

Summer Updates 2024-2025

Presented by:

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Welcome



THE KEY TO SUCCESS FOR ALASKAN
EDUCATORS SERVING STUDENTS
WITH LOW INCIDENCE DISABILITIES

www.sesa.org

Agenda

Goal 1:

SESA Mission

Goal 2:

SESA Productivity

Goal 3:

Feedback for SESA

Goal 4:

SESA In Action

Goal 5:

Questions



Fiscal Year 2025 SESA Staff Photo: Fourth/Back Row Left to Right: Claire Agni, Robert Sinclair, Brian Babcock, Brandie Clark; Third Row Left to Right: Christine Collier, Kelly Maki, Jennifer Schroeder, Amy Topmiller, Lyon Johnson; Second Row Left to Right: John Barrowman, Erin Land, Meriah Cory, Olivia Yancey, Angel Black, M'Lissa Parker, Yuya Hisada; Front Row Left to Right: Katie Groller, Autumn Holt, Samantha Weiland, Abby Steer, James Batin



Mission

SESA provides consultation and training to support the unique educational needs of individuals and the Alaskan communities that serve them.



About Us

SESA is an educational service agency comprised of a low incidence disability service inclusive of a statewide lending library. Low incidence disabilities include autism, deaf and hard of hearing (DHOH), vision impairment, emotional disabilities and multiple disabilities.

In addition, SESA operates three grants:
Alaska Autism Resource Center (AARC)
Alaska Deaf-Blind Project
Alaska Center for Accessible Materials (AKCAM)

Meet the SESA Board

Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus, **Board President**

Heather Wheeler, **Vice President**

Anna Attla, **Treasurer**

Shelly Vendetti Vucovitch, **Secretary**

Richard Saville, **Ex Officio**

Donald Enoch

Dr. Madeline Aguillard

Michaela Kolerok

Elizabeth Joseph

Vacant Seat



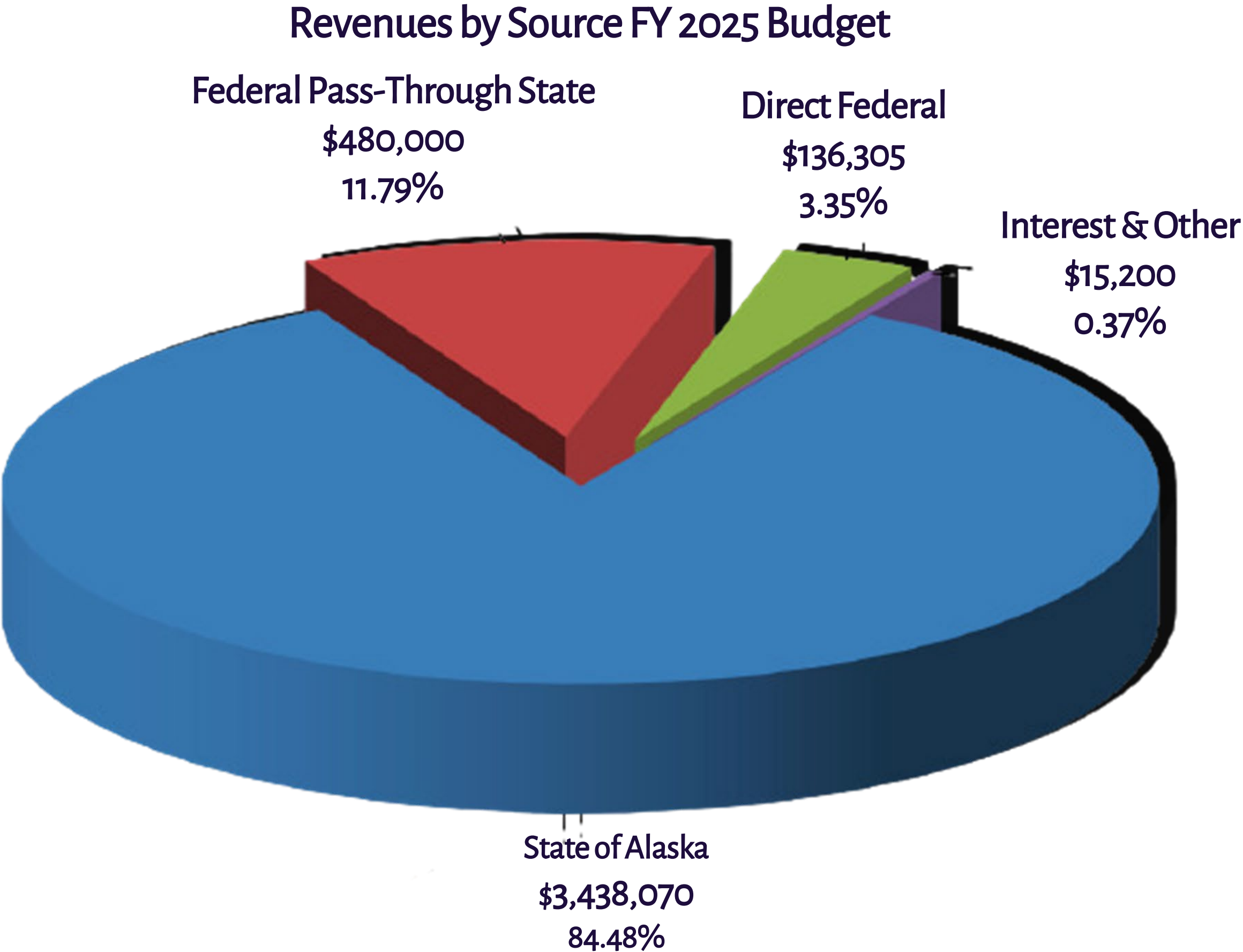
Fostering Community

We couldn't do it alone.

Thanks to partnerships, sponsorships, and grants, SESA is better able to serve Alaskans.



Funding for SESA



Since August 2024

SESA has provided technical assistance to over **21,586 Alaskans**.

SESA programs have offered over **124 site-based, district, and state-wide trainings** for Alaskans on evidence based or best practices related to the educational program of students with low incidence disabilities. Over **49%** of these trainings were conducted via distance delivery (e.g., Zoom).

SESA Low Incidence Disability Programs have offered and provided support to **524 students** and their school teams.

SESA has produced **506** customized student or patron focused reports offering recommendations and guidance.

