



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT Update

March 2013

*"Making a difference in the lives and families
of young children within our communities"*

PLAY – LAUGH – LEARN – GROW



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STATISTICAL PROFILE OF OUR COMMUNITIES

According to data released from the 2012 Census, “Alaska’s 2012 Census resident population has been determined to be 732,298. This is an increase of 16.81 percent from 2000 to 2012. Alaska has four types of primary divisions that are equivalent to counties in other states: borough, census area, city and borough, and municipality. Among these, the largest county equivalent is Anchorage Municipality, with a population of 298,842. Its population grew by 14.81 percent since 2012. The other county equivalents in the top five include Fairbanks North Star Borough, with a population of 100,343 (increase of 21.13 percent); Matanuska-Susitna Borough, 93,801 (increase of 58.12 percent); Kenai Peninsula Borough, 56,756 (increase of 14.22 percent); and Juneau City and Borough, 32,832 (increase of 6.91 percent).”



CCS Early Learning’s service area straddles the two largest governmental regions in Southcentral Alaska: The Municipality of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. These two areas together accounted for 69.32% of the total statewide population increase between 2000 and 2012. The organization’s services in Anchorage are confined to the Chugiak-Eagle River area of the northern part of the municipality. In the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, services are currently concentrated in

and around the “Core Area,” which includes the cities of Palmer and Wasilla, the Meadow Lakes area just north of Wasilla, and the Knik-Fairview area which is south of Wasilla.

CHUGIAK-EAGLE RIVER

It is a perennial challenge for all sectors in the community to obtain data specific to this area of Anchorage. For the first time in many years, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) compiled and published demographics for its planning area, including some discrete statistics on the Chugiak/Eagle River area. The information is contained within “Anchorage Indicators/Neighborhood Sourcebook,” and is published on the city’s web page at:

<http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Pages/NeighborhoodSourcebook.aspx>

▪ Population

- The Municipality of Anchorage continues to dominate the state. Its population of 298,842 in 2012 accounts for 40.81 percent of the state’s population. This percentage of the statewide population has decreased slightly since 2000 when Anchorage made up 41.5 percent of the state population.

- According to the 2012 Census the population in the portion of the Municipality of Anchorage that we serve is 35,487. This is broken out into the following Census Tracts with a general description:
 - Census Tract 1.01 (Peters Creek/Eklutna) 5,885
 - Census Tract 1.02 (Chugiak and Birchwood) 5,348
 - Census Tract 2.01 (N. Eagle River, West of Glenn Hwy) 4,207
 - Census Tract 2.02 (N. Eagle River, East of Glenn Hwy) 6,030
 - Census Tract 2.03 (Eagle River) 10,502
 - Census Tract 2.04 (Hiland and Eagle River Valley) 3,515
- Eighty-four percent of the population is White; 4 percent is American Indian or Alaskan Native; 2 percent is Asian; 2 percent is Black, 1 percent is other, and 6 percent is 2 or more races.
- According to the MOA Neighborhood Sourcebook, in 2000, preschoolers accounted for 6.7 percent of all people living within all the Eagle River community council planning areas, and school-aged children accounted for 25 percent.
- Seventy percent of the population lived as married couples and 5.4 percent lived in single-family female households. Eighty-one percent of people owned and lived in their own home.

- **Employment:** The latest Anchorage Economic Development Corporation economic forecast has information that can be very useful in planning for the upcoming year:

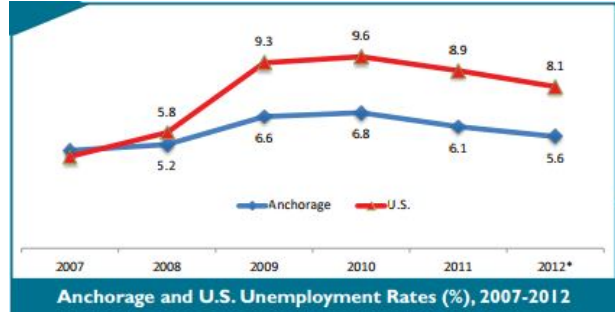
<http://www.aedcweb.com/aedcnew/images/Econ%20Forecast%20Report%202013%20-%20FINAL1.pdf>

This document states, “Measured in terms of employment, Anchorage continued along a path of steady growth in 2012, adding 1,800 jobs to the economy, a 1.2 percent increase. Last January AeDc predicted 1,500 jobs would be added to the Anchorage economy in 2012. While preliminary, the latest available data suggests growth was slightly ahead of that pace. The anchorage economy has added 5,000 jobs over the past three years and now includes an annual average of 156,200 wage and salary jobs.”

In this document they state that the local 2012 employment picture ended on a strong note. Preliminary employment estimates for the 4th quarter of 2012 show anchorage employment 2,200 jobs above the 4th quarter of 2011 (1.4 percent growth). That momentum will carry into 2013. Changes are expected in the following areas:

- Health Care (+400 jobs)
- Leisure and hospitality (+400 jobs)
- Oil and Gas (flat)
- Professional and Business Services (+400 jobs)
- Transportation (+100 jobs)
- Retail Trade (+200 jobs)
- Financial Activities (flat)

- Unemployment:** Anchorage’s 2012 average monthly unemployment rate was 5.5 percent, an improvement from the peak average rate of 6.8 percent in 2010. Unemployment is declining in Anchorage, and still well below the national average, local unemployment remains above the pre-recessionary level of 4.9 percent in 2007. The 2012 national unemployment rate of 8.1 percent marks an improvement from 2011 and is at its lowest rate in four years. It is still well above what most economists would consider a natural or “healthy” unemployment rate of around 5.6 or 5.7 percent.



- Self-Employed:** According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, there were approximately 36,236 self-employed proprietors in the Anchorage economy in 2005, which was the most recent data available. Self-employed persons are not typically included in the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development published data.
- Personal Income:** Anchorage residents earned a total of \$17.96 billion in personal income in 2010, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Anchorage residents account for over half of the total statewide personal income of \$31.59 billion. Per capita personal income in Anchorage was \$46,886 in 2010.

Another key piece of data that helps us to look at the income levels of residents in our service area is the percentage of students in the public schools that qualify for free or reduced meals.

