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Talking Points

Newtok, Alaska's tiny village school could be the country's first forced to close by climate change

Where the water is eating the land, an Alaska school could be the first to go because of climate change

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Newtok, Alaska

In Dawn Wilson’s classroom, fourth-graders are writing a story about what they would need to survive if their families were forced to quickly leave their homes and relocate upriver. Astutely, her young students tick off the essentials: food, clothing, guns and ammunition.

In this remote Yup’ik tribal community on Alaska’s southwest shore, this sort of brainstorming is not an abstract academic exercise. It’s a real-life lesson built around the environmental forces now threatening to upend the already hardscrabble existence of some 400 people for whom hunting is essential to eating.

(The 74 Newsletter: [Learn more about the issues effecting America's schools](#))

The very school where Wilson’s fourth-graders contemplate their survival supplies will soon be gone, submerged by a fast-rising river that’s grown so wide you can’t see the other side. Each year, the water slides closer, buoyed by wind and rainstorms, record-high temperatures and melting permafrost.

Next year, [estimates say](#), the river will flow past the shoreline houses and reach the school, which is the village’s highest point, its community center and its only source of running water. If the current rate of erosion remains constant, the school — the first in the country to shutter because of climate change — may not make it through 2018.

The current roster of high school seniors will be among the last to graduate from Newtok.

“We have to move ... the water is eating the land,” Wilson read in the classroom a few weeks ago, reciting to her students the narrative they had composed together during the first week of school.

Watch — The people, and plight, of Newtok, Alaska



(Video by Erik Keto and Hanna Craig. Reported by Mareesa Nicosia)

If they don't already, Wilson's young pupils will soon know this lesson by heart: Their village is at the front lines of the global climate change crisis that could ultimately devastate dozens of small indigenous communities scattered along Alaska's Bering Sea coast. They lie within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, a 19.5 million-acre expanse of wetlands and tundra between the Bering Strait and the Aleutian Islands.

The village of Newtok — a few dozen dilapidated buildings splayed on a treeless, marshy bend of the Ninglick River just before it opens into the ocean — is disappearing. More than 100 feet of its shoreline was ripped away in a single storm; most years average 72 feet. The layer of earth that forms the village's foundation and was once frozen solid is turning to mud.

Just a few hundred feet from the encroaching river, Newtok's school sits perched on splintering wooden stilts, a T-shaped modular covered in peeling blue and white paint. Wilson, an elementary reading specialist from Ohio, arrived here in early August, but her two-year contract could be cut short by the very manifestation of what she is teaching.

In mid-August, though, time feels abundant here. The days stretch on and on — the sun does not set until 11 p.m., and children play and ride their bikes on the rickety wooden boardwalks that serve as Newtok's streets late into the night.

But sooner rather than later, the belongings that Wilson's fourth-graders listed in their story must be packed up, along with their books, pencils and backpacks. And the residents of Newtok will leave their sinking village and abandon the land their ancestors have lived off for generations, finally moving to sturdier ground — they hope — after years of anxious waiting, bureaucratic missteps and political infighting.

School as communal house

Newtok's school, also sometimes known as Ayaprun School, is part of the Lower Kuskokwim school district, which serves 4,100 students in 27 schools in a region about the size of West Virginia.

In Newtok, all but a few of the roughly 130 students are Alaska Natives from poor homes. The 28 staff members are a mix of certified teachers from the Lower 48, like Wilson, who are recruited to work on short-term contracts, and Alaska Natives, often uncertified, who typically work as classroom aides. Part of the draw for outsiders is that certified teacher salaries start at \$52,000, quite a bit higher than the recent [national average](#) of \$36,141.

[\(Photo Essay: One Week in Newtok, Alaska\)](#)

Although students and staff officially occupy the building from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the doors don't lock most nights until 11. Any afternoon or evening, the sounds of students singing and drumming Yup'ik music fill the halls. Youth and adult teams play basketball, Newtok's favorite sport, every day in the gym, which doubles as the cafeteria. It's also where students on the Native Youth Olympics team practice for the annual statewide competition. They perform a series of [traditional endurance and agility feats](#), like the one-foot high kick, the wrist carry and the seal hop, which originated with the daily activities of early Alaska Natives.



Newtok students practice traditional Yup'ik drumming after school.

