

Louie Flora

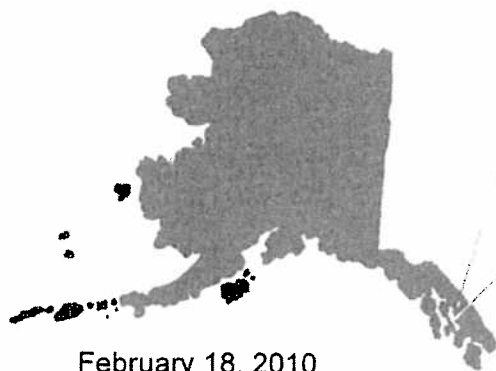
From: Sharon Waldo [swaldo@dgsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 11:55 AM
To: Louie Flora
Subject: Delta/Greely 5 year counts.xlsx
Attachments: 5 year counts.xlsx

Hi Louie,

Attached please find the 5 year count information from Delta/Greely School District. Please let me know if you need or would like any additional information.

Sharon Waldo
Delta/Greely School District
907-895-4658 ext 25

DELTA/GREELY SCHOOL DISTRICT COUNTS			
	10/15/2009	2/15/2010	Difference
Student Count	813	809	-4
	10/15/2008	2/15/2009	
Student Count	807	801	-6
	10/15/2007	2/15/2008	
Student Count	842	828	-14
	10/15/2006	2/15/2007	
Student Count	864	850	-14
	10/15/2005	2/15/2006	
Student Count	826	836	10



**WRANGELL
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
DISTRICT OFFICE

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

P.O. BOX 2319
WRANGELL, ALASKA 99929
Telephone (907) 874-2347
Fax # (907) 874-3137

February 18, 2010

Honorable Representative Seaton and Honorable Education Committee Members
The following data and comments are respectfully submitted per your request:

Concerning Wrangell Public Schools

Wrangell Public School Counts

2005 Feb.	374	Oct.	370
2006 Feb.	361	Oct.	355
2007 Feb.	349	Oct.	346
2008 Feb.	345	Oct.	324
2009 Feb.	310	Oct.	317

District Wide Dropout Rates

4.8%
1.1%
1.1%
0.5%
1.1%

In Wrangell we have had a general decline in enrollment ever since the federal government chose to curtail forest production. Since about 1995 our enrollment numbers have been on a downward spiral. To assume that because we loose students between October and February there is a positive correlation to our dropouts is unfounded. In the above figures you will notice the same trend between February and October of the next year.

Generally each summer we do have some families that move to Wrangell. Because the job market here has been dismal they often are not able to make it through an entire winter. The most likely time for them to leave is after the permanent fund checks are distributed in October. Many of them move at Christmas time since this is a natural break for them.

The same is true of the summer months. Many families move as soon as school is out. It seems to be a natural break for them. Some families move north to the cities in Alaska and many of them move south to the lower forty-eight. Even though we have families moving to Wrangell the general trend over the last fifteen years has been more families with children moving out than moving in.

I can tell you without equivocation that every student who drops out has been contacted as well as the parent(s) of that student if we know their whereabouts. Even one dropout is too many in our view.

Concerning Bush Alaska

Having had some experience as an administrator in bush Alaska I can also share what sometimes happens there. Some families move to the cities when the permanent fund checks come out in October. They often stay one or two weeks, however, some stay much longer. There are many students who do not enroll in school during this time. Some families stay with friends or relatives until their money runs out.

I have heard the comment from committee legislators that principals or school district personnel should make contact with drop outs and their families and encourage their return, see if there is a problem, determine if someone can help the student return, etc. In many of these instances school personnel does not know where these families are or how to get hold of them.

When and if these students traveling with their parents return to school, whether it is in their home school or the school of new residence, they often have missed so much school they cannot receive credit for the semester. Even more problematic is when the student is out of school for significant periods of two separate semesters, the end of the first semester and the beginning of the second. For many students this is adequate reason to drop out. And for many that is what they do.

I would contend that even if the school personnel could locate and contact these parents it would be of little consequence. The students of parents in the above situation, who allow their children to be out of school for long periods of time, are highly likely to drop out of school.

One simple answer to solve this problem is to change the permanent fund pay out. Give it out in June. A second answer is to fine parents when their children are out of school and unaccounted for. Garnishing an amount equal to the permanent fund from a parent of a child who is not in school would significantly curtail the dropout problem in Alaska.

