributed to supporting sustainable change (65% Juneau staff 'a great deal or completely helpful' compared to 40% of staff in the comparison schools, $\chi^2(4) = 9.4, p < .05$).

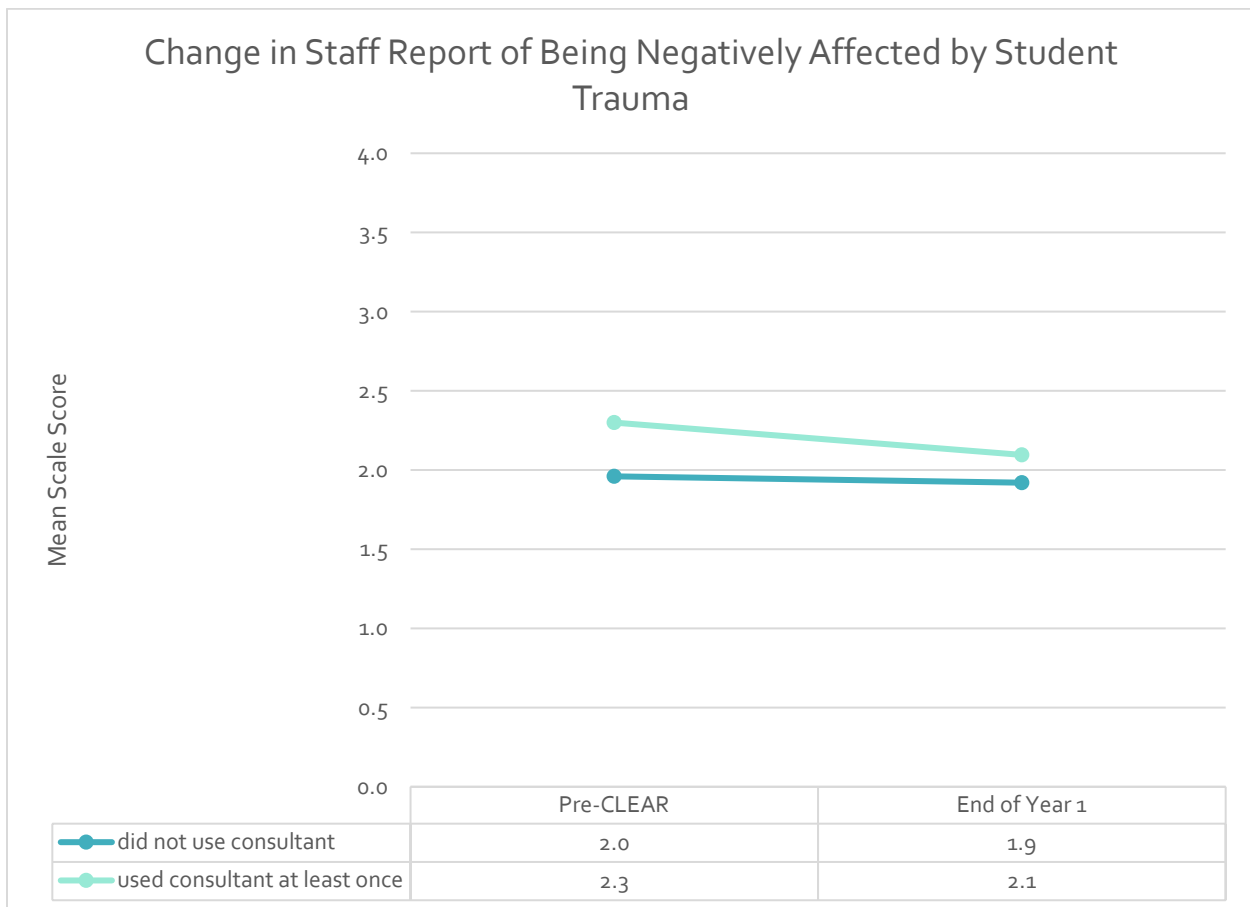
In the survey, we ask a series of questions about work burden and the impact of student trauma on the staff member. The questions include:

- I get satisfaction from my work.
- I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- I feel worn out by my work in ways that interfere with other parts of my life.
- I think that I might have been negatively affected by the traumatic stress of the students in our school.
- Because of the traumatic stress of the students in our school, I find it difficult to separate my professional life from my personal life.

The response scale ranged from 0 equaling 'never' to 4 equaling 'always.'

Across all survey respondents we observed that staff, regardless of their decision to use the consultant, report equivalent job satisfaction (overall mean for work satisfaction $M=3.03, S.D.=0.78$; overall rating for 'I can make a difference through my work' $M=3.25, S.D.=0.74$). However, staff who use the consultant report significantly higher negative work effects than do those staff who do not utilize the consultant.