SESA LID specialists have made **474 onsite consultations or trainings** for Alaskans.

Alaska Center of Accessible Materials has created and connected **32 accessible educational materials projects** for school teams and their students with print disabilities.

Alaska Autism Resource Center has conducted **46 trainings** and **48 community outreach activities**.

The Anne Freitag Library has **1,409** patrons and continues to do outreach across the state during conferences, Facebook, and SESA Newsletter to share what is available at the statewide lending library.

Since August 2024 (cont. 1)

Over my 20+ year career in Alaska, I have never had a poor experience with anyone from SESA. Jennifer is a wealth of knowledge and her delivery of information is very user friendly. FY25 Site Visit Survey

(Autumn) I was given a very engaging presentation that helped me see autism and neurodivergence in a spectrum, and a different light than I had before. Very useful and helpful. Thank you for the handouts, brain breaks, and treats! FY25 AARC Training Feedback Survey

Loves Abby's presentation and the activities presented at ASSEC. I am going to take this back to my district to figure out ways to make our school board meetings and in-services more accessible. Thanks Abby! FY25 Site Visit Survey

Lyon is an asset! I appreciate all of his input and feedback. Thank you, Lyon! FY25 Site Visit Survey

We enjoyed M'Lissa's onsite visit. She was professional and friendly. She respected the student's desire to not be singled out and offered great resources and feedback. FY25 Site Visit Delivery

(Angel) AB balances a delicate personal touch with a knowledgeable professional approach, ensuring my son's access to his education. We feel like she is my son's strongest advocate and lately is helping us focus on what we are doing now to prepare him for college and beyond. FY25 Site Visit Survey

Meriah answered my questions and offered tips on how to help my student for the remainder of the school year. I hope she is able to come out to observe again and work more with the students and the PCA. FY25 Site Visit Survey

Since August 2024 (cont. 2)

Robert was a large help to the student's program that I am working on. He had good input and carried over with the prep work that he sent after we met to review the needs. Very beneficial!

FY25 Site Visit Survey

Erin is so kind, knowledgeable, and fun! She gave us so many great strategies to use and I learned so much from her. I can't wait to see her again. Qu yana Erin!!!

Site Visit Survey

LOVE love love Kelly!!! Super helpful and a happy person!!

FY25 Site Visit Delivery

Amy is absolutely OUTSTANDING! From the moment she walks in, she brings such a warm, supportive presence. She is an incredible listener, truly taking the time to understand the situation, and then seamlessly tailoring strategies and resources to fit perfectly. Her kindness and friendly demeanor make such a difference, and I can't express enough how much I appreciate her. She made me feel so supported, and her help has been invaluable. She is a true lifesaver in so many ways, and I am beyond grateful for all that she does!

FY25 Site Visit Survey

Always excited for John's visits. They are very informative and supportive.

FY25 Site Visit Survey

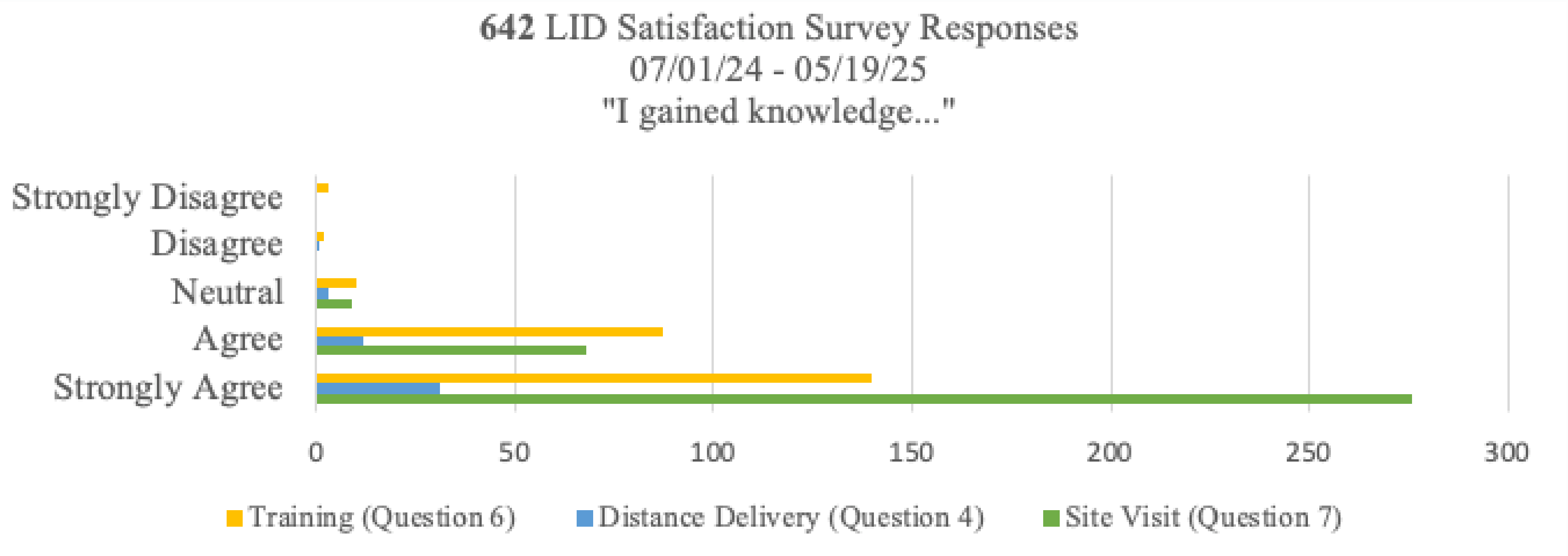
Samantha and the SESA are amazing and valuable. Our students truly benefit from this program, and we always have authentic, practical, and excellent ideas, materials, support, and kindness from the SESA program and Samantha.

FY25 Site Visit Survey

Brian Babcock was very professional yet down to earth with all his advice and comments. He was able to visit with the intensive paraprofessional one-on-one and they communicated together very well. He suggested ideas for learning and how to communicate with her student. He also suggested we should try to get the LAMP program for this child for communication. Brian is a wonderful individual to work with.

