



Sarah Palin, Governor
State of Alaska

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

P.O. Box 240249 • Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249 • Phone: 907-269-8990 • Fax: 907-269-8995 • Toll Free 888-269-8990

February 5, 2009

The Honorable Chris Tuck
State Capitol, Room 426
Juneau, Alaska 9980-1182

Dear Representative Chris Tuck,

This letter is in support of House Bill 69, Alaska Parents as Teachers Act, establishing a voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children and a rating system for early childhood education. The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education (the Council) advocates for change that improves the lives of people with disabilities. One of the roles of the Council is to serve as Alaska's Interagency Coordinating Council for Infants and toddlers with Disabilities.

The Interagency Coordinating Council and parents as Teachers have two goals in common: (1) to ensure early detection of developmental delays and (2) increasing school readiness. The Council understands the importance of early detection of developmental delays and early intervention services for children. Many delays can be corrected before a child reaches school age, thus providing a cost saving for schools by decreasing the need for special education or remedial services. The Council also understands the importance of early detection and intervention for young children which leads to increased school readiness and later success in school.

The Early Intervention Committee of the Council recently completed an outreach trip to Haines to gather information on how early childhood intervention services are working for infants and toddlers with disabilities in rural communities. During our visit, we were impressed with the skills of Kim Phillips, Parents as Teachers staff in Haines. She was able to share with us her ability to help families identify the need for screenings if their child appears to have a delay. Then she assists them through the referral process, while continuing to provide support in the home environment during this stressful time. She works closely with the Infant Learning provider and the Headstart teachers to create a seamless early childhood system of services.

Creating Change That Improves The Lives Of People With Disabilities

The Council supports the creation of a statewide Parents as Teachers program through House Bill 69 to provide families with early education including early detection of developmental delays and increased school readiness for young children.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (907) 269-8990.

Respectfully,

Stacey Messerschmidt, Chair
Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education

Cc:

The Honorable Les Gara
State Capitol, Room 500
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

The Honorable James Petersen
State Capitol, Room 422
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

The Honorable Scott Kawasaki
State Capitol, Room 428
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

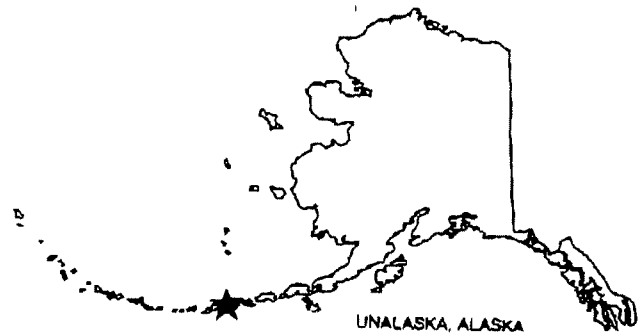
**CITY OF UNALASKA**

P.O. BOX 610

UNALASKA, ALASKA 99685-0610

(907) 581-1260 FAX (907) 581-2187

April 7, 2009



Dear Alaska State Legislator:

I am writing to voice my strong support for Senate Bill 23 and House Bill 54: "Pension Benefits for Public Employees".

As a 21-year contributor to the Public Employees Retirement System, I have witnessed first hand the advantages of providing a strong retirement benefit to attract new employees. Having guaranteed pension and health care benefits has helped me to retain high quality employees for extended periods of time.

I have watched with great concern, since the new defined contribution system went into effect, a turnover of new staff in other Departments within our City and wondered what effect the defined contribution system would have on our Water and Wastewater Utility.

With the expected and near term retirement of some of our senior Water and Wastewater staff, I am greatly encouraged to see this important legislation introduced. I look forward to informing new and prospective employees of the positive impact that a long-term employment commitment to our Utility can have on their retirement.

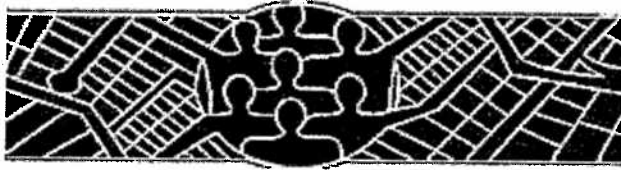
I encourage all legislators to support Senate Bill 23 and House Bill 54.