- For the 'worn out' question, staff using the consultant report greater distress at both baseline and the end of year 1 without a significant change (At Baseline: Used Consultant M=2.58 v. Did Not Use Consultant M=2.08. $F(1, 230) = 12.4, p < .001$).
- For the 'separate my work life' question, staff using the consultant report greater distress at both baseline and the end of year 1 without a significant change (At Baseline: Used Consultant M=2.58 v. Did Not Use Consultant M=2.08. $F(1, 230) = 12.4, p < .001$).
- Asked if they feel negatively affected by student trauma, staff utilizing the consultant report higher distress at baseline. By the end of year 1, there is an overall modest but statistically significant reduction in being negatively affected that is largely attributable to change in the staff who utilized the CLEAR consultant. Please see the next figure.



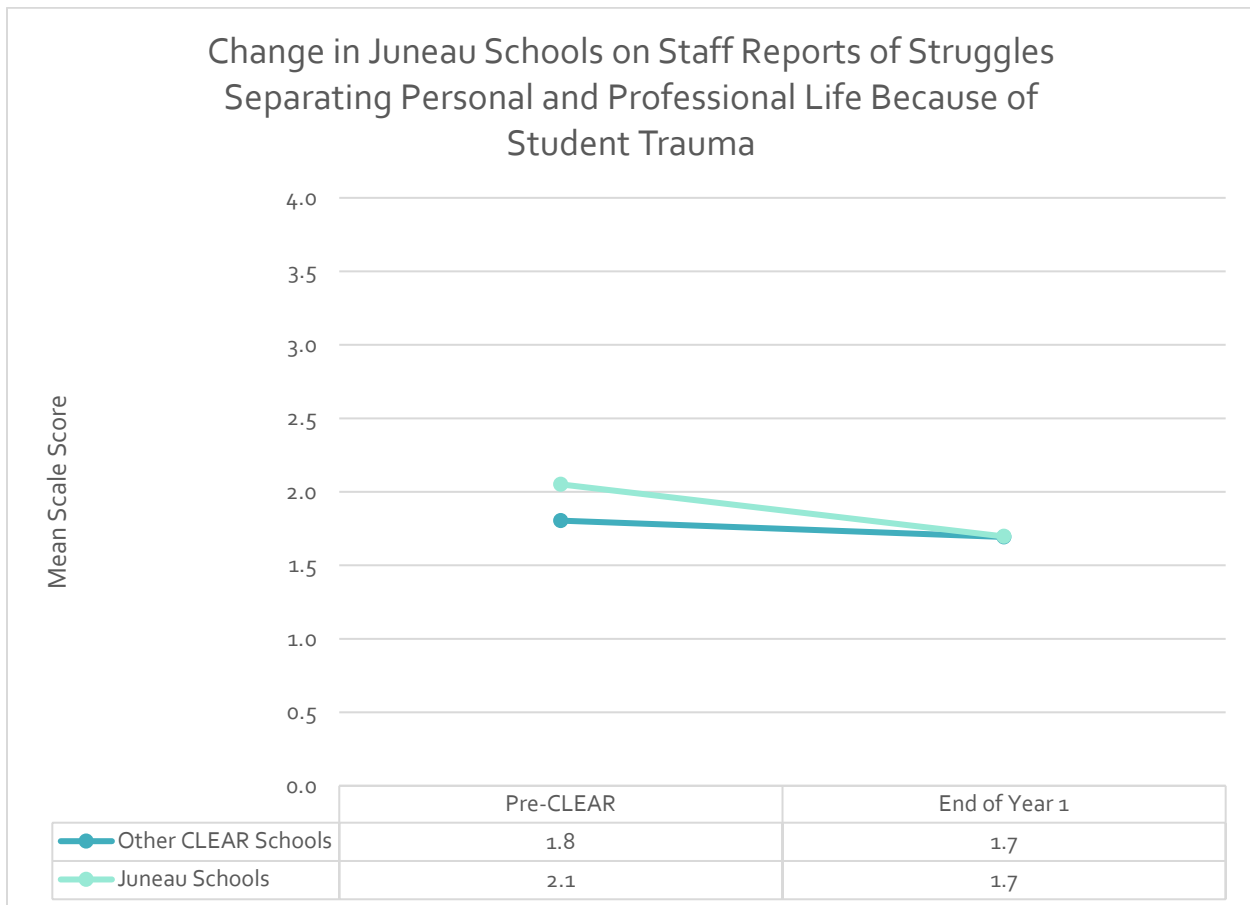
$F(1, 230) = 4.5, p < .04$ for main effect of change from baseline

This finding suggests that work stress and burden may have an important motivational effect on educators' decision to engage the CLEAR consultant. Asked about being 'worn out' and 'affected by student trauma,' staff using the consultant report significantly greater strain than staff not using the consultant.