FY25 Site Visit Survey

Feedback for SESA

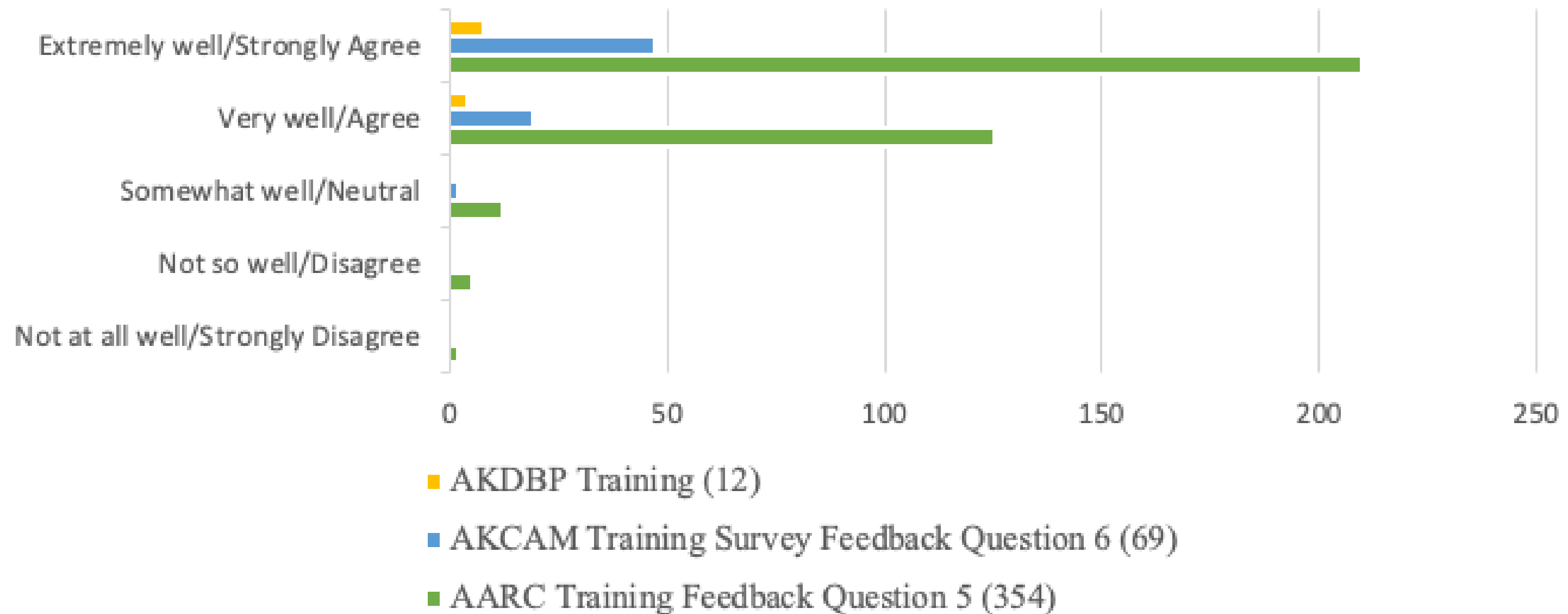


Satisfaction survey results demonstrated that 95.63% of respondents reported gaining knowledge about a disability and how to implement a strategy as a result of the technical assistance received this school year.

Out of 353 completed LID Site Visit Surveys, 83.09% requested on-site services as their preferred mode of technical assistance.

Feedback for SESA (cont.)

435 AARC & AKCAM Training Feedback Survey Responses
AARC Question 5: "This presentation provided me with new knowledge."
AKCAM Question 6: "I gained knowledge."
AKDBP Question 5: "I gained knowledge."



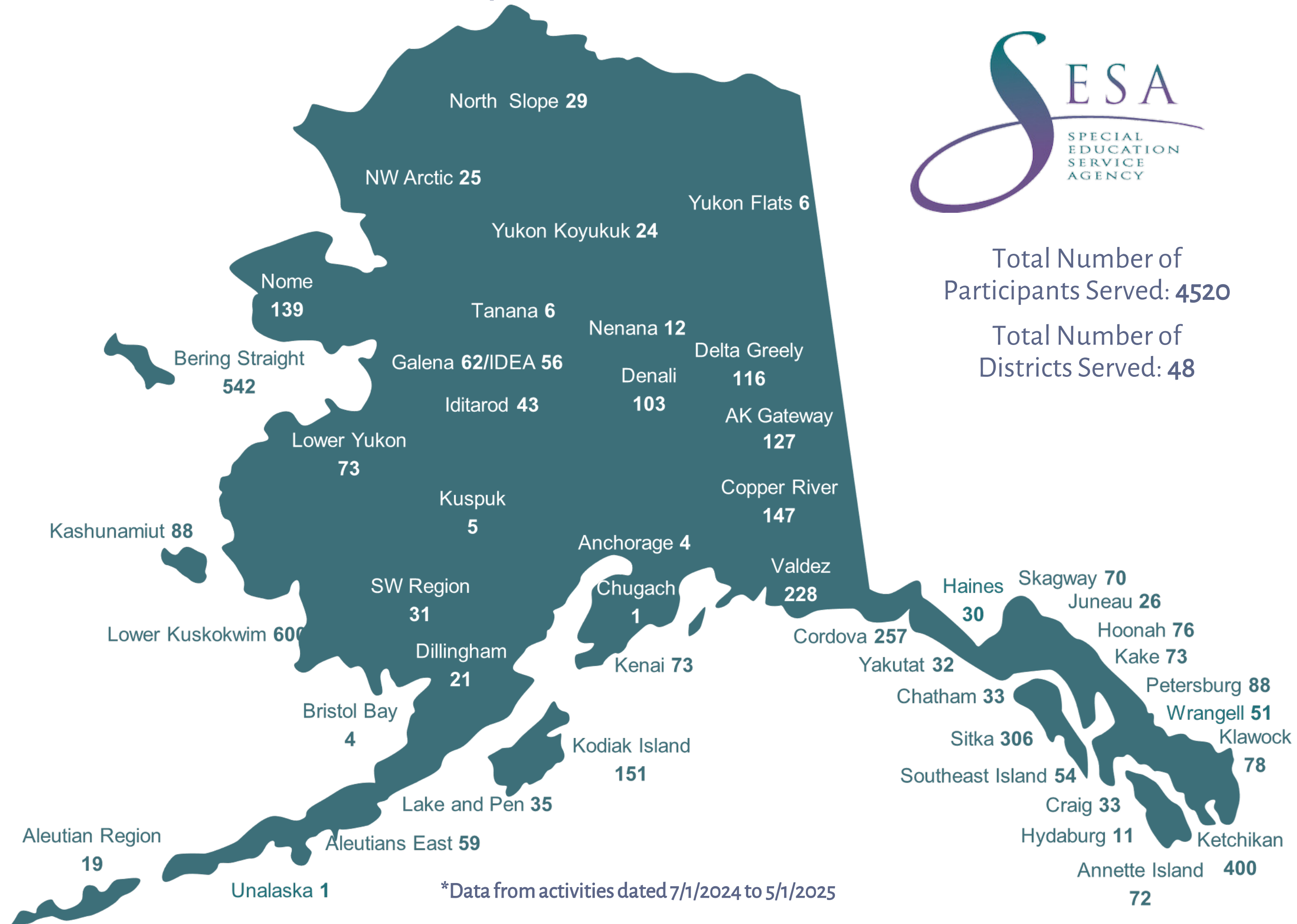
Satisfaction survey results demonstrated that 94.63% of respondents reported gaining knowledge about a disability during a training received from a SESA specialist this school year.