Free/Reduced School Lunch in Chugiak-Eagle River							
	2008	2010	2013		2008	2010	2013
Eagle River Elementary	31%	35%	36%	Chugiak High School	9%	13%	13%
Gruening Middle School	15%	19%	22%	Mirror Lake Middle School	13%	17%	21%
Eagle River High School	10%	13%	11%	Chugiak Optional Elementary	4%	4%	6%
Fire Lake Elementary	23%	35%	38%	Birchwood ABC Elementary	11%	12%	16%
Homestead Elementary	14%	12%	18%	Alpenglow Elementary	7%	8%	9%
Ravenwood Elementary	8%	6%	12%	Chugiak Elementary	16%	18%	25%

	2008	2010	2013		2008	2010	2013
Chugiak/Eagle River (Total)	13%	16%	18%	Anchorage School District (Total)	33%	39%	43%

The percentage of students in Chugiak/Eagle River area who received free and reduced meals in 2012/2013 was 17.9 percent compared to 13 percent in 2008. Across the entire Anchorage School District, 43.4 percent of the student population is eligible for free or reduced meals, compared to 33 percent in 2008. This further indicates that the portion of the Municipality that we serve is more affluent; however, the entire area has suffered as a result of the recent downturn in the economy.

- **Housing:** Statistics from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development showed that the average sales price of a single family home during the first quarter of 2012 in Anchorage was \$317,456. In the 2000 Census there were 100,368 total housing units reported. In the 2009 American Fact Finder update 110,982 housing units were reported with a occupancy rate of 93.4 percent. This is a 10.5 percent increase in the number of units available in Anchorage.
- **Community Trends:** In December of 2006 the Anchorage Assembly adopted the Chugiak Eagle River Comprehensive Plan Update. The original plan was adopted in 1993 and this is the first and most recent update to this document. This area is in many ways, a typical bedroom community. Residents of Chugiak-Eagle River tend to be older, more educated, and have significantly higher incomes than the rest of the Municipality. In 2000 the median household income for Chugiak-Eagle River was \$68,652 compared to the Municipality at \$55,546. The number of impoverished citizens is also significantly less, with only 2.9% living below the poverty line in 2000, versus 7.3% of the overall Municipality. As the Municipality of Anchorage grows, the Eagle River-Chugiak area is expected to continue growing as well. It is expected that the rate of growth will slightly outpace that of the Municipality and by 2025 the area is projected to have a population of 53,695 or 15% of the overall Municipality of Anchorage.
- **Other Child Development and Child Care Programs:** The State of Alaska has recently started a limited pilot pre-K program in several areas of our state. However, at this time there are no state funded pre-k programs in operation in this portion of our service area. The only programs that are in operation are private child care centers or child care homes. These facilities are classified as either licensed or approved. These designations are only obtained if a center or home wishes to be eligible to receive state child care assistance funds. There are many private homes and relatives that also care for children “underground” where the vast majority of children are safely cared for. However, we have no way of tracking this data because they are not regulated or tracked in any way. The latest data indicates that there are approximately 21 licensed child care providers (homes and centers) in the Chugiak and Eagle River area. These providers have the ability to care for 865 children. Our Chugiak Head Start facility accounts for 60 of these. There are also 8 Approved Child Care facilities in this area. Each Approved facility is allowed to care for up to 5 children. This

would allow child care for an additional 40 children if each of these facilities were full.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

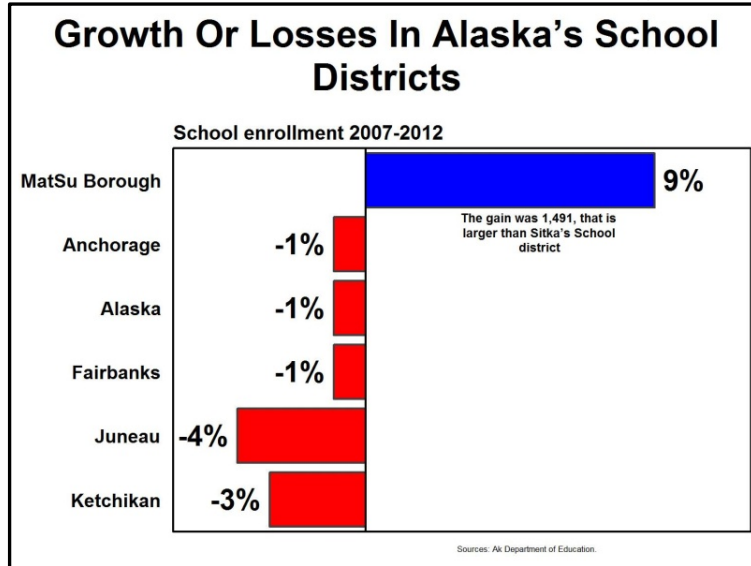
For the past 23 years, the Mat-Su Borough (MSB) has been the fastest growing community in Alaska. In the nation, it ranked as the 31st fastest growing county in 2006. In both square miles and population, Mat-Su is the third largest borough in the state. Nearly the size of West Virginia, the borough’s population is surpassed only by Anchorage and the Fairbanks North Star Borough. Its home to three residents per square mile, compared to 166 in Anchorage. Unlike Anchorage, where most of the large swaths of developable land are gone, Mat-Su still has significant room to grow, which is why it has become home to the lion’s share of the area’s new residents in recent years.

- **Population:** The MSB remains the fastest growing area of the state, as it has been since 1990, with growth of 50 percent from 2000-2010. This compares to growth of 12 percent in Anchorage and 13 percent in the state as a whole during the same time period. There are only three incorporated cities in the Mat-Su Borough; Palmer, Wasilla and Houston – and these three areas only contain 18 percent of the overall Borough population. The area of the Borough with the highest population is Knik-Fairview with a 2010 population of 14,923. The population in Knik-Fairview has grown by 112% since 2000 and if it was incorporated it would be the fourth largest city in Alaska behind only Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.
- The population in the Mat-Su was 88,995 as of 2010 (US Census), and was estimated to be 93,801 in July of 2012 by Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Projections for the borough estimate that the population will be 103,070 in 2015, 131,764 by 2025, and 160,693 by 2035. The areas of the borough that have seen the most growth in population between the 2000 and 2010 census are listed below.