Comparing Juneau and other CLEAR schools for work adjustment (satisfaction, make a difference, worn out, can't separate, negative impact of student's trauma), Juneau staff rate

themselves with lower quality work adjustment than comparison school staff on several measures.

- Asked about 'making a difference' Juneau staff report significantly lower job satisfaction (At baseline, Juneau staff $M=3.1$ v. Other CLEAR schools $M=3.3$, $F(1, 230), 4.6, p<.04$).
- Asked about being 'worn out', Juneau and other CLEAR school staff report equal results and no change in Year 1 of CLEAR (Baseline: Juneau $M=3.05$, $S.D.=0.86$ v. Other CLEAR schools $M=3.04$, $S.D.=0.78=7.4$).
- Asked about being negatively affected by student trauma, Juneau staff rate themselves as significantly more impacted (Baseline Juneau $M=2.4$ v. Other CLEAR schools $M=2.1$, $F(1, 230) =3.8, p<.05$). The overall baseline to end of year differences indicates a statistically significant reduction in staff distress resulting from student trauma.
- Asked about struggles with separating their personal and professional life because of student trauma, Juneau staff report greater baseline distress but at the end of the year report reduced trauma effects comparable to staff in other CLEAR schools. Please see next figure.



$F(1, 230) = 6.4, p<.01$ significant change over time for Juneau staff

In summary, the use of the consultant is a critical indicator of engagement with the CLEAR change process. We find overall high levels of CLEAR consultant use with 67% of staff reporting at least one invited contact with the consultant. There are several indicators that staff who use

the consultant may be experiencing more work distress they attribute to the trauma struggles of their students. Staff burden in Juneau schools appears to be higher on several measures than in other CLEAR schools which in turn may be a factor in the observed higher consultant utilization. With respect to being negatively affected by student trauma, staff who used the consultant report lower distress at the end of year 1.

Staff Adoption of CLEAR Practices

In this year's survey, six conceptual and practice principles central to CLEAR were assessed. The questions included:

- In my practice, I understand that exposure to trauma impacts learning and school readiness.
- In my practice, I understand student need versus behavior.
- In my practice, I understand that working collaboratively around students is critical and not the responsibility of only one person.
- In my practice, I design student interventions based on strength and not problem identification.
- In my practice, I understand the importance of repair following rupture with a student.
- In my practice, I understand the importance of teaching students about their own regulation and ways to manage it.

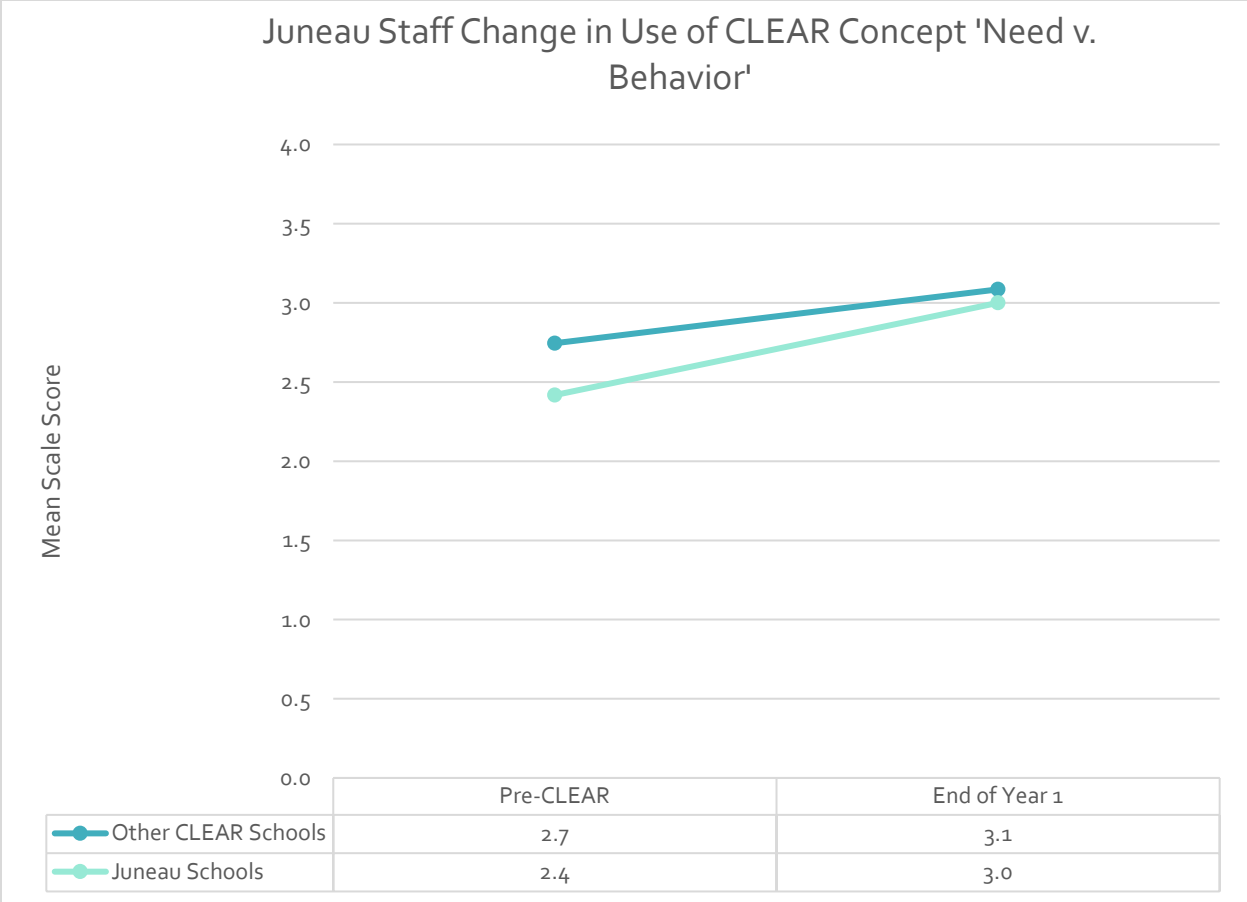
The response scale ranged from 0 equaling 'never' to 4 equaling 'always.'