LID Participants Across Districts FY25*



Total Number of
Participants Served: **4520**

Total Number of
Districts Served: **48**



*Data from activities dated 7/1/2024 to 5/1/2025

In-Person Services by Location FY25*

Trainings & Resource Consultations



Total Number of
Participants
Served: **1,139**

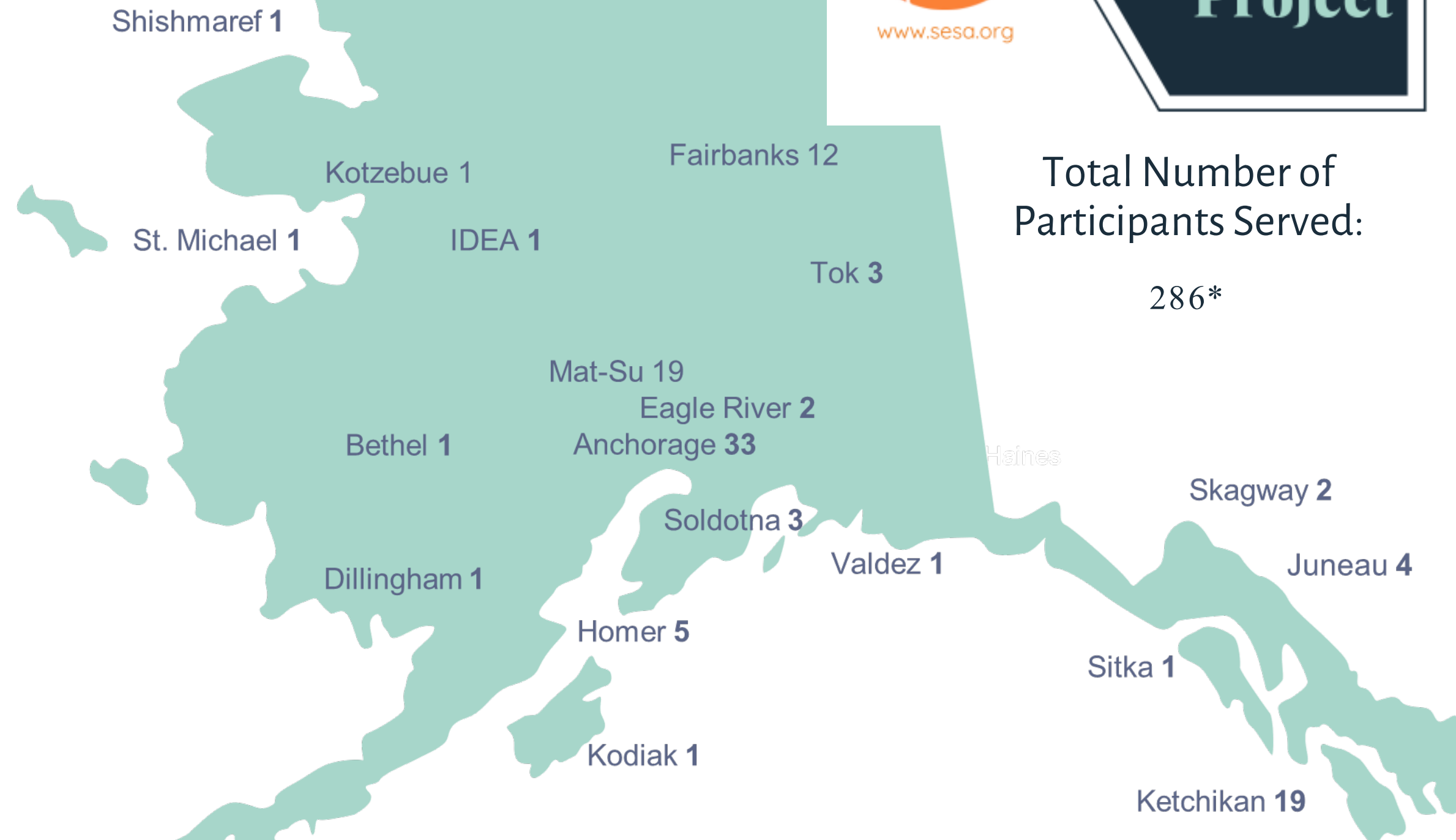


*Data from activities dated 7/1/2024 to 5/1/2025

Participants Served by Location Trainings



**Alaska
Deafblind
Project**



Total Number of
Participants Served:

286*

*Includes 175 out-of-state training participants

FY25 YTD
Total Number of
Participants served:
650



Outreach



Consultation



Materials



Trainings



Celebrating SESA'S Students

SESA has the honor and privilege of working with students across the state.

Teacher Appreciation Day is a tasty opportunity for this student to learn about kitchen tool safety. He is hard at work on Chicken Noodle Soup. The best part? Sampling the soup when it was all done.



Image description: A teenage boy in a blue and green jacket with a soccer ball on it peels carrots. A red bowl with cut up chicken sits in the foreground

Putting computer skills to the test. This student is creating visuals for a sorting task while also working on typing and sight word recognition using the Lesson Pix website.