Area	Population	Pop Gain	Percent Gain
Knik-Fairview	14,923	+7,873	+112 percent
Tanaina	8,197	+3,204	+64 percent
Meadow Lakes	7,570	+2,751	+57 percent
Fishhook	4,679	+2,649	+130 percent
Gateway	5,552	+2,600	+88 percent
Wasilla city	7,831	+2,362	+43 percent
Lakes	8,384	+1,658	+25 percent
Palmer city	5,937	+1,404	+31 percent
Big Lake	3,350	+715	+27 percent
Houston	1,912	+710	+59 percent
Butte	3,246	+685	+27 percent

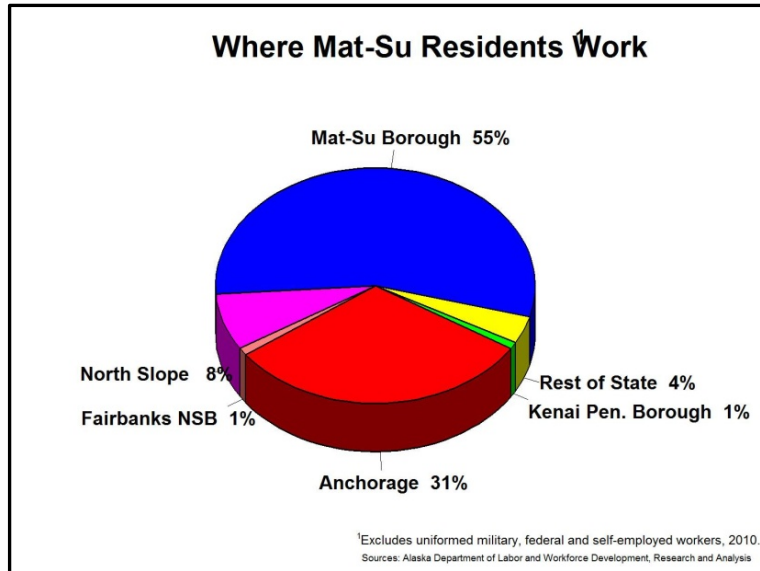
- The median age in the Borough was 34.5 in 2009 which is a bit older than both Anchorage and the rest of the state.
- In 2009 7.9 percent of the population was under 5 years of age.

- The Borough tends to be among the least diverse areas of Alaska. Eighty five percent of the Borough population was Caucasian, 5.5 percent were Native American, 3.7 percent were Hispanic, and 3.2 percent were identified as Black, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander or other.
- **Schools:** The Mat-Su Borough's school enrollment numbers coincide with the borough's surge in population. Unlike statewide school enrollment that peaked in 1999, the borough's enrollment has continued to grow. The population of 17,494 students enrolled as of October 2012, makes this district the second largest in the state – only behind Anchorage. The facilities include 20 elementary schools, five middle schools, six high schools, and four K-12 schools, including a comprehensive home school. Additionally, the district hosts six charter schools, and three alternative education schools which offer a range of specialized programs. Facilities are continually being remodeled, expanded and built to keep up with the growing student population.



- **Employment:** During the past four decades, the principal source of the borough's growth has been its proximity to the state's largest city. This type of economic relationship is not unusual in other parts of the country, but it's one of a kind in Alaska. What allows this relationship to exist is the fact that most of the Mat-Su Borough's population lives within 40 to 50 miles of Anchorage by a major highway.
- Simply put, jobs in Anchorage account for much of the borough's growth. Average wages for jobs in Mat-Su are more than a quarter lower than they are in Anchorage. The biggest reason for the wage difference is not that similar jobs pay more in Anchorage, but that Anchorage is home to a much larger number – and percentage – of high wage jobs.
- In 2008, 55 percent of Mat-Su Residents worked locally and 32 percent of worked in Anchorage, These statistics excludes commuters who work for the federal government or the uniformed military, which is a significant portion of the population. It also excludes the self-employed.

- There are other Mat-Su commuters who have to travel significantly longer distances than the drive to Anchorage. Thirteen percent of the borough's working population are truly long distance commuters, working on the North Slope or in other areas of the state. After Anchorage, Mat-Su has the second-largest group of resident Alaska North Slope workers. Other borough residents commute to oil platforms in Cook Inlet, fisheries in Bristol Bay, mines in Delta Junction or construction jobs throughout the state.



- Employment has also grown faster in the Mat-Su Borough than anywhere else in the state. From 916 jobs at statehood in 1959, Mat-Su employment has grown to 37,744 in 2008 (again excluding military, federal and self employed workers).
- Since 2000, more than three quarters of all wage and salary job growth in the Mat-Su Borough has come from the services sector, which isn't particularly surprising since those jobs dominate the borough's labor market. Health care and social assistance, along with retail, has been the largest contributor to this growth. Combined, they represent nearly a third of all jobs in Mat-Su. Leisure and hospitality services (mostly restaurants and hotels) are not far behind in growth.
- As it has been for many years, the Mat-Su Borough remains the largest agricultural producer in the state.
- Several very large projects are also impacting employment in the Mat-Su. Among them are the Port MacKenzie port expansion, the Alaska Railroad spur extension (to the Port), and the construction of the state's largest prison facility, Goose Creek which is under construction and scheduled to open in 2012. There also appears to be an increasing likelihood that industrial coal mining will make a re-appearance in the Mat-Su Borough in the near future.

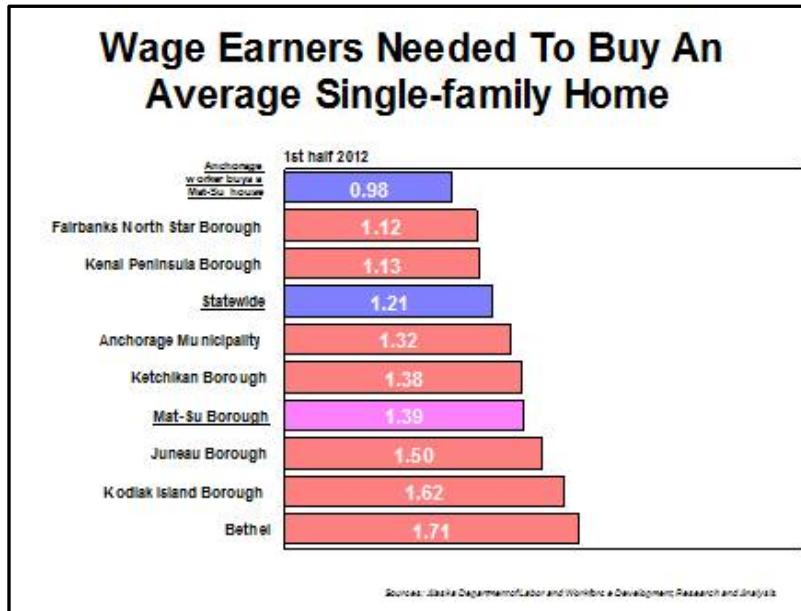
- **Unemployment:** The borough's average unemployment rate for 2012 was 8 percent, which was a increase from 2007's annual rate of 6.9 percent, but a decrease from the higher levels of unemployment experienced during 2009 and 2010. Traditionally the Borough's unemployment rate has consistently been higher than Anchorage's unemployment rate, the rate for the state of Alaska, and the rate for the nation as a whole (see 2007 below). However, because the nationwide recession did not impact Alaska as much as it did in the lower 48, the nationwide rate has risen above the other three (see 2009-2012 below). The Borough rate continues to be higher than the Anchorage and the Alaska average;

however in 2012 the average rate for the nation was only slightly higher than the rate for the Mat-Su Borough.

