

NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Nunamiut Amaqut

Nunamiut School
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Atgasuk Eagles Tinmiagpat

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Barrow Whalers

Barrow High School
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HMS Wolves

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Arctic Foxes

Fred Ipalook
Elementary School
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Kiita Uqpiich

Kiita Learning Community
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Kaveolook Rams

Harold Kaveolook School
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Nuiqsut Trappers

Trapper School
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Nuiqsut, Alaska 99789
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Tikiqag Harpooners

Tikiqag School
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Kali Qavviich

Kali School
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Alak Huskies

Alak School
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HB 330: State Standards

Testimony to Committee

2/24/2012

Peggy Cowan

I'm Peggy Cowan, superintendent of schools for the North Slope Borough School District.

Good morning Chairman Dick, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to speak today and for your consideration of HB 330 and other education issues. I am grateful for your dedication to the education of the children of our state. I know you have a busy agenda and I will try to be brief.

I reviewed HB 330: State Standards, Representative Dick's sponsor statement and the material distributed to school districts by the Department of Education and Early Development inviting comment on the current draft of the standards. I agree with Representative Dick's emphasis on the importance of the investment in state standards and their effects on and use by the districts. Our district is in a five year process of comprehensive curriculum development, alignment, integration and mapping and the state standards and grade level expectations are at the heart of rigorous academic content for this curriculum. We are relying on a locally developed Inupiaq Learning Framework for the relevance and integration of local language, history and culture into our curriculum. We turn to the state standards and grade level expectations for guidance on academics.

I also agree with Representative Dick's sponsor statement's emphasis on a thorough vetting process for state standards. The Department of Education and Early Development was right in extending the time between introduction to the State Board of Education and adoption rather than the typical cycle of the next meeting. This is a step in the right direction to allow thorough vetting. As Representative Dick explained industry representatives and employers are important in the review of the standards. Industry and employers are not likely to review the state standards without the state being intentional. As a point of reference, let me summarize the process in the North Slope Borough School

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District. The district's Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment is reviewing them herself and getting teams within the district to review them and provide recommendations for our district's feedback to the Department of Education and Early Development. These teams are made up primarily of members of our district's own curriculum committees who are guiding the work on our curriculum and are for the most part teachers. We do include what we call 'steering committees' which are made up of parents, businesses and community members in the review of our own curriculum, but we are not including these people in the district's review of the state's standards. I do not know, but expect that the review by others districts is similar, so the district's review of the standards will not elicit industry review. To get that review, the state will need to invite and solicit it intentionally.

Thank you again for your service on this committee and to the students in our state. I'd be happy to answer any questions.