Photo: Erik Keto

There are monthly movie nights and occasional extracurriculars, such as when a village resident volunteered to teach students archery. This year, another resident offered guitar lessons, so the school purchased a few instruments.

The school is the only building in the village with flush toilets and showers (two for men, two for women). The homes here do not have indoor plumbing or running water, so young men are sent to haul five-gallon jugs of water from the school every day.

When there's a funeral, the gym is where residents gather to eat and mourn. And when other areas of the village flood — as they do almost every year now — the school, as Newtok's highest point, is where residents go to shelter.

“The school is like the *qasgiq*,” said Principal Grant Kashatok, using the Yup'ik term. “It's the communal house from 100 years ago where people come together to become a community.”



Newtok School cross-country coach Kevin Portie watches his students practice on a recent afternoon.

Photo: Photo: Mareesa Nicosia

A first-of-its-kind relocation in Alaska

The first Newtok school was built in 1958 by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, which was at the time building schools at many Alaska Native seasonal camps in an attempt to encourage the people to settle year-round and enroll their children in school.

For thousands of years, the camps were inhabited by semi-nomadic Yup'ik who lived off the land and followed their food sources from season to season — fishing, hunting moose and muskox in the winter, hunting seals in the spring and foraging for berries and other plants in the summer.

When will relocation happen? ‘Tomorrow morning but not today’

Like many native communities, the village of Newtok [developed around that first school](#). Since the 1960s and '70s, according to state department records, the village has been a year-round residence, but the tradition of subsistence living goes on.

“For a lot of teachers, it’s hard to get past, ‘My student’s gonna be gone for a week, because they’re gonna go moose hunting,’” said math teacher Brandi Portie, a Louisiana native who moved here with her husband, Kevin, 10 years ago. “It’s hard to work around, but that’s part of the culture, and so it’s something you have to accept as a teacher.”



Brandi Portie, a Louisiana native, moved to Newtok with her husband 10 years ago to teach.

Photo: Hanna Craig

This is a place where the daily tasks that ensure students' safety and survival often take precedence over getting to class.

"For a lot of them, having a high school education is important, but it's not as important as ... 'Am I going to have food for my family?' 'Do I need to miss class this morning to get some stove oil to heat the house?' 'Do I need to go dump the honey bucket because the honey bucket's full?'"

The buckets, filled with human waste, are emptied daily into the smaller Newtok River, to the east, where residents dock their boats. There's no other alternative, since the community dump site, along with the village's barge-landing dock, were swallowed by the Ninglick River years ago.

As a teacher, these harsh, elemental routines are “just something that you get used to,” Portie said.

“Teachers don’t come in here and think that they’re gonna like, save the world,” said Wilson, the elementary reading teacher, “because this is not our world to save. It belongs to the people of Newtok. You know, it’s up to us to come here and become part of them. It’s not up to us to come here and change them.”

Educators aren’t blind to the fact that in many ways, the lifestyle the community has chosen to maintain and protect comes with certain costs.

About 50 percent of Newtok students graduate from high school in four years, compared with [71 percent statewide](#) and 82 percent nationally. The majority of village students in all grades lag behind their peers in the district and throughout Alaska on state reading and math proficiency tests, school data show. Ten percent or less were considered proficient in science as of 2015, [according to state data](#).

Many students don’t consider leaving the village for college, often because they’re relied upon to help care for elderly relatives or siblings (most families have around seven children, the principal said).

More than a third of [Newtok residents](#) live below the federal poverty line, according to 2010 census data — although the number is likely higher now, officials said. Newtok is legally a dry town, but alcoholism and drug abuse are widespread. School officials say it’s not unusual for parents to leave their children to look after each other while they drink away their annual permanent fund dividend check — every Alaska resident [received \\$2,072 in 2015](#) — in Bethel or Anchorage.

Navigating the sometimes bleak realities of their students’ lives, Portie and her colleagues can’t help but feel weary some days. Yet in nearly a decade of teaching here, she has proudly watched her students inch forward academically.

All students study the Yup’ik language through the school’s burgeoning dual language program. Since the school expanded the program a few years ago, starting English lessons in kindergarten rather than third grade, students have made strides, Portie said. They are better readers and sharper mathematicians, she said. They stay after school to attend her homework help sessions, urged on by the knowledge that they’ll get a free snack afterward. Kids often show up at teacher’s doors at 11:30 p.m. just to talk. When a few visitors recently camped out in the school library, which serves as a makeshift hostel for journalists and state officials, a swarm of smiling and inquisitive elementary school kids peppered them for information: name, age, place of origin.