Image description: A Teen boy in a red shirt with dark hair works on an open black laptop. An iPad in a blue case sits on the table.

The Alaska Deafblind Project

Decisions, decisions, decisions.

During lunch, an Alaska Deafblind Project student decides what she wants to drink and works with a specialist on her functional vision using Goldfish and an ice cube tray.

Exercises like this help her develop communication, fine motor, and visual scanning skills.



Image description: A girl with long black hair in a ponytail selects juice while pushing a cart in front of her



Image description: A girl in a blue tee-shirt sits cross legged on the floor with a woman with short red hair and glasses. The girl has a white ice tray in front of her

The Alaska Center for Accessible Materials

The AKCAM Grant Coordinator educates a group at the Alaska School Counselors conference about Accessible Education Materials (AEM). During FY25, AKCAM found a direct link between outreach to the community and requests for consultations.

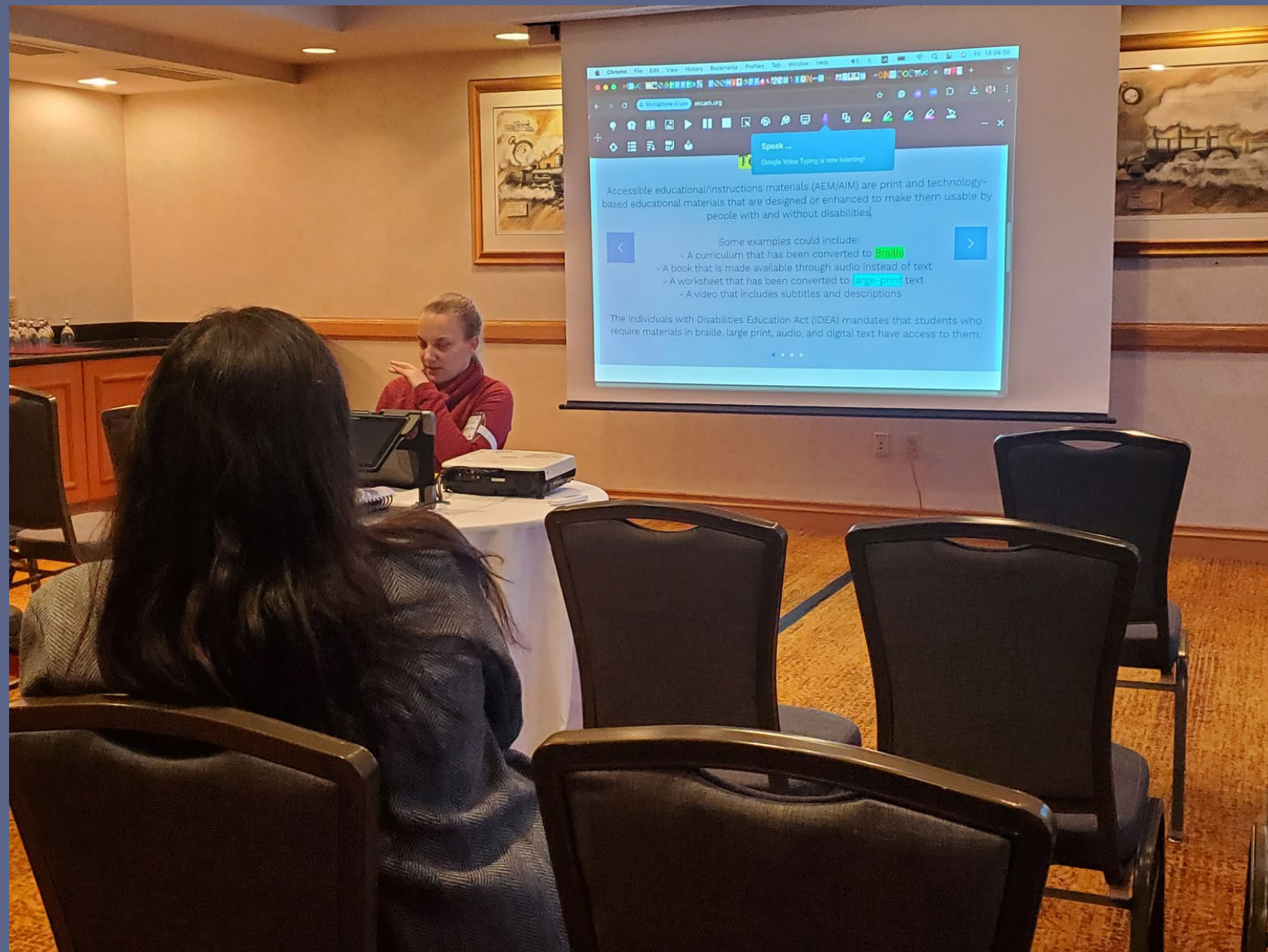


Image description: A woman in a red shirt sits at a table as a slide about AEM is projected onto a screen behind her. A woman with long dark hair sits in a chair in front of her.

Enlargement projects help provide students with AEM. Depending on the size of the project, it can be extremely time consuming. AKCAM is working with districts across the state to increase local capacity so they can create or locate materials themselves to help deliver them to students faster.