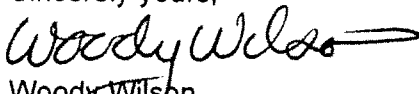
I am not naive. I know these are difficult issues to address. But changing the permanent fund payday or fining parents who are delinquent in their duties would have a direct and positive correlation to improved school attendance and would lower Alaska's drop out rates.

In my opinion, lengthening the count period, splitting the count period, or otherwise tinkering with the count period assuming it will significantly address the dropout problem is short sighted. If there was a way for economists to apply a cost-benefit analysis to this idea they would likely predict the result to be insignificant or perhaps unrelated to the real issue at hand, dropouts.

It is difficult enough to reconcile student counts to one twentieth ($1/20^{\text{th}}$) of the foundation formula. With an eighty-day count we would be reconciling to one eightieth ($1/80^{\text{th}}$). Adding this bureaucracy to the burden of districts without a fiscal note to this legislation is just another unfunded mandate. And even though Mr. Jeans indicates he has no plans to add staff to the Dept. of Education in an effort to reconcile an eighty-day count I suspect the folks expected to do those reconciliations are groaning loud enough for you to hear it across town in the committee room.

The Education Committee is brave for tackling such difficult issues. The answers to complicated issues are often, as one would expect, complicated. Thank you for your willingness to look at the hard issues and try to find those complicated answers.

Sincerely yours,


Woody Wilson
Superintendent

Louie Flora

From: David Means, Director of Administrative Services [david_means@jsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 10:58 AM
To: Louie Flora
Cc: Glenn Gelbrich; Jeans, Eddy (EED); Lobaugh, Mindy H (EED)
Subject: Estimate for Juneau School District HB 206
Attachments: Extend Count Date to 80.pdf

Hi

I developed an estimated fiscal impact to extending the count date to 80 days for the Juneau School District as requested. I estimate that extending the counting period to 80 days would reduce state foundation by \$57,000 in FY 2011, or slightly more than 1% of the District's basic need of \$51,048,000. This would also reduce the maximum level of local municipal appropriation by \$13,000 for a total impact to the District of \$71,000.

I also see increased difficulty in administering the foundation program by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. Each and every school district is required to prepare a school calendar and submit it the Department of Education and Early Development. It will be highly unlikely that all districts have the same 80 days of school because of variations in when they take winter break and potential holidays such as Veteran's Day, Alaska Day, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday. Students transfer between district's and this can result in a student having more or less than 80 days because of the differences in calendars.

Sincerely,

David Means
Director of Administrative Services
Juneau School District

907-523-1770

Prepared by
David Means
February 17, 2010

[illegible]

Louie Flora

From: PJ Ford Slack [pjford@dgsd.k12.ak.us]
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 10:43 AM
To: Louie Flora; lhsclaf+akschooldistricts@legis.state.ak.us
Cc: alasbo@gci.net; jgreely@aasb.org; Mary Francis
Subject: RE: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Dear Louie,

I am sitting here waiting for the fog to lift and realize I have been focused on answering your questions about counts, numbers, and how DGSD an REAA might be affected by this. What I continue to miss and need to address is the whole reason for this bill or so it seems...and that is that districts, after count, don't care whether a student drops out. The supposition with that thought is that our count goes down because we encourage, help, or just turn our heads to students dropping out.

DGSD lost 65 students last year when the oil prices hit the roof in our area. These students were from the elementary school, a Blue Ribbon School. Their parents left, either to Anchorage or the lower 48, because it was too darn expensive to live in our area.

80 days is not going to keep students in school in my area and I dare say there are not many who would find this a drop out reduction technique. We are doing everything we can at DGSD to keep students in school. I know all my colleagues are too. We might help students look for other career paths if traditional high school is not working but that is not to rid ourselves of students. For example at DGSD we are looking at moving 5th grade to Ft. Greely to have a comprehensive middle school (that is on base so there will be protests to that) but it will allow all the staff to wrap their arms around students from 5-8th grade. There will be a math focus if it happens and we will continually work on transition to high school. The students who drop out do so in most cases between 7-9th grade. Our New Horizons program hold on to fathers, mothers, and many of our Slavic Students. Those students, who make up 30% of our population are a group whose family does not recognize the high school diploma as a useable certificate. They come from a European system where most students "leave" at 16 to work or apprentice unless you go to college. This is not wrong it is just different and it is something we work all the time to educate about. Will an 80 day count change that cultural thought, NO.

We also have a 9th grade academy to wrap our arms around the new 9th graders. It takes teacher and staff time to connect...that is what holds students in school not an 80 day count.