(California’s Crisis: [The Forgotten Students, and Eroding School Districts, of the Drought](#))

It’s unclear to what extent local, state and federal leaders have considered the educational disruption that the village relocation will create for Newtok’s 132 students, but what is apparent is the pending move’s enormous difficulty.

“I don’t want to see the kids fall any further behind,” Portie said. “I would hate for it to go backwards, and I feel like that’s the way it would go if they plan a move without planning everything together.”

Kashatok, who has been principal for 12 years, has operated in perpetual wait-and-see mode. He expects to meet with village council members and state officials this fall to discuss the plans.

“It’ll be a challenge for sure, because it’s the first time ever [that relocation is] being done in any community in Alaska,” he said.

Soft-spoken and prone to wry humor, Kashatok is the self-described “gatekeeper” of the school. His roster of duties includes math teacher, sports coach, nurse, backup cook, guidance counselor, data analyst and social worker. He likes to hunt, fish and play bingo in his free time, what little there is of it.

His wife, Sarah, is the school librarian, and the youngest of their four children is in eighth grade. Two sons are already in college, and their daughter graduated high school in June, with plans to go to the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

Newtok, Alaska



Imminent danger

More than 180 Alaska Native villages have experienced gradually worsening erosion and flooding for decades, and Newtok continues to surface at the top of government warning lists. In 2003, it was named one of four villages in “imminent danger” in a U.S. General Accounting Office study; a [follow-up report](#) in 2009 reaffirmed that finding.

In 2009, the Army Corps of Engineers labeled Newtok one of 26 “[priority communities](#)” that were so at risk of damage that they were recommended for “immediate and substantial intervention” by state, federal or other agencies.

Between 2005 and 2014, nearly 500 feet of land along the Ninglick riverbank eroded, according to data provided by the state Department of Natural Resources.



Newtok's southern shoreline loses about 72 feet each year to the rising Ninglick River.

Photo: Hanna Craig

A few villages have begun to map out plans for a move. The residents of Shishmaref, located on a barrier island north of the Bering Strait, [voted Aug. 16](#) to relocate. Past efforts had derailed because of concerns about the viability of potential relocation sites as well as residents' [attachment to a village school](#) built in 1977.

Statewide, Newtok is the furthest along in addressing the crisis, having actually started building anew over the past 10 years at the relocation site, a large island of rolling hills nine miles upriver. The quiet northern tip of Nelson Island where Newtok plans to relocate is called Mertarvik, which in Yup'ik means "getting water from the spring." Mertarvik's grassy ridges rise 500 feet above sea level versus Newtok's 10, and it's an ideal location in other ways: It has plentiful well water, loads of blueberries and nearby hunting grounds — muskox roam on the ocean-facing side. Three other villages are scattered along the island's southwest side.

Past estimates by the Army Corps of Engineers have put the total cost of the move at \$130 million. The village has so far cobbled together funds piecemeal. Currently it has access to about \$20 million from the state and the Bureau of Indian Affairs earmarked for “pioneer-level” infrastructure, said Sally Russell Cox, a state employee in the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development who has worked with the Newtok Planning Group for years. The money can be used for relocating 12 homes; work on a quarry and a Dura-Base road that leads to the quarry; finishing the emergency evacuation center; building a temporary landing strip for deliveries of construction supplies and for emergencies; and water, sewer and a landfill. Most everyone agrees on what needs to be done, and done quickly, Russell Cox said. And yet the plans have sputtered along for decades, stymied in large part by a bitter power struggle between rival factions of local leaders. (Wavering support from state and federal officials as administrations turn over hasn’t helped.)

The former village council was led by Stanley Tom, the longtime relocation coordinator for the move. He and his council [were ousted](#) a few years ago after some residents accused him of embezzling funds for the project and alleged that local elections were rigged to keep the council in office for the duration of the relocation. As a result, several million dollars in government aid that had been scraped together was frozen, residents said.