While not all of these principles and practices are unique to trauma informed practice recommendations, these are core concepts introduced in the first year of CLEAR.

Recognition of the role of trauma in compromised learning is the fundamental starting point for class and individual educational strategies. Asked about integration of a broad trauma informed perspective in their work, use of the consultant was not a differentiating factor but overall staff report significant adoption of this perspective over the course of Year 1 (Baseline $M= 3.0$, $S.D.= 0.85$, End of Year $M= 3.5$, $S.D.= 0.64$, $F(1, 230) = 74.0$, $p<.001$). Juneau and the comparison CLEAR school staff were equivalent at both baseline and the end of the year.

In trauma informed practice, the concept of addressing underlying need rather than focusing on managing the behavior is a core concept. The results indicate that there is a general reported increase in adoption of this planning focus regardless of utilization of the consultant (Baseline $M= 2.6$, $S.D.= 0.90$, End of Year $M=3.1$, $S.D.= 0.69$, $F(1, 230) = 76.6$, $p<.001$).

In Juneau, staff were initially significantly less likely to report adoption of the need v. behavior concept but demonstrated significant gains relative to peer staff in comparison schools by the end of year 1. Please see next figure.



F (1, 230) = 7.1, p<.008 significant Site X Time interaction
 F (1, 230) = 4.3, p<.04, Juneau v. Comparison staff difference

Addressing the need for collaborative response to trauma in students, we found an overall significant change from baseline to the end of the year such that adoption of a collaborative approach was more common in CLEAR schools (Baseline M=3.2, S.D.=0.82, End of Year M=3.5, S.D.=0.64, F (1, 230)= 41.9, p<.001). Juneau and comparison schools were equivalent at baseline and end of year.

For use of strengths-based planning of learning, we again found a significant overall gain for year 1 (Baseline M=2.5, S.D.=0.99, End of Year M=2.8, S.D.=0.92, F (1, 230)= 28.3, p<.001). Juneau and comparison schools were equivalent at baseline and end of year.

The CLEAR concept of repair versus rupture addresses the objective of helping students re-enter classes and re-establish positive connections after a breach of behavior. We again found a significant overall change from baseline to the end of year 1 (Baseline M=2.8, S.D.=1.00, End of Year M=3.2, S.D.=0.84, F (1, 230)= 58.9, p<.001). Juneau and comparison schools were equivalent at baseline and end of year.

Self-regulation skills involve the ability to calm oneself under stress and not be overwhelmed by emotions. Integration of self-regulation skills development as an educational goal is a

recommendation of CLEAR. We found that there was a significant increase over time in the reported use of regulation strategies (Baseline $M=2.9$, $S.D.=0.89$, End of Year $M=3.3$, $S.D.=0.70$, $F(1, 230)=73.5$, $p<.001$). While Juneau schools did not differ from peer schools in terms of the scope of change over time, Juneau staff report significantly lower adoption of regulation practices at both baseline and the end of year 1 compared to peer schools (Baseline Juneau $M=2.7$, $S.D.=0.84$ v. Other CLEAR Schools $M=3.0$, $S.D.=0.86$, $F(1, 230)=8.5$, $p<.004$).