Thank you,



Clint Huling
Water & Wastewater Supervisor
City of Unalaska
PO Box 610
Unalaska, AK 99685

Ph (907) 581-1260
Fax (907) 581-6210



Center for Community
700 Katlian Suite B
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Phone: 907-747-6960
Fax: 907-747-4868

Early Learning Program

February 10, 2009

Dear Representative Chris Tuck,

This letter is to support House Bill 69 which would establish a voluntary Parents as Teachers home visiting program for families with children prenatally up to kindergarten entry age.

The Early Learning Program (ELP) based in Sitka serves children and families with special needs between the ages of birth and three. Since the children we serve are also served by the PAT program in a rural village that we service, collaboration between the programs is essential. To this end, the PAT teacher in Kake, Alaska has been exceptional in this area. When the PAT program began, the PAT teacher contacted the ELP program to see how the programs could work together. Over the past two years, the ELP and PAT program have developed a partnership in the following areas:

- Screening vision and hearing for all 0-3 children
- Conducting joint home visits for children enrolled in both the ELP and PAT
- Including the PAT program in the development of Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP's)
- Providing support to PAT teacher in the implementation of IFSP goals during home visits
- Assisting families in locating necessary resources such as Medicaid, Denali Kid Care and referrals to specialists (e.g., Ears, Nose and Throat doctors)

- Assisting families and children with special needs transitioning from ELP and PAT to the school district at the age of three

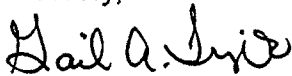
Prior to the PAT program starting up in Kake, the ELP, as an "outside" agency was not very successful in making contact with families. However, with the assistance of the PAT teacher, we were able to introduce our services and gain access to the children in need. The PAT program was the much needed bridge between the ELP program and families.

Along with the collaborative efforts, the PAT program provides the necessary supports and services to those children not eligible for the ELP. Eligibility for the ELP requires a delay of 50% or more in one or more areas of development. The PAT program is able to support all the children, particularly those who may be "at-risk" for developmental delay. Through the home visits and screening provided by the PAT program, children who might otherwise fall through the cracks are provided with necessary services and supports. In addition, the support for pre-natal families provides the opportunity for every infant to begin life in a supportive environment. The socializations provided by the program are instrumental in providing children with the chance to interact with other children and parents with the opportunity to meet other parents. There are no other programs in this particular village that provide the opportunity for these children to learn play skills and develop the social and emotional skills such as self-regulation, turn taking and sharing that are necessary for successful lives.

The Early Learning Program full supports House Bill 69. Without it many families will not receive the necessary support to enhance their child's growth and development.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at gtrujillo@cfc.org if you need any further information.

Sincerely,



Gail A. Trujillo, M.Sc.
Early Learning Program Coordinator



February 5, 2009

Dear Representative Chris Tuck:

On behalf of Child Care Connection, Inc's Board of Directors and staff, I am writing to support current legislation to establish a voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children and the implementation of a quality rating system for early childhood education in Alaska.

Home based education and support programs such as Parents as Teachers help parents understand what to expect during each stage of their young child's development, how to support their child's growth and learning, and how to prepare their young children for success in school. Parent success in this critical role largely depends on their understanding of child development, best parenting practice, how to detect their child's developmental delays and health issues, and their access to resources and supports in their community. Implementing a voluntary home visiting program in Alaska will provide parents, with access to expert guidance and assistance to ensure their child's healthy development and learning.

Beyond this critical parent education program, families with parents in the workforce need access to high quality early learning programs for their children while they work and contribute to Alaska's economy. Currently, Alaskan parents do not have a comprehensive way to objectively assess the overall quality of early learning programs in our communities. A Quality Ratings Improvement System (QRIS) would support parents in their search for high quality early learning programs through a five star rating scale evaluating the following factors: staff qualification and professional development, environment, curriculum and learning, leadership and management, and family engagement. A QRIS in Alaska would empower parents to become informed consumers who are better able to identify and seek high quality early learning programs for their children. The system would also provide a roadmap for individual early learning programs to improve their quality of care, thereby increasing parent access to a larger supply of quality options. Finally, the system would allow for greater accountability for policy makers who govern public investments in Alaska's early care and education system, providing coordinated support to all types of early education programs in Alaska.