Average Annual Unemployment Rates
Not Seasonally Adjusted

	2007	2009	2010	2012
Mat-Su Borough	6.9%	8.9%	9.1%	8.0%
Anchorage	4.9%	6.5%	6.8%	5.5%
Alaska	6.1%	7.8%	8.0%	7.0%
United States	4.6%	9.3%	9.6%	8.1%

- Personal Income:** Wage data clearly reveal the reason so many Mat-Su residents commute. The commuter work force, which makes up 45 percent of the borough’s working population, earns 58 percent of the total wages earned by Mat-Su residents. The degree to which this occurs in Mat-Su is unique in Alaska: the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that more than a third of Mat-Su’s \$819 million in personal income comes from sources outside the borough. Every other borough and census area in the state has an income flow in the opposite direction – out rather than in.



- The median household income for the Mat-Su Borough in 2010 was \$68,940. This can be compared to Anchorage at \$72,178 and the state as a whole at \$64,576.

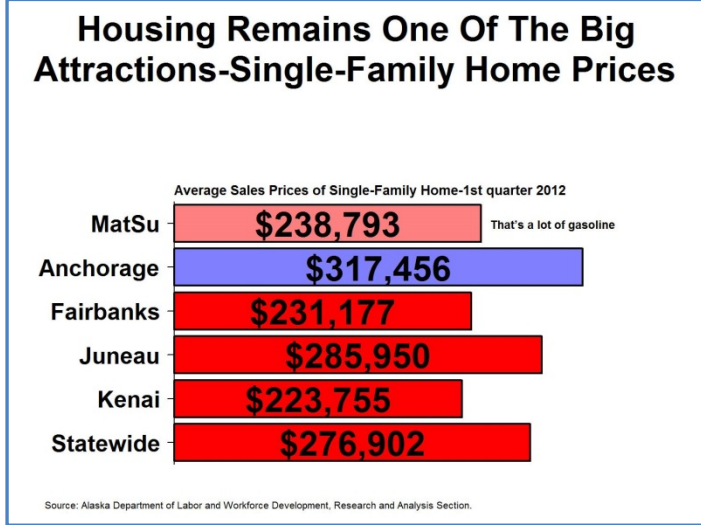
- Once again data regarding free and reduced lunches is also a great indicator of household income.

PERCENTAGE OF FREE/REDUCED LUNCHES FOR MAT-SU SCHOOLS							
SCHOOL NAME	2008	2010	2013	SCHOOL NAME	2008	2010	2013
BIG LAKE ELEMENTARY	62%	66%	64%	PALMER MIDDLE SCHOOL	39%	38%	44%
BURCHELL HIGH SCHOOL	74%	72%	65%	PIONEER PEAK ELEMENTARY	27%	26%	27%
BUTTE ELEMENTARY	49%	48%	50%	SHAW ELEMENTARY	43%	45%	41%
COLONY HIGH SCHOOL	19%	19%	20%	SHERROD ELEMENTARY	40%	41%	37%
COLONY MIDDLE SCHOOL	26%	26%	30%	SNOWSHOE ELEMENTARY	39%	32%	37%
COTTONWOOD CK ELEMENTARY	30%	31%	30%	SUTTON ELEMENTARY	59%	63%	67%
FINGER LAKE ELEMENTARY	31%	33%	39%	SU-VALLEY JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL	52%	60%	49%
GLACIER VIEW SCHOOL	49%	40%	36%	SWANSON ELEMENTARY	35%	42%	41%
GOOSE BAY ELEMETARY	50%	49%	44%	TALKEETNA ELEMENTARY	50%	53%	38%
HOUSTON HIGH SCHOOL	32%	48%	53%	TANAINA ELEMENTARY	40%	47%	52%
HOUSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL	48%	61%	54%	TEELAND MIDDLE SCHOOL	29%	32%	33%
IDITAROD ELEMENTARY	50%	51%	61%	TRAPPER CREEK ELEMENTARY	85%	83%	71%
KNIK ELEMENTARY	45%	46%	45%	VALLEY PATHWAYS	45%	44%	39%
LARSON ELEMENTARY	25%	35%	37%	WASILLA HIGH SCHOOL	27%	32%	34%
MACHENTANZ ELEMENTARY		32%	22%	WASILLA MIDDLE SCHOOL	41%	45%	44%
MAT-SU CAREER & TECH H.S.	41%	29%	27%	WILLOW ELEMENTARY	55%	62%	57%
MEADOW LAKES ELEMENTARY	50%	52%	48%	WILLOW ELEMENTARY	55%	62%	57%
PALMER HIGH SCHOOL	23%	25%	29%	PALMER MIDDLE SCHOOL	39%	38%	44%
DISTRICT WIDE AVERAGE FOR EACH YEAR					37%	38.90%	39%

- For the 2013 program year, in the Mat-Su School District, the average percentage of students eligible for free or reduced meals is 39 percent. This percentage is slightly higher than the average seen last year, but follows several years of a higher trending percentage of students that qualify for free and reduced meals.
- **Housing:** A big part of the Mat-Su Borough's appeal is its affordable housing market. The average sales price reported during the first quarter of 2012 for an existing single family home in the Mat-Su Borough was \$238,793. This can be compared to an average sales price of \$317,456 in Anchorage. This is obviously

very enticing to earners in either Anchorage or Mat-Su, as well as for those who may be working outside the region but want to live near Anchorage.