So will 80 days help stop drop outs, not in most schools. It might change the reporting for correspondence schools but for most of us it will not be what keeps a student in school. Not 80 or 60 or 40...the connection is person to student not money.

Hope that helps. PJ

From: Louie Flora [mailto:Louie_Flora@legis.state.ak.us]
Sent: Wed 2/17/2010 12:11 PM
To: lhsclaf+akschooldistricts@legis.state.ak.us
Cc: alasbo@gci.net; jgreely@aasb.org; Mary Francis
Subject: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Hi,

The purpose of this e-mail is to remind districts that HB 206 will be discussed on Friday in House Education. As you are aware, HB 206 Work-draft Version P is posted on the Basis web-site under the "documents" tab. This is the Work-draft with the 80-day count requirement. Following discussion with school districts we have proposed an amendment dealing with unanticipated increases in student count numbers occurring at the start of the 80-day count period. Please see the attached amendment allowing a 20-day count at the beginning, and providing a district with the ability to seek funding during the current year count period to cover the unanticipated increases. Recall that under the version P Work-draft districts are funded in the current year based on the previous year's count.

Louie Flora

Subject: FW: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

-----Original Message-----

From: pjford@dgsd.k12.ak.us [mailto:pjford@dgsd.k12.ak.us]

Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2010 4:41 AM

To: Louie Flora

Subject: Re: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Deart louie

I have not had connectivity on the road. I am currently dealing with the enrollment of 3 intensive students (in Jan). 2 of which may require out of state residential. This is a huge cost to an REAA.

I have no one in our district who can compile. Feb counts for past years but I shall see what I can do today.

REAA's are most at risk. Without extra funds (in our case no large impact aide and no native Corp) we can not afford any touch to the BSA. I don't mind an 80 day count nor does our board as long as it does not increase our need for more personnel. We would welcome a way to petition for funds when something unusual arises like what has happened this year.

Thank you

PJ Ford Slack, Ph.D

Supt

DGSD

REAA 15

Sent from my BlackBerry® smartphone powered by ACS!

Louie Flora

Subject: FW: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers
Attachments: HB 206 Version P Amendment.pdf

From: Vanni Prichard [mailto:Vanni.Prichard@nsbsd.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 8:21 PM
To: Louie Flora
Subject: FW: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Good Evening Mr. Flora:

Superintendent Peggy Cowan has requested that I provide the following information to you for the North Slope Borough School District.

1. During the past five years, what was your district's total enrollment in October?

2009	1592
2008	1626
2007	1656
2006	1745
2005	1721

2. During the past five years, what was your district's total enrollment in February?

2009	1538
2008	1582
2007	1634
2006	1712
2005	1671

3. Please explain briefly what caused any fluctuations within a given year.

The majority of the fluctuations between October and February from year to year are attributable to multiple factors: Transfers in and out of district; students temporarily left school due to family problems, pregnancy, medical/psych hospital; lack of progress, or excessive absences; early graduation in December. Additionally, some of the students identified as having excessive absences often could also fall into the category of having personal or family problems.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Respectfully,

Vanni Prichard
Director of Assessment/Accountability
North Slope Borough School District

Louie Flora

From: Richard Carlson [richard.carlson@klawockschool.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 1:12 PM
To: Louie Flora
Subject: RE: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Louie: Over the years Klawock has seen very little change in enrollment numbers from the October count period to February.

Richard E. Carlson
Superintendent
Klawock City School District

--- Original Message ----

From: Louie_Flora@legis.state.ak.us
To: lhsclaf+akschooldistricts@legis.state.ak.us
Cc: alasbo@gci.net, jgreely@aasb.org, mary-acsa@gci.net
Subject: RE: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 12:11:59 PM YST

Hi,

The purpose of this e-mail is to remind districts that HB 206 will be discussed on Friday in House Education. As you are aware, HB 206 Work-draft Version P is posted on the Basis web-site under the "documents" tab. This is the Work-draft with the 80-day count requirement. Following discussion with school districts we have proposed an amendment dealing with unanticipated increases in student count numbers occurring at the start of the 80-day count period. Please see the attached amendment allowing a 20-day count at the beginning, and providing a district with the ability to seek funding during the current year count period to cover the unanticipated increases. Recall that under the version P Work-draft districts are funded in the current year based on the previous year's count.

Also, we made a request recently that districts provide the committee with information as relates to enrollment numbers historically in October and February, as well as any explanation the districts may have for fluctuations in enrollment. To date we have received materials from the Anchorage School District, but no other districts.