The new council stepped in after the Bureau of Indian Affairs took [the rare step of intervening in a local issue](#) in 2013. While the two sides remain divided and barely communicate, Newtok Tribal Administrator Tom John; his wife Bernice, a councilwoman; and the new relocation coordinator, Romy Cadiente, insist that the lingering dispute is not preventing progress.

This year, in fact, the Newtok project has finally picked up some momentum, officials said, and Cadiente hopes the village can serve as a “template” for other communities that are facing or soon will face death by erosion in rural Alaska.

“This thing is in full bloom,” said Cadiente, who [works closely](#) with the state and other agencies. “There’s a lot of people that are putting their blood, sweat and tears into this.”

As of late August, the council was considering entering a FEMA buyout program to demolish some of the most decrepit Newtok homes. Officials would seek grant funding for the remaining cost of building new, replacement ones in Mertarvik, Cadiente said. Though each new home is estimated to cost up to \$350,000, the appraised value of the existing ones is likely far less. No one can say for sure yet how they’ll make up the difference.



The Cold Climate Housing Research Center of Fairbanks worked with villagers to build a prototype home with self-sufficient water and energy systems.

Photo: Mareesa Nicosia

Three houses already built in Mertarvik are seasonally occupied by pioneering Newtok elders with strong ties to the old council; three other houses stand vacant save for electric wires, new window screens stacked by piles of dead flies and a dusty white porcelain toilet practically still in its packaging — signs of a project abandoned without explanation.

Workers with the Fairbanks-based nonprofit Cold Climate Housing Research Center and villagers spent the summer building a new self-sufficient, [energy-efficient home](#) on movable skids that will serve as a prototype for future construction that would start in earnest next summer.

For now, the relocation site is accessible only by boat, which drives up the cost of transporting construction materials. The five gallons of fuel required for a recent round trip between Newtok and Mertarvik, to carry five people 18 miles by powerboat, cost \$34.

25 students — or none

When he visited Alaska last September, President Barack Obama [spoke at the high school](#) in the village of Kotzebue, where [he was greeted](#) with nose-rubbing Eskimo kisses by the president of the regional school district; in the village of Dillingham, he [joined students](#) for a traditional Yup'ik dance.

He was there — [the first sitting president to visit the U.S. Arctic](#) — to call attention to the threat of global warming and announce that the Denali Commission would coordinate federal, state and tribal resources to address erosion, flooding and climate change in Alaskan communities.

Tucked into the \$20 million relocation aid Newtok has now is about \$3 million from the Denali Commission for planning and design work, according to Russell Cox, the state staffer. But that's not nearly enough — and it's unclear how much, if any, would aid the school relocation.

The current Newtok school was built in 2000 using \$14 million in insurance money after a fire burned down the old school, according to Kashatok, the principal. At the time, Newtok residents had already voted to relocate the village, so the new school was designed to be taken apart and reassembled at the new site.

In the 16 years since, however, the building has aged beyond its intended use, and local officials say it is unfit to be moved by barge to Mertarvik. Plan B, which will be hashed out in the coming months, is that by next school year, 2017–18, a makeshift school could be up and running in a storage facility that is already built at the new site.

Once 25 students have made the move, Newtok can apply through the state education department for an estimated \$40 million in capital funding for construction of a new school, local officials said.

The timeline is clearly problematic, some teachers and parents have noted drily.

“You have to have so many kids to build a school, but how can the kids move there without a school?” said Kylie Riches, 24, a teacher from Fairbanks who moved to Newtok three years ago, right out of college. That catch-22 will likely consume officials' workdays for months to come. In an interview, Lower Kuskokwim School District Superintendent Dan Walker said getting through the transition will probably require using portable classrooms or relying on parents to homeschool their children. A few teachers will be assigned to the site to start. The district has a robust [distance-learning program](#) that students in Mertarvik could participate in once the new site has internet access, he said.

[\(The 74: Alaska's Campaign to Get Faster Internet to Its Most Remote Schools — Where Even Dial-Up Is a Luxury\)](#)

The next 12 to 36 months will demand great flexibility from staff, students, district officials and residents, Walker said.

“Quite frankly, I don't know that there's been a situation like this before,” he said. “I think Newtok is going to be the first one, and it's going to be a bit groundbreaking.”

Meanwhile, the odds of squeezing out extra education funding from the state are slim, especially as several other schools in the Lower Kuskokwim district that need renovations and additions are competing for some of the same pot of money.