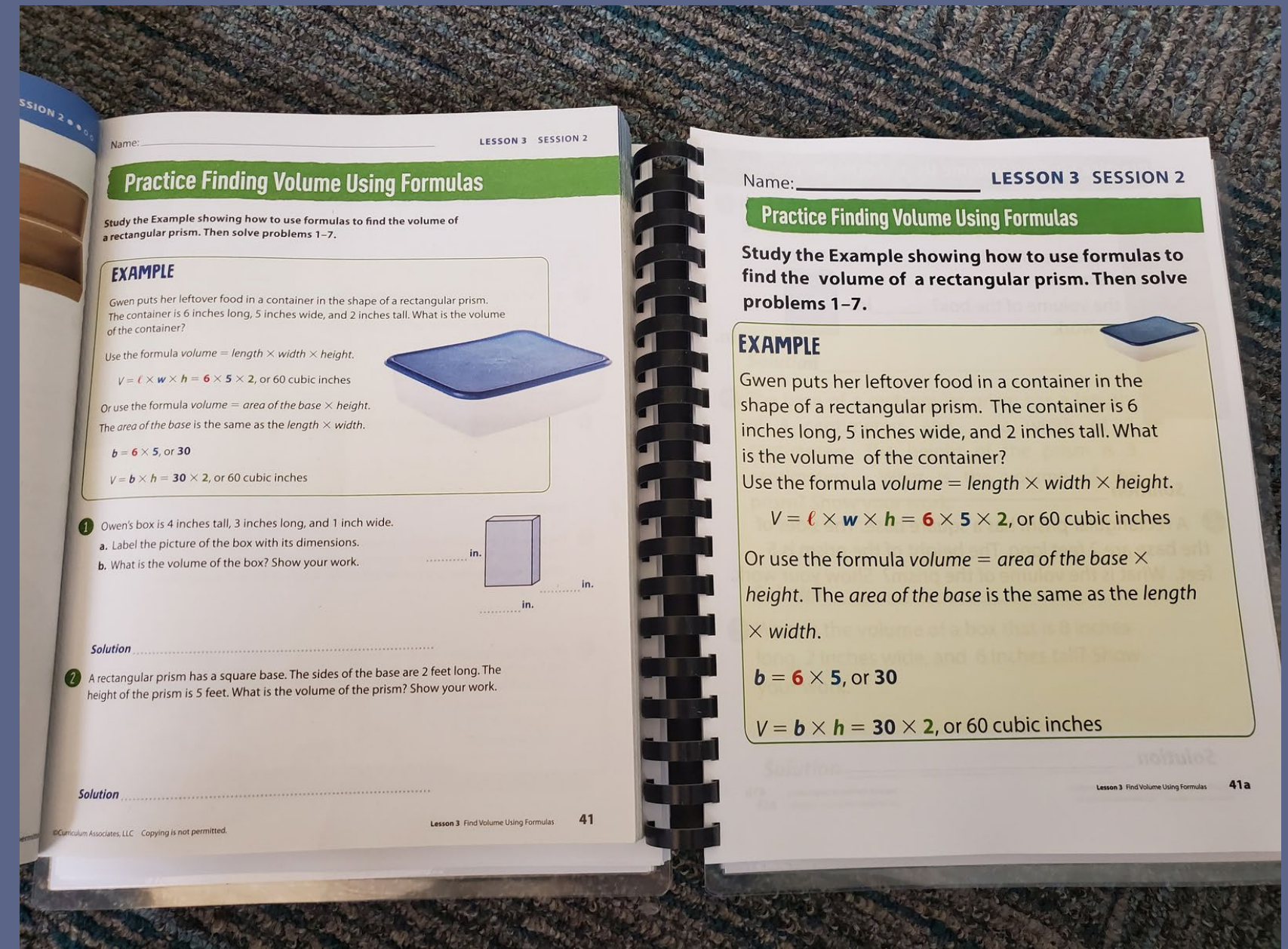


Image description: An original page from a math textbook sits next to the same page from an enlarged math textbook.

The Alaska Autism Resource Center

Let's Walk it Out!

The second annual Autism Acceptance and Awareness Walk drew a crowd of 155 people in 2025. Planning is already underway to make it even better next year!



Image description: Prize wheel from the AARC Walk. Triangles represent donations. Every child who attended went home with a prize.



Image description: A crowd sits on bleachers in front of three tables. A woman in a red shirt and an orange shirt stand in front of them.

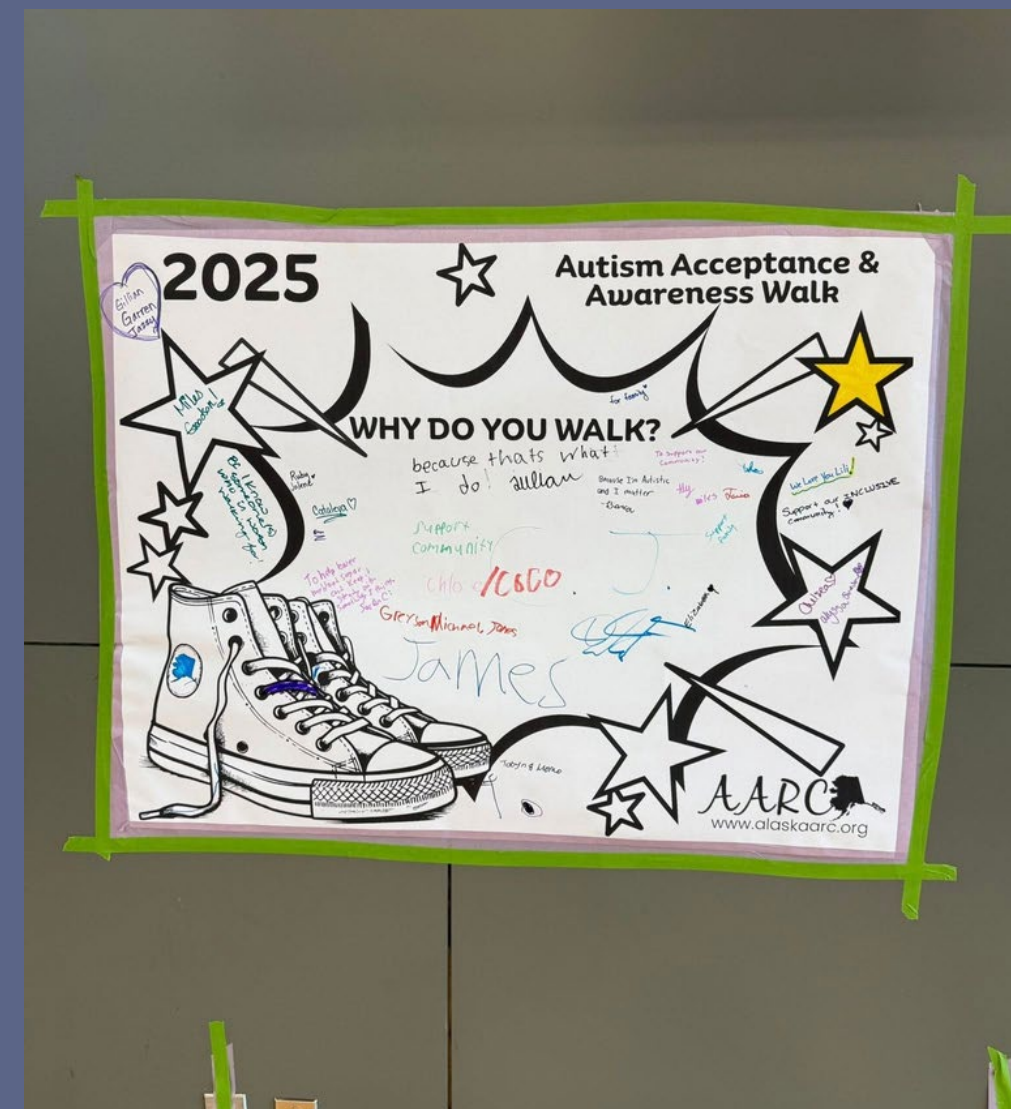
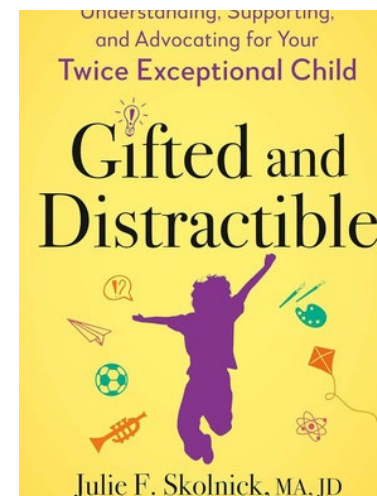