In summary, we show a consistent pattern of staff reporting significant changes in trauma-informed principles and practice introduced by CLEAR. When we examine the mean scores, there are several practices such as a value on collaborative practice where report of the practice is quite high and as a result there is little room for overall staff change. Other practices like the use of strength-based intervention planning is a less uniform practice and potentially is an area of targeted development in CLEAR schools that demonstrates gains.

CLEAR Impact on Social Emotional Learning Practices

We ask staff to reflect on their practice with respect to social emotional learning (SEL) as a foundation for trauma informed care, and their use of specific trauma responses to support students. Our emphasis on SEL practice as a component of trauma informed response reflects the typical development goals placed at risk due to trauma. The questions include:

- I am satisfied with my understanding and utilization of social emotional teaching techniques.
- I am confident in my ability to set a positive social-emotional example for our students.

Staff responded using a scale where 0 indicated never and 4 indicated always.

With respect to use of SEL teaching techniques, we found significant overall gains regardless of whether the staff used the consultant or not (Baseline $M=2.4$, $S.D.=0.85$ v. End of Year $M=2.8$, $S.D.=0.78$, $F(1, 230)=62.8$, $p<.001$). Comparable results were found for staffs' confidence in being a model for SEL behaviors (Baseline $M=2.9$, $S.D.=0.76$ v. End of Year $M=3.14$, $S.D.=0.72$). This finding supports a common anecdotal observation in CLEAR that introducing the CLEAR process helps to reinforced SEL practices. Please note that CLEAR does not endorse a specific SEL practice but rather emphasizes SEL practice as an essential but not sufficient set of conditions for responding to student trauma.

On SEL practice, Juneau schools were comparable to other CLEAR schools regarding SEL teaching and show the same significant gain reported above. For staff as SEL models, Juneau staff indicated less initial confidence (Baseline Juneau schools $M=2.8$, $S.D.=0.69$ v. Baseline Other CLEAR $M=3.0$, $S.D.=0.78$; $F(1, 230)=3.7$, $p<.06$) but along with other CLEAR school staff show significant gains by the end of Year 1.

We conclude that CLEAR may have a beneficial effect on the quality of SEL practice in our implementing schools.

CLEAR's Impact on Staff Perceptions of the School Community

In the end of year survey, our outcome measures address staff peer relationships, relationship with school and district leadership, relationship with students, and adoption of educational practices foundational to trauma informed practice. We consider these to be interim outcomes that are associated in the greater educational literature with overall academic success and success of the school as a community. We examined change from pre-CLEAR positions to status at the end of CLEAR's first year. The questions included in the survey are organized into three categories: students, colleagues/school leadership, and trauma informed school characteristics. Educators responded on a scale where 0 equaled 'not at all' to 4 equaling 'completely.'

Students

I have positive feelings about the students in our school

I have positive feelings about the students in our school who struggle with behavior and/or self-regulation

Students in this school show respect for one another

Colleagues and Leadership

I have positive feelings about the adults working in our school

I feel supported by people I work with

I feel supported by the principal and assistant principal leadership at this school

I feel supported by district leadership

School Environment and Trauma Response

My school is an emotionally safe place for students and staff

My school is a physically safe place for students and staff

In our school, disciplinary alternatives to office referrals are made available to students

In our school, office referrals result in trauma-informed responses

In reporting on educators' feelings towards all students, staff in all schools report consistently high levels of positive feelings. At baseline, the overall mean rating by CLEAR educators was 3.3/4.0 and at the end of year 1, 3.3/4.0. There was not a significant change over time for the CLEAR schools. Schools in Juneau were comparable to other schools in their positive feelings toward students.

When asked about feelings towards students who struggle with behavior and self-regulation, educators in CLEAR schools report significant increases in the consistency of their positive response to the students (Baseline M= 2.8, S.D.= 0.80, End of Year M= 3.2, S.D.= 0.72, F (1, 230)= 25.00, p<.001). We view this as a particularly significant result for CLEAR because normalizing trauma behaviors as adaptive rather than inherently pathological is a core shift in understanding trauma informed response. The reported shift in attitude was equivalent in Juneau and the comparison schools.

Reporting on their view of student-to-student respect, educators rate student respect quite low and this assessment does not change by the end of CLEAR Year 1 (Baseline M= 2.30, S.D.= 0.66, End of Year M= 2.3, S.D. = 0.79). Juneau educators report equivalent results to their peers in other schools.