The village of Napakiak, just downriver from the school district headquarters in Bethel, is facing similar erosion and flooding problems, Walker said. It could one day be grappling with the same challenge of relocating residents and rebuilding a school.

Some 470 miles north, Kivalina is another Alaska Native community of fewer than 1,000 people located on the tip of an island that is [trying to relocate](#). Officials there asked the state for \$64 million in capital funds to build a new school for 175 students. They were granted \$43 million, said Tim Mearig, facilities manager in the state education department.

Newtok and villages like it have no local tax base to support a municipal bond for a project, as most U.S. public school districts do. The main state aid source that rural districts like the Lower Kuskokwim can access to build or fix schools, the Regional Education Attendance Area fund, is capped at \$70 million for 2017, said Mearig, and the fund was cut this year by 25 percent. Once each school project is added to the department's priority list, it must be individually approved by the state legislature.

Alaska's budget deficit has surpassed \$3 billion, owing mostly to the plummeting price of oil, the state's main source of revenue. That's expected to lead to state spending cuts in education and other areas over the next few years. In 2015, about 22 percent of all state spending went to education.

They will have no voice

Back in Newtok, an environmental disaster is bearing down, but life moves along for most at an unhurried pace.

"Tomorrow morning but not today," one man quipped, laughing, when asked for his take on when the Mertarvik move will begin.

Then he squinted into the sun and suddenly turned solemn.

"We need to get heard out there [by people who can help] because this place is sinking," he said.

"I'm not sure how long we got, but it's not long."

The village's slow but certain deterioration is set against a deceptive tranquility. During a handful of sun-drenched days in August, geese honked overhead and the dogs that wander freely barked at a stranger passing by. Children whooped and adults moved over the bleached-out boardwalks that lead from the school through a maze of mud tracts and tall, soggy grass.

A splatter of one-story, weather-worn wooden homes and a few other buildings — two churches, two general stores, a health clinic, the post office and the tribal council office — make up the whole of Newtok.



Wooden boardwalks serve as roads for the small village of Newtok.

Photo: Hanna Craig

Occasionally, the whine of an engine broke the air as an all-terrain vehicle rumbled from one end of the village to the other. A few times a day, weather permitting, a prop plane coming from Bethel buzzed down on the airstrip, shuttling supplies and visitors in and out.

The sense that Newtok is drifting and that its inhabitants feel powerless to right its course was palpable in many conversations with village residents.

Andy Patrick Sr., 69, a member of the old tribal council, said he led early efforts to research the move and obtain grants. He's still fuming over the loss of that money and the council's authority. It chafes him that the new relocation manager, Cadiente, hails not from Newtok but from Hawaii. In separate interviews, both sides indicated their distrust of the other, and any early willingness to cooperate has long since disappeared.

Patrick prefers that the village move forward with the relocation independently, without the help of bureaucrats who, he says, are full of empty promises.

“They died waiting for that dollar!” he bellowed, stabbing the air at a photo collage of smiling Newtok elders that hangs on the wall in his office.

“Right now, I’m not fighting for my future, ’cause I don’t have that much time left,” he added. “I’m fighting for the future of my grandkids. If we don’t fix this problem, they won’t have any future. They will have no voice.”

Hints that deep-rooted conflict still simmers beneath Newtok’s polite, quiet exterior seem to surface everywhere.

Walking north near the village water tank, Sophie Simon, a mother of six, was on her way to the school to find out about selling her handmade grass baskets. Embroidered with colorful abstract designs, they might go for \$20 or \$30 apiece.

The week before, Simon said someone had set fire to the mechanic’s shop, destroying several snowmobiles. Not too long before that, the post office was burglarized. State troopers swept into Newtok to investigate one day, and while someone eventually turned themselves in for the burglary, weeks later, nobody had been held responsible for the fire.

Some villagers think these incidents, which in most other communities would be felonies, may be Newtok’s disaffected youth acting out.

Simon looked pained when asked about the arson and what could be done to improve life here. She said she lost her mother and her home in 2006 in an accidental fire started by her then-5-year-old son. When kids feel that no one is invested in their future or the community, they’re going to spark trouble, she said, and things have steadily been getting worse.

Last year, a 17-year-old student tried to bring a rifle into the school, triggering a lockdown.