Image description: Filled in coloring sheet secured with green tape to a brown wall.

The Anne Freitag Library



Books



Sensory Materials



Toys & Games



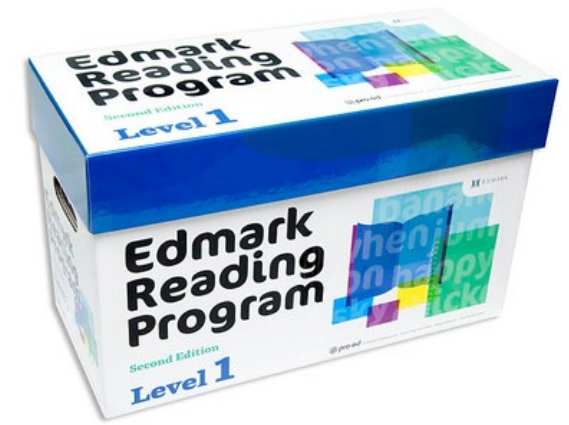
Accessible Reading Materials



The Anne Freitag Library (cont. 1)

Most
Checked Out
Items

Edmark Reading Program
Level 1



Mini-Lite Box



Light Table Manipulatives



The Anne Freitag Library

Library (cont. 2)

Most Downloaded Booklists

THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY

Recommended Reading

ACTIVITIES

For Children With Autism



YOGA FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM BY MICHAEL CHISSICK
Speaking from decades of experience, Chissick shares the secrets to teaching yoga to children and young people with ASD. The book is suitable for teaching everyone on the spectrum, with an emphasis on teaching those with more complicated needs.



AUTISM & ME: AN EMPOWERING GUIDE WITH 35 EXERCISES, QUIZZES, & ACTIVITIES! BY KATIE COOK
This book highlights positive ASD traits while showing how to work through some of ASD's challenges. Presents interactive exercises, from fill-in-the-blanks to multiple-choice quizzes.



HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM & SENSORY DISORDERS BY TERESA GARLAND
Innovative, practical and fun activities for children with autism and sensory disorders. Following a step-by-step recipe format, Garland provides nearly 200 activities and interventions to help children with their sensory needs.



EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOUR YOUNG CHILD WITH AUTISM LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL BY DEBRA S. JACOBS
Easy to carry out and to fit into your routines, they will help improve a child's sense of body awareness, coordination and motor skills, and address key tasks such as eating meals and healthy sleep.



105 ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR CHILD WITH AUTISM AND SPECIAL NEEDS: ENABLE THEM TO THRIVE, INTERACT, DEVELOP AND PLAY BY SUSAN JULES
The activities are presented in easy-to-grasp bits to enable you to engage easily with your Special Needs child and get the tasks completed in no time, and most importantly have fun in the process without the stress.



AUTISM ACTIVITY BOOK FOR KIDS BY PUJA TRIVEDI PARIKH
A book full of interactive activities that help kids with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) to build confidence, communication skills, and thrive.

2600 Denali Street, Suite 200 Anchorage, AK 99501
907-343-1301 | cagni@sesa.org | sesa.org/library

Activities for Children with Autism

THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY

Recommended Playing

GAMES

For Children With Autism



FEELINGS DETECTIVE
Designed to help players understand their own feelings as well as the feelings of others. It is especially helpful for children who tend to misread social clues, including those who are at any position on the Autism Spectrum.



HAPPY OR NOT
An educational game that give kids real practice in recognizing emotions in familiar scenarios. The first player to match all 9 emotions on their board to the choice of 18 emotions on the cards is the winner.



HIDDEN RULES
Hidden rules is a term used to describe the unwritten social rules and behavior that most of use seem to know without every being taught. This fun card game will help children learn and practice 40 hidden rules for everyday life.



SOCIAL SMARTS
Educational game that helps all children improve their social relations and communication skills. It is especially helpful for children who tend to misread social cues, including those who are at any position on the Autism Spectrum.



WHAT DO I DO?
This deck of 48 cards helps children understand how to handle various social situations with poise, grace, and confidence. The cards are perfect for opening up dialogues between parents and children about what behavior may be expected from them in various social environments.



WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?
Designed to help children understand the different reactions we have to difficult situations and how our responses affect those around us.

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Games for Children with Autism

THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY

Recommended Reading

CHARACTERS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

For Tweens and Teens



HEAR ME BY KERRY O'MALLEY CERRA
After being diagnosed with progressive hearing loss, Rayne resists her parents' efforts to "fix" her and rethinks her own assumptions about what her condition means for her.



ALL HE KNEW BY HELEN FROST
In 1939 six-year-old Henry, who is deaf, is taken from his family and placed in a home for the feeble-minded where, years later, his friends include a conscientious objector serving there during World War II.



DEAF NOT DEAF BY CHRISTIAN FUSCO
Rian is starting her sixth grade year in a new home and at a new school in Northeast Philadelphia. On her first day, she is greeted by Shack, the class bully, who wastes no time breaking one of her cochlear implants. She's used to feeling like an outsider, but nothing could prepare her for life at John Hancock Elementary.