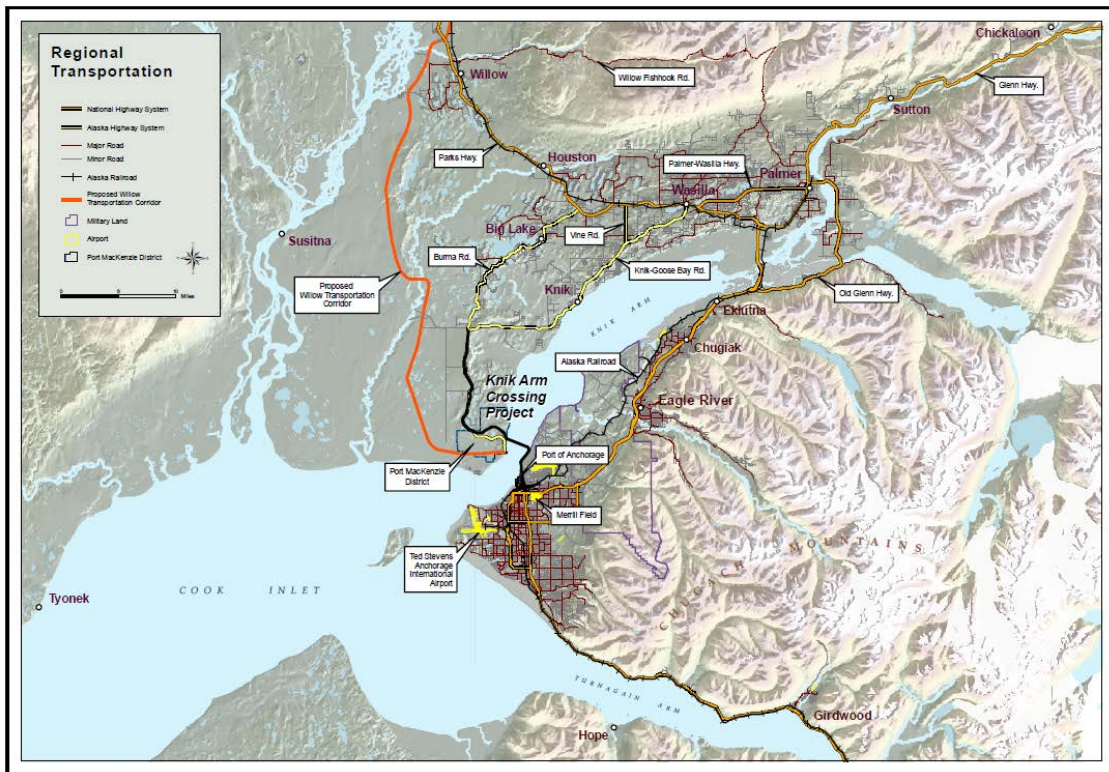
New construction in the Mat-Su also regularly outpaces that in Anchorage; primarily because most of the available land for construction in Anchorage has been utilized while much still remains in the Mat-Su.



- Far more Mat-Su residents live in their own homes as compared to Anchorage – 80 percent in Mat-Su versus 61 percent in Anchorage. This is probably due to several factors including the higher cost of purchasing in Anchorage, the fact that less land is available in Anchorage, and more apartment and rental housing is present and needed in the municipality.
- The price of renting a place to live is also much different. In order to rent a single family residence in Anchorage the average price would be \$1,535 a month. In Mat-Su it would be \$1,160. An apartment in Anchorage would average \$989, in Mat-Su an apartment would average \$796.
- It would be an oversimplification, however, to say that inexpensive housing is the only thing that has attracted so many people to the Mat-Su Borough. The lifestyle options available are another contributor. The ability to live on a larger piece of land than would be available in Anchorage, for example, is certainly appealing to many.
- Another attraction is the alternate types of housing that exist in the borough but are rarely available in Anchorage. In 2006, roughly 256 structures – or 18 percent of the new residential building activity recorded in the borough – were categorized as “cabin-like structures” or buildings not required to meet the more stringent zoning and permitting requirements that are typical in incorporated urbanized areas such as Anchorage. Many of these buildings are recreational properties but many others are primary residences for people who want a different lifestyle than would be possible in Anchorage.
- **Community Trends:** Assuming that the Anchorage and statewide economies continue to expand, the Mat-Su Borough is unlikely to relinquish its role as an economic standout. According to Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development population projections, the Mat-Su Borough could become the second-most populous area in the state sometime in the next 5 years, and population projections estimate that the borough’s population could exceed

160,000 in 2035. A number of known projects will be important to both the near- and long-term economic future of the borough:

- *State Prison:* The largest of these is Goose Creek Correctional Center at Point MacKenzie. This is a new, \$240 million, 1,536 bed medium-security correctional center for long-term male felony offenders. The new facility has been constructed on a 330-acre tract, and includes 430,000 SF of buildings on a 135-acre cleared compound. Currently the prison is being filled to its full capacity. Once it is fully operational it will create approximately 350 long term correctional center jobs in the Borough. There is also the expectation that many family members of incarcerated individuals will move into the community as well.
- *Knik Arm Bridge:* A long discussed endeavor that could have major long-term economic consequences is the construction of the Knik Arm Bridge – a bridge



that would directly connect Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough. The concept of a direct transportation route via a causeway or link-span bridge between Anchorage and Point MacKenzie has been discussed for over 50 years. The Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority, (KABATA) created by the State of Alaska in 2003, published the final Environmental Impact Statement in 2008. KABATA's goal is to construct a cost-affordable, vehicular toll bridge of about 2.7 miles across Knik Arm to join the Port of Anchorage area and Port MacKenzie area, as well as 19 miles of road to support the bridge's accessibility. The purpose of this project is to build a bridge to fulfill the following needs:

- An efficient link between the operations and infrastructure of the two ports;
- An alternate north-south emergency response and disaster evacuation route;

- Transportation infrastructure for existing and projected population and economic growth; and
 - Implementing the Alaska legislative mandate.
- *Port MacKenzie Rail Extension:* The new rail link is expected to bring significant economic benefit to Alaska through new jobs, economic diversification and state revenues. The rail project is expected to create some 3,000 construction and construction related jobs, according to a study by the Institute of Social and Economic Research. The shorter rail distance to tidewater provided by the project could stimulate valuable new development in the Interior due to lower transportation costs. For example, if the Alaska Gas Pipeline project gets underway, shipping the pipe and heavy materials through Port MacKenzie could save \$100 million. The new rail link could also supply most of the heavy materials for the construction of the proposed Susitna Dam.
- *Natural Gas Pipeline:* Work continues to explore the possibility of building a Natural Gas Pipeline to connect reserves on the North Slope of Alaska to markets in Canada, the lower 48, or Asian markets. The State of Alaska passed the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) in 2008 that authorized the state to award a license to TransCanada to permit, develop, and build the 1,715 mile pipeline.
- **Other Child Development and Child Care Programs:** The State of Alaska has implemented a pilot pre-K program in local school districts over the past three years. There are some limited pre-k slots available in the Mat-Su Borough. We have worked very closely with the district to make sure we are not duplicating services, but rather both programs are collaborating to make more opportunities available to additional children and families. We have assisted in this effort by providing all the screening necessary for their program and for our programs. Their eligibility guidelines are more liberal than ours so by doing this we have been able to make sure Head Start eligible children are directed into our programs, and other children are given opportunities in the district program. The only other programs that are in operation are private child care centers or child care homes. These facilities are classified as either licensed or approved. These designations are only obtained if a center or home wishes to be eligible to receive state child care assistance funds. There are many private homes and relatives that also care for children “underground” where the vast majority of children are safely cared for. However, we have no way of tracking this data because they are not regulated or tracked in any way. The latest data indicates that there are approximately 48 licensed child care providers in the Mat-Su Borough. These providers have the ability to care for 1,560 children. Our Head Start facilities account for 252 of these. There are also 81 Approved Child Care facilities in this area. Each Approved facility is allowed to care for up to 5 children. This would allow child care for an additional 405 children if each of these facilities were full.

