

HOUSE CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 103(HES)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/15/00

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATORS LINCOLN, Ellis

REPRESENTATIVES Morgan, Kapsner, Harris

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to a curriculum for Native language education; and providing
2 for an effective date."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new
5 section to read:

6 SHORT TITLE. This Act may be known as the Native Language Education Act.

7 * **Sec. 2.** The uncoded law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
8 to read:

9 FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

10 (1) Alaska's indigenous Native cultures and languages are unique, essential
11 elements of Alaska's heritage;

12 (2) Alaska's indigenous Native languages are an integral part of Alaska Native
13 people's culture and well-being;

14 (3) knowledge of one's indigenous language is important for the development

1 of social skills and self-esteem; it further contributes to the development of the individual and
2 the ability to communicate;

3 (4) translations from a Native language into English result in the loss of
4 context and deprivation of the full range of social and cultural understanding necessary to
5 function in the individual's environment;

6 (5) when Native children are proficient in their primary indigenous language,
7 they are more likely to do well in school; they also develop a higher degree of proficiency in
8 English;

9 (6) historically, Alaska Native children first learned their Native language in
10 their homes and communities, but, with the passing of Native elders and with a current
11 generation of parents who are not fluent in their Native language, younger generations are less
12 knowledgeable about their language and culture;

13 (7) the loss of indigenous Native languages dates back to the late 1800's when
14 mainstream American missionaries enforced federal policies that forbade the use of Native
15 languages, punished children for speaking their own language, and urged parents to speak only
16 English to their children;

17 (8) the continuation of "no Native language" policies in federal, territorial, and
18 state school systems between 1910 and 1970 resulted in the loss of many Native languages;

19 (9) the fact that only two of the 20 Alaska Native languages are fluently
20 spoken by children today is an indicator of the impending extinction of Native languages;

21 (10) unless action is taken, by the year 2055 only five of the 20 Alaska Native
22 languages will be spoken by anyone, and soon thereafter the Native languages of Alaska may
23 vanish.

24 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.120(d) is amended to read:

25 (d) Annually, before the date set by the district under (e) of this section, each
26 public school shall provide, in a public meeting of parents, students, and community
27 members, a report on the school's performance and the performance of the school's
28 students. The report shall be prepared on a form prescribed by the department and
29 must include

30 (1) information on accreditation;

31 (2) results of norm-referenced achievement tests;

(3) results of state standards-based assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics;

(4) a description, including quantitative and qualitative measures, of student, parent, community, and business involvement in student learning;

(5) a description of the school's attendance, retention, dropout, and graduation rates as specified by the state board; [AND]

(6) the annual percent of enrollment change, regardless of reason, and the annual percent of enrollment change due to student transfers into and out of the school district; **and**

(7) if Native language education is provided, a summary and evaluation of the curriculum described in AS 14.30.420.

* **Sec. 4.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to article 6 to read:

Sec. 14.30.420. Native language education. (a) A school board shall establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board for each school in the district in which a majority of the students are Alaska Natives and any school district with Alaska Native students may establish a local Native language curriculum advisory board for each school with Alaska Native students in their district. If the local Native language curriculum advisory board recommends the establishment of a Native language education curriculum for a school, the school board may initiate and conduct a Native language education curriculum within grades K through 12 at that school. The program, if established, must include Native languages traditionally spoken in the community in which the school is located. Each school board conducting a program of Native language education shall implement the program as a part of regular classroom studies and shall use

(1) instructors who are certified under AS 14.20.020 or 14.20.025; and

(2) to the maximum extent possible

(A) instructors and instructional materials available through the University of Alaska; and

(B) audio-visual, computer, and satellite technology.

(b) In this section,

(1) "district" has the meaning given in AS 14.17.990;

- 1 (2) "Native" means a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaskan
2 Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood.
3 * **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2000.