THE SILENCE BETWEEN US BY ALISON GERVAIS
After moving to Colorado, deaf seventeen-year-old Maya is forced to attend a hearing school, where she must navigate a new life and prove that her lack of hearing will not stop her from pursuing her dreams.



SHOW ME A SIGN BY ANN CLARE LEZOTTE
LeZotte weaves threads of adventure, family tragedy, community, racism, and hearing people's negative assumptions about Deaf people into a beautiful and complex whole. Mary overcomes her own ordeal with the support of her community, but in the process she discovers that there is no silver bullet for the problems and prejudices of the world.



A SIGN OF AFFECTION BY SUU MORISHITA
Yuki is Deaf and a typical college student, whose world revolves around her friends, social media, and the latest sales. But when a chance encounter on a train leads to her meeting friend-of-a-friend and fellow student Itsumi, her world starts to widen.

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Characters Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

THE ANNE FREITAG LIBRARY

Recommended Reading

TRAUMA IN THE CLASSROOM



BUILDING A TRAUMA-INFORMED RESTORATIVE SCHOOL
Covering both theory and practice, this book will teach educators everything they need to know about developing restorative practices in their education settings, in a way that is also trauma-informed.



TRAUMA TREATMENT TOOLBOX FOR TEENS BY KRISTINA HALLETT
A practical workbook for clinicians working with teenagers who have experienced trauma, PTSD, and stress. Inside you'll find 144 unique trauma-informed worksheets and exercises to connect, relate and engage with teens -- and help them understand how trauma impacts the mind and body, to promote growth and healing.



TEACHERS' GUIDE TO TRAUMA: 20 THINGS KIDS WITH TRAUMA WISH THEIR TEACHERS KNEW BY DR. MELISSA SADIN AND NATHAN LEVY, WITH THEO SADIN
An introduction to the neurobiological and psychological impact of early childhood trauma. This guide is designed to provide an overview of how trauma impacts learning and behavior in school.



FOSTERING RESILIENT LEARNERS: STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A TRAUMA-SENSITIVE CLASSROOM BY KRISTIN SOUERS WITH PETE HALL
Grounded in research and the authors' experience working with trauma-affected students and their teachers, this book will help you cultivate a trauma-sensitive learning environment for students across all content areas, grade levels, and educational settings.



EQUITY-CENTERED TRAUMA-INFORMED EDUCATION BY ALEX SHEVRIN VENET
An in-depth look at trauma-informed education practices, emphasizing the need for them to be implemented within a schoolwide approach to equity and social justice



TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: BUILDING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT HEALING AND SUCCESS BY BILL ZIEGLER, ET. AL.
A practical guide to the day-to-day work of creating a trauma-sensitive school culture and revamping policies and practices to better support trauma-affected students.

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Trauma in the Classroom

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Recommended Reading

CHILDREN WITH BIG FEELINGS



I'M HAPPY-SAD TODAY BY LORY BRITTAIN
This friendly picture book helps young children make sense of mixed-up emotions. Happy, and also sad. Excited, but nervous too. Feeling friendly, with a little shyness mixed in. Mixed feelings are natural, but they can be confusing.



SOAR BY HILLARY DAECHEER
Ramona, a shy hummingbird, is about to leave the nest for the first time. But his anxiety and fear keep him from taking off. Full of kind words and encouragement, Ramona's mother gives him room to work through his emotions, building his confidence and letting him set his own pace.



MONSTER EMOTIONS BY KAREN KILPATRICK
When Monster accidentally steps in a mess, he sparks a series of events that cause him to feel a lot of different emotions. But Monster keeps swallowing these emotions, making him sick. Will Monster learn to express his feelings?



THE BOY WITH BIG, BIG FEELINGS BY BRITNEY WINN LEE
Meet a boy with a heart so big, his feelings glow from his cheeks, spill out of his eyes, and jump up and down on his chest.



AN EMOTIONAL MENAGERIE: FEELINGS FROM A-Z BY THE SCHOOL OF LIFE
Children experience all sorts of emotions: sometimes going through several very different ones before breakfast. Yet they can struggle to put these feelings into words. An Emotional Menagerie is an emotional glossary for children.



THE BIG FEELINGS BOOK FOR CHILDREN BY SHARON SELBY
It's normal for kids to experience feelings so big that they're hard to manage! This book is filled with engaging exercises that show kids how to use mindfulness to work through tough emotions and feel happier fast.

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Children with Big Feelings

Online Booklist Collection

Partners of The Anne Freitag Library

Rasmuson Foundation

\$15,000 in 2023-2024



Carr Foundation

\$5,000 in 2024-2025



Walmart Spark Good

\$2,500 in 2024-2025



American Printing House for the Blind

\$59,754.05 in 2025 *quota funds



How to Make a Referral

SESA ONLINE REFERRAL:

With the online referral, you can save your progress and resume later. On the referral website, you will need to click the "Save Work to Resume Later" button above the menu to get an access code to resume a referral later.

SESA PAPER REFERRAL:

Printable forms are available on our website. You may complete and send them via:

Email: referrals@sesa.org | Fax: (206)330-0306

Mail To:

Special Education Service Agency

2600 Denali Street, Suite 200

Anchorage, Alaska 99503

The requesting Alaskan school district completes the SESA forms, obtains parental signature(s), provides the required documents, and sends the referral to SESA.

SESA Mutual Exchange of Information (MEI)

District Referral Agreement

Medical or school reports documenting the child's diagnosis

Current, signed Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Current, signed Evaluation Summary and Eligibility Report (ESER)

Contact information

SESA Hosted Webinar Speakers



Lara Rondberg
Benetech



Ann Meyer
Attainment
Company



Robbin Keating Clark
Utah School for
the Deaf and Blind



Dr. Yue-Ting Siu
Northwest Center for
Assistive Technology
Training



Dr. Susan
Bashinski
Missouri Western
State University



Michele Hart
Amplify Education,
Inc.



Leslie Romeo
Northwest Center for
Assistive Technology
Training



Dr. Amy Parker
Portland State University



Ilse Willems
Perkins
School
for the Blind



Connect With Us

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Monday - Friday
8:00am – 4:30pm

sesa@sesa.org



Special Education
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Alaska

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