- **Health, Nutrition, Mental Health, and Dental Needs of Alaskan Children:** Various data has been collected regarding the overall health status of children in Alaska. It is very difficult to find data for pre-school age children as they typically are not as easily accessible as school age children. However, the data below is either taken from the preschool age group or is applicable across all ranges of childhood.

Oral Health

Dental caries, or tooth decay, is the most prevalent chronic disease of childhood. Among children, oral disease and oral pain have been associated with speech problems, difficulty eating, sleep problems, poor school performance and reduced self esteem.

- Thirteen percent of mothers of 3-year olds say they've been told their child had tooth decay or cavities.
- Many large population areas (including our service area) do not have municipal water supplies – thus fluoridated water is not available.
- An oral health study screening of Alaska Native dental clinic users during 1999 indicated that Alaska Native children experienced 3 to 4 times the amount of dental decay as their national counterparts.
- Additionally severe early childhood caries was found in 59.7% of 2-4 year old Alaska Native children screened during the project.
- Sixty-five percent of Alaska third graders who participated in an open mouth assessment by dental professionals in 2004-2005 had caries experience (treated/restored and untreated tooth decay) and 28% had untreated caries.
- Medicaid/Denali KidCare is the dental coverage source for many of the children and adolescents with special health care needs. Only about 1 in 3 children enrolled in Medicaid/Denali KidCare receive an annual dental service. Furthermore, many dentists are not accepting new Medicaid clients in their practices and the state has only 14 pediatric dental specialists. Compounding the problem, the Alaska dental labor force is aging: during Fiscal Year 2002 more than 25% of active, licensed dentists were age 55 years and older and 39% were age 45-54 years.
- Children in families with low incomes have 5 times more untreated decay than children in higher income families

Source Women's Children's & Family Health Title V Needs Assessment: Special Series Fact Sheets April 2005

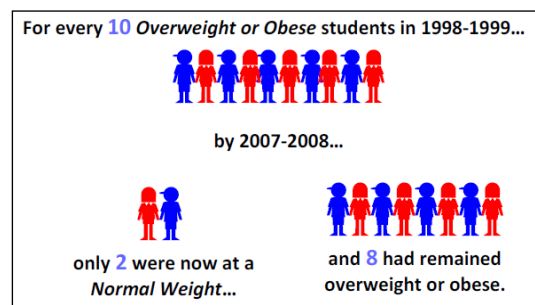
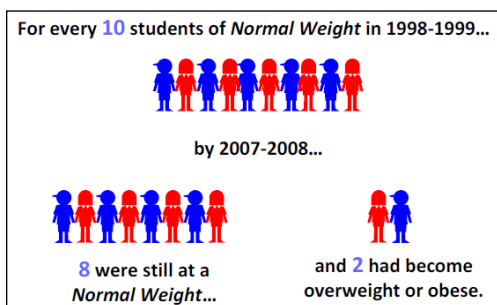
Overweight and Obesity Levels

In March of 2011 a multi-year study was released by the Alaska Division of Public Health. The report was titled, "Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity among Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District Students, 2003-2010." During this time period the study analyzed routinely collected height and weight measurements for students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, and 7. Some of the findings from this report include:

- At the end of the 7-year time period in 2009-2010, 2% of students were underweight, 71% were at a healthy weight, 14% were overweight, and 12% were obese.
- Of students entering kindergarten or first grade in 2009-2010, 22% were overweight or obese.
- The trend in weight status among MSBSD students over the past 7 years is positive. Over that time period, the percentage of students who were above a healthy weight (BMI >85th percentile) decreased from 32% in 2003-2004 to 26% in 2009-2010, representing a 19% decline in the percent of students above a healthy weight.

In February of 2009 a similar study was conducted in the Anchorage School District. Some of the findings from this report include:

- At the end of the ten-year time period in 2007-2008, 2% of students were underweight, 62% were at a normal weight, 18% were overweight, and 18% were obese.
- Of students entering kindergarten or first grade in the 2007-2008 academic year, 32% were overweight or obese (combined).
- A total of 926 students had valid height and weight data in both the 1998-1999 and 2007-2008 school years. Tracking the BMI's of this cohort of students allows for a finer examination of changes in weight status in both directions, which is depicted in the two figures below. Due to the higher proportion of students in 1998-1999 being of normal weight (71%), the net changes result in an additional 9% of students being overweight or obese (combined) at the end of the 10 years. Overall, obesity prevalence nearly doubled, from 12% in 1998-1999 to 22% in 2007-2008 among this subset of students.



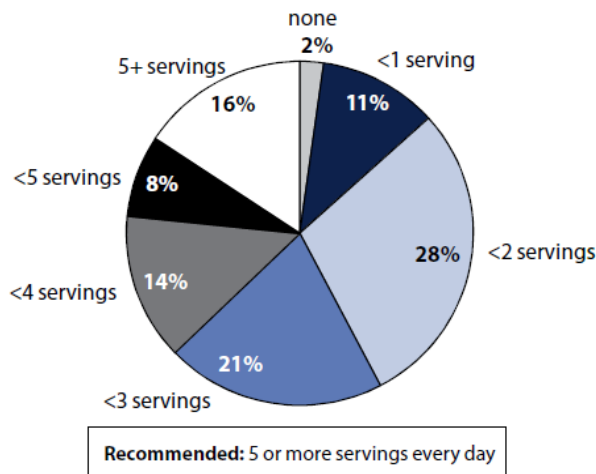
- The trend in Anchorage School District student weight status over the past 10 years has moved in the wrong direction. Over that time period, the percentage of students who were at a normal weight decreased significantly, from 68% in 1998-1999 to 62% in 2007-2008. Looking more closely, it appears that much of this reduction was due to an increase in obesity, and that this increase may have reached a plateau.