Kashatok, the principal, said the teenager was drunk and had been targeting him. No one was harmed.

Kashatok, who is aligned with the new council, said the incident was unrelated to the tribal dispute, though parents said children of former council members have been bullied in school. Could the move to Mertarvik be a fresh start? Will it ever actually happen? Simon cupped her basket in her hands and looked skyward.

“I’m just a resident patiently waiting to move,” she said. “Patience and prayer, that’s [what] I go by.”



Traditional Yup'ik dancing and drumming fill the hours after school lets out.

Photo: Eric Keto

Living in harmony

Kashatok is one of only three Alaska Native principals of the 27 schools in the Lower Kuskokwim school district — a point of personal pride but also a symptom of what he views as a potential threat to the survival of the Yup'ik culture.

If educators are not interested in or not fluent in the Yup'ik language and traditions, their students will lose touch with their heritage, he reasons. In Kashatok's school, the daily morning assembly is spoken in Yup'ik. Every object in each classroom, including the ceiling, is clearly labeled in both English and Yup'ik.

Kashatok, 52, was born in the nearby village of Kipnuk. Growing up in a culture that relates to the natural world on an intimate, often spiritual level — where village heroes are the young

hunters who can fell the largest moose — Kashatok’s preference for reading and studying language from an early age made him feel like a misfit, he said.

As a young educator, he grappled with a perceived conflict between his academic ambitions and the strong desire to uphold the Yup’ik way of life.

Eventually, he found that the two parts of his identity could exist in harmony — and he makes a point to convey this to his students with the hope that it will help them overcome any tendencies toward suicide or drugs, which have taken many young lives in Alaska Native villages. (Alaska has one of the [highest suicide rates per capita](#) in the country.)

“As long as I remain true to being a Yup’ik man, then I will feel good about myself,” he said. “If we show that to the other students then we’ll make some inroads [on those problems].”

Kashatok likes to brag that more than half of Newtok’s sixth-graders are proficient in the Yup’ik language, even as they struggle with English.

[*\(There are 74 million reasons to care about America's classrooms: Get the top news in your inbox\)*](#)

Though there are no Advanced Placement classes, no test prep sessions for juniors and seniors eyeing college, several students each year travel to Bethel, the hub community about an hour east by plane, to live in dorms and take STEM classes in preparation for college. Last year, students raised \$18,000 to send all seven seniors in the class of 2015 to Honolulu, an exotic destination for almost anyone, never mind these teens, some of whom had never left their village.

“Since we’ve been having the kids travel more ... [their] worldview has gradually changed so that they see themselves succeeding in college and getting professional careers going and so on, which is a good thing,” Kashatok said. “[It’s a] big change from how it was before.”

Bosco Charles, who graduated in June, will be the third in his family to go to college, with plans to major in accounting at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks.

“I want to do a lot of things,” he said, leaning his tall frame, clad in a basketball jersey, against a locker. “I want to [come back] and be a Yup’ik teacher.”

When he returns from the city in four or five years, his community may look very different.

“The erosion is scary. Houses might fall into the water,” he said. “We don’t want it to happen, but we can’t control it.”

When the principal envisions the future of his school, at the top of his wish list is a soundproof Yup’ik room for dancing and drumming. A spacious new gym and a separate cafeteria are a close second. And of course, the tight-knit sense of community that grounds the Newtok school — where teachers can tick off the names of the 10 children in one family, from youngest to oldest, without batting an eye — will be preserved.

Above all, the new school will be safely located on rocky volcanic soil in Mertarvik, far from the rising water that seeps further inland on Newtok’s shore every day.

And when he considers the futures of his students, Kashatok dreams of them returning home with engineering degrees, prepared to help rebuild their community in its new island berth.

“What I hope are ... a lot of students saying ‘I went to Newtok School’ and that means something,” he said. “[And that] even though there was poverty and no running water, shit on the ground ... that they made it.”



The class of 2016 could be one of the last to graduate from the Newtok School. (From left to right: TeddieAnn Tom, Byron George, Scott Charlie, Isaiah Charles, Brandon Queenie, Alexie Julius, Nadine Kilongak, and Nathaniel Simon)

Photo: Eric Keto

[\(The 74 Photo Diary: One Week in Newtok, Alaska, Where Climate Change Is Threatening a Village, Its School and a Way of Life\)](#)