Please provide our office with this analysis if you are able prior to the Friday meeting in House Education.

Thanks again for your help,

Louie Flora
House Education Committee Aide,
Representative Paul Seaton, Chairman
(907) 465-3923

Louie Flora

To: Connie A. Newman
Subject: RE: Enrollment

From: Connie A. Newman [mailto:canewman@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 2:56 PM
To: Louie Flora
Cc: Babe Odell
Subject: Enrollment

Good Afternoon Louie,

I submitted the data for our enrollment on an AASB survey. Here is the data I shared

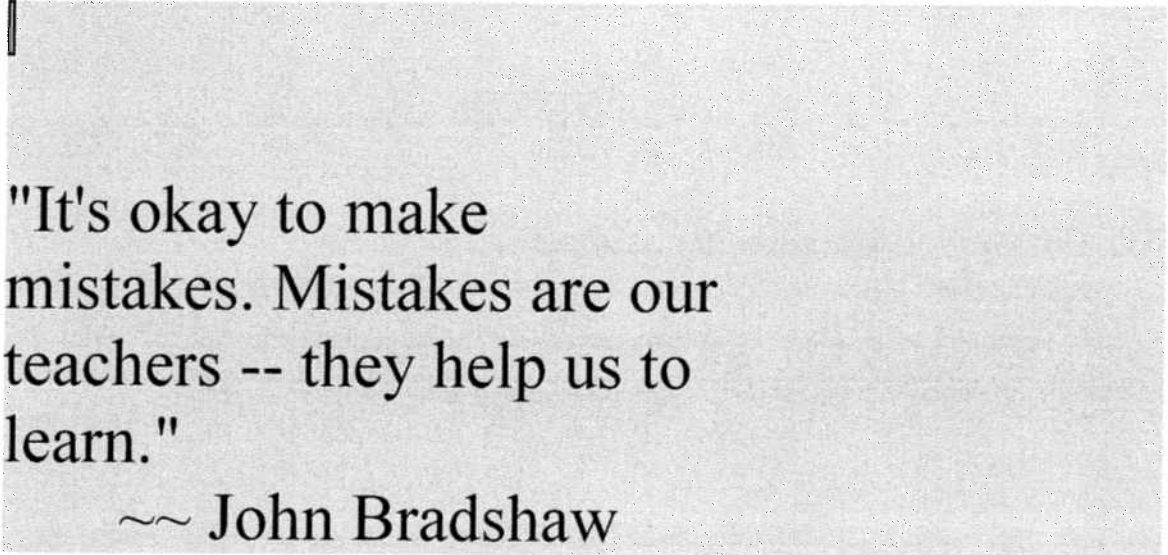
October	February
2009 15	13
2008 15	15
2007 15	16
2006 13.6	11
2005 12	13.5

Families leave to find work in Winter.

I have read through the bill and was wondering how this will help students stay in school? Did I miss something?

Thank you,

*Connie A. Newman, Superintendent
Pelican City Schools*



"It's okay to make mistakes. Mistakes are our teachers -- they help us to learn."

~~ John Bradshaw

Louie Flora

From: Gary Baldwin [Gary_Baldwin@lksd.org]
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 2010 3:15 PM
To: Louie Flora
Subject: Re: HB 206 amendment and renewed call for student count numbers

Louie Flora <Louie_Flora@legis.state.ak.us> writes:

Also, we made a request recently that districts provide the committee with information as relates to enrollment numbers historically in October and February, as well as any explanation the districts may have for fluctuations in enrollment. To date we have receive materials from the Anchorage School District, but no other districts.

Louie,

AASB just ran a survey with these same question, so hopefully that information is available. When I compared our February enrollments with those in October, we consistently have about 50 fewer students in February out of about 3900 students. We have students who enroll in August, drop out during the year and re-enroll the next August. Some of them actually graduate after 5 or 6 years of high school.

There has been some comment about the longer count period providing and incentive for district's to keep students in school. Nothing could be further from the truth. With rare exceptions school districts are doing everything in their power to keep students from dropping out.

I hope this helps.

Gary Baldwin
Superintendent
Lower Kuskokwim School District
Phone (907) 543-4912
Fax (907)543-4904
gary_baldwin@lksd.org

	Preschool	Kindergarten	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th		
10/23/2009	88	670	643	670	653	641	697	684	724	684	684	808	802	723	683	9170
2/15/2010	96	667	656	662	664	641	704	683	729	688	688	766	780	698	711	9145
																35