The fact that a high percentage of students are overweight or obese when they enter school in both of these studies indicates that prevention efforts cannot wait until children enter the school system.

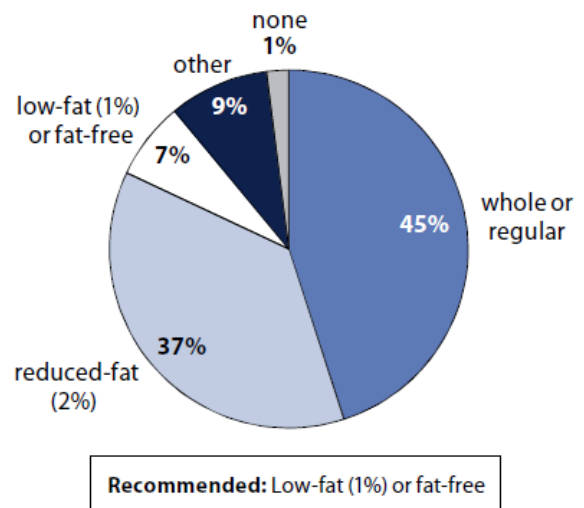
Nutrition

- In general children in Alaska of all ages eat fewer fruits and vegetables and drink less milk than the national average. In turn the national averages are much lower than what health care professionals say should be occurring. Part of the reason for this is that the selection of fruits and vegetables in Alaska are limited and many are only seasonally available – and therefore are quite expensive. We also are limited in the types and quantities of fruits and vegetables that we can produce locally. The charts below show several nutritional statistics for Alaskan youth.

Number of Servings of Fruits and Vegetables Consumed Daily Among High School Youth (Alaska YRBS, 2007)



Usual Type of Milk Consumed Among Two Year-Olds (Alaska CUBS, 2006)



Indicator	Alaska 2003	Nation 2003	Healthy People 2010 Goal
Percentage of high school student's grades 9-12 who consume at least 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables	16.1%	22.0%	30%
Percentage of high school students that consume ≥ 3 glasses of milk per day	11.9%	17.1%	---

Source Women's Children's & Family Health Title V Needs Assessment: Special Series Fact Sheets April 2005

Mental Health

- In Alaska, an unpublished analysis of Medicaid billing claims from 1998-2002 found that each year approximately 10% (5,700) of the Medicaid-eligible children ages 0-14 years had billing claims for mental disorders, including 1.2% (100) of infants less than one year of age, 5.6% (945) of children 1-4 years of age, 11% (2,045) of children 5-9 years of age, and 16% (2,609) of children 10-14 years of age.

Source Women’s Children’s & Family Health Title V Needs Assessment: Special Series Fact Sheets April 2005

Insurance

- Generally speaking Alaskan children tend to be insured at about the same levels as children nationwide. The major differences however are found in the ways that children either receive their healthcare or the sources that they receive their insurance benefits. Alaskan children are much less likely to receive medical care through private health insurance and more likely to receive care from other sources.

[Kids Count Data Center](#)

	Alaska	United States
2008	13%	10%
2009	14%	9%
2010	12%	8%

Children without health insurance (Percent) – 2008 to 2010

• **Prevalence of Disabilities in Alaskan Children**

The most recent prevalence study for the State of Alaska was done in December of 2004. This study looked at the numbers and percentages of children with disabilities being served at that time. From those numbers they were able to estimate what the rates and prevalence of child disability in various communities would be. It should be noted that this study was for Part C children, which encompasses ages 0-3. There has not been a recent study that shows this same data for the age range we work with. However, we believe that the percentages from this study would be very similar to that of our target population.

Index: The index is computed by dividing the percentage of children served (Child Count divided by total population) for each community against the summary percentage of the selected variables. The highest index value is selected as the universal index and is applied to the summed variables for each community. For the indexed community with the highest value, the result when multiplied by the population should yield the same as the percentage of children currently in service.

Area	Summary %	12/1/2003 Child Count	Index	Estimated Prevalence % (Universal Summary Index x the Summary Percentage)
Anchorage	34.7%	2.6%	.0744	4.60%
Matanuska Susitna	41.0%	1.6%	.0386	5.50%
State of Alaska	39.9%	2.3%	.0572	5.30%

Source: State of Alaska Prevalence Study 12/04

The estimate then from this data is that approximately 4.6% of the children in Anchorage, ages 0 – 3, and 5.5% of children in the Mat-Su would qualify to receive Part C services. The eligibility criteria for Part C are:

- Children who have a diagnosed medical or physical condition
- Children experiencing developmental delays
- Children at-risk of experiencing a substantial delay

If we apply those percentages to our estimate of how many children live in the municipality of Anchorage and in the Mat-Su Borough (see below) we come up with approximately 386 children in Mat-Su and 1,019 children in Anchorage for a total of 1,405. This would be an estimate of how many children under the age of 5 would be expected to meet at least one of the criteria listed above.

Identifying specific types of disabilities is very difficult due to the fact that many children cross over into multiple categories and many times the cause of the disability cannot be identified. Based on conversations with local providers it appears that just under half of the disabilities children are treated for in our area are speech related. Approximately forty percent are treated for global developmental or early childhood developmental delays. These may be due to premature birth, fetal drug or alcohol exposure, neglect, other health impairments, or due to unknown causes. Children are also treated for Autism, Down syndrome, hearing impairments, vision impairments, orthopedic impairments, and neurological impairments.

- **Eligible Un-Served Children**

This statistic for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough is based on American Community Survey Data from 2011 (Report number DP05 and DP03). We use the following formula for calculating the number of eligible Head Start and Early Head Start children:

1. Number of children under 5 multiplied by the poverty rate of all people under the age of 18:
 $7,025 \times 17.5\% = 1,229$
2. Number of children under 5 in poverty divided by number of age groups:
 $1,229 \div 5 = 246$
3. Number eligible per age group times number of age groups served by each program:

Early Head Start $246 \times 3 = 738$	Head Start $246 \times 2 = 492$
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4. Actual children currently served by program:

Early Head Start = 49	Head Start = 210
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5. **Estimated percentage of eligible population served:**

Early Head Start = 6.6%

Head Start = 42.7%

These statistics show that CCS is currently funded to serve 210 Head Start children in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, which is approximately 43% of the eligible (based on income) population. When the same calculations are applied to Early Head Start we find that we are able to provide services to 49 children which is approximately 7% of the eligible (based on income) population. These estimates are very conservative because we are allowed to enroll families that are over income up to 10% of our slots. We also are allowed to enroll children from families in the 100% - 130% of poverty as income eligible if we can demonstrate that the under 100% of poverty population is being served. These children and the over income children are not taken into account in our formula above.