Asked to report how positive their feeling towards their colleague are, educators report high positive feelings across all participating schools at both baseline and end of year but do not report a change in attitude toward colleagues (Baseline M= 3.0, S.D.= 0.75, End of Year M= 3.0, S.D.= 0.75). Juneau educators were equivalent to peers in other schools. Similarly, asked if they feel supported by colleagues in the work, educators report high levels of support but do not report a change over time (Baseline M= 3.0, S.D.= 0.88, End of Year M= 3.0, S.D.= 0.86). Again, Juneau staff did not differ from peers elsewhere in the level of support reported.

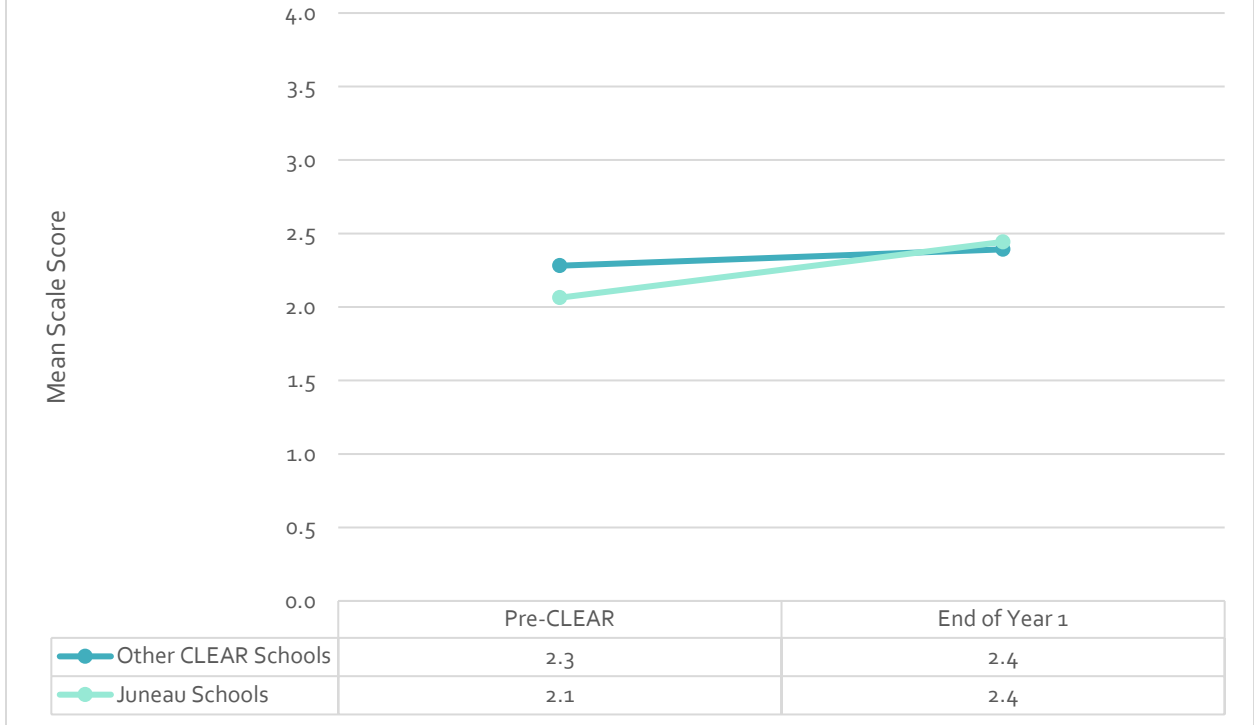
When asked to rate the level of support staff felt from their school principal, there was no change in reported support over the course of Year 1 and the level of reported support was high. However, we did find that Juneau educators, while reporting high levels of support from principals, report feeling lower levels of principal support compared to educators in other CLEAR schools and that the level of reported support did not change over the year (Juneau Baseline M= 3.1, S.D.= 0.99/Juneau End of Year M= 3.0, S.D.= 1.1; Comparison Schools Baseline M= 3.3, S.D.= 0.91/Comparison Schools End of Year M= 3.3, S.D.= 0.93). Educators rate district leadership support lower than support from principals and the rating of support did not change over the course of the first year of CLEAR (Baseline M= 2.4, S.D.= 1.1, End of Year M= 2.4, S.D.= 1.2). Juneau and comparison school educators rated district support equivalently.

Asked to rate the emotional safety of their school, educators in all the CLEAR schools rated emotional safety low and staff report of emotional safety did not change over the first year of CLEAR (Baseline M= 2.6, S.D.= 0.80, End of Year M= 2.7, S.D.= 0.92). Juneau and comparison CLEAR schools were equivalent in rating emotional safety. Educators rate physical safety in schools higher but again did not report a change in safety by the end of the first year of CLEAR (Baseline M= 2.9, S.D.= 0.80, End of Year M= 2.9, S.D.= 0.90).