One must be careful, however, to differentiate between eligible and available. Children may be eligible, but the service might not be available for a variety of reasons, the most obvious being geographic distance and availability of transportation. In the case of small communities where there are some eligible children, there may not be enough eligible and available children for a Head Start classroom or full program.

Since the rule of thumb is that the service area is saturated when Head Start is serving approximately 85% of the total number of *eligible and available children*, we can deduce that our current Head Start and Early Head Start services fall far short of the actual need in the Mat-Su Borough. Our current services are provided in the population centers of the borough. As the population in this core

area has more than doubled over the past 20 years – the number of children we serve has not.

The equivalent data for Chugiak-Eagle River is not yet broken down by Anchorage by Census Designated Place (CDP). We do, however, know that Chugiak-Eagle River is a more affluent area than Anchorage, as a whole. If we apply the same formula to Anchorage as for Mat-Su, we get the following result:

1. Number of children under 5 multiplied by the poverty rate of all people under the age of 18:
 $22,170 \times 11.5\% = 2,549$
2. Number of children under 5 in poverty divided by number of age groups served:
 $2,549 \div 5 = 520$
3. Number eligible per age group times number of age groups served by each program:
 Early Head Start $520 \times 3 = 1,560$ Head Start $520 \times 2 = 1,040$
4. Actual children currently served by programs in the Municipality:
 Early Head Start = 59 Head Start = 606
5. **Estimated percentage of eligible population served by programs in the Municipality of Anchorage:**

Early Head Start = 3.7%

Head Start = 58.2%

The funded enrollment in 2012 for children served in Anchorage was calculated as follows:

	Head Start	Early Head Start
CCS Early Learning (Chugiak/ER)	50	11
Kids' Corps, Inc. (Region X)	361	16
Cook Inlet Native Head Start (AI/AN)	<u>195</u>	<u>32</u>
Total	606	59

For Head Start it appears that the three grantees are serving approximately 58 percent of the eligible (based on income) population in Anchorage. For Early Head Start only 4 percent of the eligible (based on income) population is being served. Again these estimates are very conservative for the reasons listed above.

- **Under Served Communities**

We are defining *under-served* communities as those where CCS Head Start services are currently available but we are not serving all income-eligible children. We can only assume that the demand for our services will increase as the population continues to grow. The table on the next page compares the

number of families on Alaska Temporary Assistance in areas that we serve to the number of children that we serve in these same areas.

Current CCS Services	Communities Served	# of 0-5 children 2010 Census	# of families on ATAP FY 10 Avg	child slots divided by # of ATAP families*	Determination
Wasilla Head Start 100 children	Wasilla (99654)	4,410	389	44%	Under served
Wasilla Early Head Start 27 children					
Meadow Lakes Head Start 60 children					
Meadow Lakes Early Head Start 11 children	Big Lake (99652)	238	36		
	Houston (99694)	125	22		
Palmer Head Start 50 children	Palmer (99645)	1,774	159	38%	Under served
Palmer Early Head Start 11 children					
Chugiak Head Start 50 children	Chugiak (99567)	606	23	107%	Adequate level of services
Chugiak Early Head Start 11 children	Eagle River (99577)	1,927	34		

Data on ATAP Families provided by the Division of Public Assistance

** This calculation is used for comparison purposes only to help determine the need in various areas. In reality each ATAP family will have multiple children and a portion of the currently enrolled Head Start children will not be part of an ATAP family. Therefore this calculation is not an actual look at the level of need in these areas. Rather, it is just a way to compare the level of need against where and how much services we provide.*

The following table shows the number of three and four year olds on the income-eligible wait list at each of our four centers as of February, 2013. We know that our waiting list is not a truly accurate way of determining the community need. Many families choose not to put themselves on the waiting list after discovering how large it is. We also do not have all eligible families in our current communities inquiring about our services. However, the waiting list does give us an accurate idea of how many additional children are available and interested in receiving Head Start services. The numbers listed below do not reflect the entire waiting list, rather only those that we believe to be income eligible

	Chugiak		Meadow Lakes		Palmer		Wasilla		Entire Agency	
Age	3yr	4yr	3yr	4yr	3yr	4yr	3yr	4yr	3yr	4yr
Income Eligible	10	5	8	1	4	3	15	13	37	22

- **Un-served Communities**

We are defining *un-served* communities as those where there is no Head Start program, but where residents have expressed a desire for these services or where there might be enough eligible children to open a Head Start program. Communities we have looked at in the past include Sutton, Willow, Trapper Creek, and Talkeetna.

	Number of Children under the age of 5 (2010 Census)	Percentage Population Increase 2000-2010	Percentage of Students receiving Free or Reduced Lunch
Sutton (99674)	91	34%	67%
Talkeetna (99676)	77	13%	38%
Trapper Creek (99683)	32	14%	71%
Willow (99688)	152	27%	57%

Community	Families on ATAP (FY 10 Average)
Sutton	7
Talkeetna/Trapper Creek	9
Willow	16

The data above appears to indicate that there are certainly a number of children who would be eligible for Head Start or Early Head Start services in each of these areas. Whether all of these children/families would indeed be interested in services and able to enroll and attend is unknown.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- **Matanuska-Susitna Borough**

We anticipate that the continuing population growth will lead to a greater demand for Head Start services in the core area of the Mat-Su Borough. Our centers in Wasilla, Palmer, and Meadow Lakes are located in areas where the population continues to expand. Because our services have not expanded – we consider this to be an underserved area.

Because the geography of our service area within the Mat-Su is quite large we also have areas that we are not providing services to. However, any future expansion into un-served areas of the Borough should only occur after we are certain we are better meeting the current needs of our highest population centers.

It also is apparent that while the need for increased services in both Head Start and Early Head Start is present, the greater need by far is services to the 0-3 population and their families.

- **Chugiak-Eagle River**

This community is growing, too, but it is a more affluent population and the demand is for fee-for-service early childhood programs. Their most pressing need at this time appears to be affordable quality child care.