Educators reported on the degree to which disciplinary alternatives were part of school practice. Disciplinary alternatives refer to use of restorative practices and other strategies to emphasize accountability over punishment. Educators report equivalent but fairly low support for alternative disciplinary strategies across schools and this level of support had not changed by the end of year 1 (Baseline M= 2.6, S.D.= 0.83, End of Year M= 2.7, S.D.= 0.92). Juneau educators were equivalent to their peers in other schools at both baseline and the end of year.

Educators also report on the degree to which office referrals for disciplinary problems are managed using trauma-informed principles. While overall report of such practices suggests modest adoption of trauma-informed office referral responses across CLEAR schools, Juneau educators report a significant increase in such practices at the end of year 1. Please see the next figure.

Increased Use of Trauma Informed Responses in Management of Office Referrals in Juneau Schools



$F(1, 230) = 11.7, p < .001$ Site X Time interaction

In summary, among year 1 schools we do not find that staff are reporting significant shifts in the nature of the school community. This is consistent with our theory of change for CLEAR. In year 1, our goal is to establish working relationships, shift language, and begin to work on key trauma response skills development. In our view, systemic changes are anticipated in the subsequent years when broad engagement with the issues has been established. However, we see two results that suggest early shifts in school community response consistent with CLEAR expectations. We demonstrate an overall reported shift in how at-risk students are viewed by staff by the end of the first year. And, in Juneau, there is some modest evidence that organizational response to disruptive behavior may be shifting.

Key Findings

Because CLEAR is a three-year program, our anticipation is that change is incremental over the three years and that change will unfold over time. The results in this report demonstrate high acceptance of CLEAR among participants, high ratings of and participation in CLEAR implementation components, and evidence on several indicators that CLEAR has an overall positive effect in schools that is accelerated among the staff who utilize the consultant in discussions about improving practice. Highlights from this report include:

- CLEAR in Juneau was positively received by Juneau educators with more than a 90% vote at the end of the first year for CLEAR to return. Juneau staff report was at the higher end of positive votes across CLEAR schools in the past several years.
- Integration of classified staff in Juneau was more successful in the first year than in other schools.
- Juneau staff report more work burden and effects from trauma than their peers in other schools. Juneau staff also report greater change on some of our indicators of work demand.
- Overall staff participation in CLEAR monthly professional development sessions is high but Juneau staff report greater participation rates than the average across other implementing schools.
- Overall satisfaction with the CLEAR consultation was high with 68% of educators rating the experience positively. Juneau staff were significantly more positive about the consultation experience than were staff in comparison schools. Juneau staff also reported the consultation experience as more impactful on their practice and a positive contributor to sustainable shifts in practice.
- Consistent with past survey years, staff who engage the consultant report more work stress and burden. This is not a reflection of the quality of their practice but it may be that staff who engage the consultant are less satisfied and more demanding of themselves.
- With respect to adoption of core CLEAR practices, staff report significant positive change on several practices promoted by CLEAR. The reported change was greater in staff who engaged the consultant voluntarily. Juneau schools were comparable to the peer schools except regarding the use of self-regulation strategies which may be a useful point of exploration in Year 2 implementation.
- There is evidence that CLEAR participation helps to increase use of and confidence in delivery of social emotional learning strategies.
- The reported shift among educators to hold more positive views of students who struggle is a significant change over the course of Year 1.

Appendix B: Chronic Absenteeism and Overall Disciplinary Referral and Academic Data

Written by the Juneau School District, provided to AMHB/ABADA July 2021

Student Chronic Absence Rate

In response to reporting requirements found in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Alaska has proposed several School Quality or Student Success (SQSS) indicators by grade spans. For each SQSS indicator, performance will be measured and reported for all students and all subgroups. The indicators that are proposed by Alaska are all designed to encourage schools to improve both the quality of instruction and the quality of the school climate and student engagement. Chronic absenteeism is proposed as one of the SQSS indicators. Alaska data from 2015-2016 shows that many schools have a significant percentage of students chronically absent (statewide rate = 26.4%). Research suggests that schools with lower rates of chronic absenteeism correlate generally with higher academic achievement.

Absenteeism for Alaska has been defined in accordance with the Office for Civil Rights' guidance. A student is considered absent if he or she is not physically on school grounds and is not participating in instruction or instruction-related activities at an approved off-grounds location for the school day. Chronically absent students include students who are absent for any reason (e.g., illness, suspension, the need to care for a family member), regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. Chronically absent students are those who were enrolled for at least 10 school days at any time during the school year and who missed 10% or more of the school days in which they were enrolled.

Chronic absenteeism is analyzed for Juneau for the 2017-2018, the 2018-2019 and the 2019-2020 school years. The data from this analysis is represented in the tables and graphic below.

All student membership records are included in these tables. It should be noted that under Alaska's ESSA school accountability system, only membership records for students who were enrolled for at least one-half of the school term are considered for the calculation of chronic absence. The chronic absence rate as calculated for this report will include a broader range of students and, therefore, may differ from that reported in the school accountability framework determined by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development.

Chronic Absenteeism	2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Number of Students ≥10 Days Membership	Number of Students Chronically Absent	Percent of Students Chronically Absent	Number of Students ≥10 Days Membership	Number of Students Chronically Absent	Percent of Students Chronically Absent	Number of Students ≥10 Days Membership	Number of Students Chronically Absent	Percent of Students Chronically Absent
Overall Juneau School District (K-12)	4771	1092	23	4719	1195	25	4700	857	18
Glacier Valley Elementary	374	95	25	355	95	27	359	73	20
Harborview Elementary	371	109	29	317	102	32	322	66	20
Riverbend Elementary	302	68	23	310	92	30	306	75	25

School Climate Discipline Report 2019-2020

Overview:

The Juneau School District is mandated to provide discipline and referral data at the end of each school year to the State of Alaska. Because of the Alaska State reporting cycle, the District starts each new school year analyzing the previous year's numbers. The data for the Suspension and Expulsion report comes from the discipline and referral data reported from each school. It is important to keep in mind that the State report includes only incidents where students are suspended or expelled. The rest of the discipline and referral data are used by the District to identify areas of need. Below is a snapshot of discipline referral data, which includes the 2018-2019 school year. In the 2018-2019 school year, the District recorded 2,930 discipline referrals. This is an 11% (344) decrease in the total number of referrals from the 2017-2018 school year. In addition to referral data, the District has collected data on discipline interventions over the past two years. The total number of interventions increased by 17 in 2018-2019, for a total of 460.

It is important to consider the following when analyzing the data:

- ❖ Entry of the data requires the person inputting the information to use judgment in classifying an event as a referral or an intervention.
- ❖ School sites often use multiple people to enter data. This increases the risk of errors, of incomplete entries, and of incomparable entries from site to site. For example, it allows for different definitions to be applied in the classification of an event as an intervention or referral.
- ❖ Cohorts of students are not 100% consistent from year to year, thus causing some incomparability of the data from year-to-year.

Key points derived from the 2018-2019 discipline and referral data:

- ❖ **Elementary school** referrals decreased by 273 in 2018-2019 from the previous year.
- ❖ **Middle school** referrals stayed the same in 2018-2019 from the previous year.
- ❖ **High school** referrals decreased by 53 in 2018-2019 from the previous year.
- ❖ **Districtwide interventions** increased by 17 in 2018-2019 from the previous year.

Referrals by School

	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018 (Disc Intervention)		2018-2019 (Disc Intervention)	
Glacier Valley	432	437	723	0	847	0
Harborview	192	242	238	17	246	54
Riverbend	249	138	152	61	208	6

PEAKS Academic Data

2018-2019		Advanced Proficient		Below Far Below Proficient			
School	Subgroup	Count	Percentage ¹	Count	Percentage ¹	Enrollment	Participation Rate
Glacier Valley	English Language Arts	64	36.16%	113	63.84%	177	99.44%
Glacier Valley	Mathematics	49	27.68%	128	72.32%	177	99.44%
Harborview	English Language Arts	60	40.00%	90	60.00%	150	100.00%
Harborview	Mathematics	73	48.67%	77	51.33%	150	100.00%
Riverbend	English Language Arts	64	45.39%	77	54.61%	144	98.61%
Riverbend	Mathematics	73	51.77%	68	48.23%	144	98.61%
2017-2018							
Glacier Valley	English Language Arts	76	40.64%	111	59.36%	189	98.94%
Glacier Valley	Mathematics	76	40.64%	111	59.36%	189	98.94%
Harborview	English Language Arts	68	40.24%	101	59.76%	181	93.92%
Harborview	Mathematics	77	43.50%	100	56.50%	181	98.34%
Riverbend	English Language Arts	59	45.38%	71	54.62%	132	100.00%
Riverbend	Mathematics	63	48.46%	67	51.54%	132	100.00%
2016-2017							
Glacier Valley	English Language Arts	71	37.37%	119	62.63%	192	99.48%
Glacier Valley	Mathematics	66	34.55%	125	65.45%	192	99.48%
Harborview	English Language Arts	89	46.35%	103	53.65%	192	98.44%
Harborview	Mathematics	54	42.52%	73	57.48%	192	98.96%
Riverbend	English Language Arts	53	41.73%	74	58.27%	130	97.69%
Riverbend	Mathematics	64	33.68%	126	66.32%	130	97.69%