As the leading agency of Alaska's Child Care Resource and Referral (AK CCR&R) Network, Child Care Connection staff talk with parents every day who share their concerns and challenges. Many parents we work with would benefit greatly from the support of the proposed home visiting program. Its early detection and screening component will be invaluable to the later success and wellbeing of each child touched by this program. Last year, our network worked with over 6,000 families as they struggled to find early learning programs that meet the needs of their children. Many of these parents need to find care for their children so they can go to work, but sometimes have to compromise the quality of their child's care because there are not enough quality programs to choose from. Parents who do find the quality care they need often cannot afford the cost of enrolling their child. I encourage you to support the creation of these two vital programs that will support families and young children both within their home environment, and within early learning programs statewide. Please contact me with questions or for further discussion regarding this letter of support. Thank you for your leadership on behalf of Alaska's young children.

Sincerely,

Candace Winkler
Chief Executive Officer
(907) 563-1977

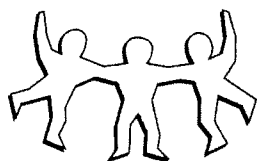
cwinkler@childcareconnection.org

Advancing the quality of early education and child development by empowering parents, educating child care professionals, and collaborating with our communities.



P.O. Box 141689, Anchorage, AK 99514-1689
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Toll Free 1.800.278.3723 Toll Free Fax 1.877.563.1959
www.childcareconnection.org EIN 920113419





Play N Learn
Community Head Start
1949 Gilliam Way Suite A
Fairbanks, AK 99701
(907) 452-4267 * Fax (907) 452-4203

Representative Les Gara
Rep Les Gara@legis.state.ak.us

January 23, 2009

Dear Representative Gara,

I am writing this letter in support of establishing voluntary Parents as Teachers home visiting programs. The philosophy of Parents as Teachers is parents are children's first and most important teachers; empowering families to begin a lifelong involvement in the learning of their child.

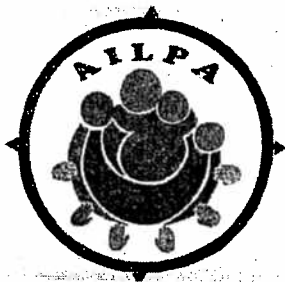
Our Head Start program uses the Parents as Teachers curriculum for home visiting and can see the benefits to children and families first hand. For one parent who was deployed, receiving mailings with updates and pictures of his child and the Parents as Teachers handouts about developmental milestones helped to keep him connected while away.

Families in Alaska can be isolated from others. Home Visitors offer child development knowledge, parent support and encouragement. The key to healthy development are care givers who provide safe, secure, nurturing environments for children, Parents as Teachers gives families the tools.

Sincerely,

Laura Frisone
Family Services Coordinator
Play N Learn Community Head Start

"Play N Learn Community Head Start
2008 Program of Excellence- Awarded by the National Office of Head Start"



Alaska Infant Learning Program Association

Serving as an advocate for Infant Learning Program children, families and staff

700 Katlian St. Suite B Sitka, Alaska 99835
907-747-6960

February 10, 2009

Representative Chris Tuck
House of Representatives
State Capitol
Juneau, AK
99801-1182

Dear Representative Chris Tuck,

The Alaska Infant Learning Program Association is writing to support House Bill 69 which would establish a voluntary Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting program for families with children prenatal up to kindergarten entry age.

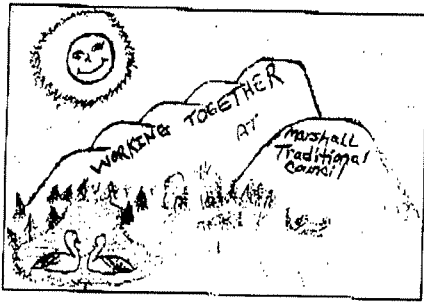
We know that the most important development of a young child occurs in the first few years of life, and our state priorities need to reflect this knowledge. Through the education and support of parents of young children, the Parents as Teachers program has proven effective in increasing children's school readiness, improving their later school success, and increasing their parents' involvement in school. If passed, this legislation would help Alaska's youngest start school ready to learn.

The PAT program provides the necessary supports and services to those children not eligible for Early Intervention/Infant Learning Programs (EI/ILP). In the State of Alaska, eligibility for EI/ILP requires a delay of 50% or more in one or more areas of a child's development. The PAT program is able to support the children who do not qualify, particularly those who may be "at-risk" for developmental delay. Through the home visits and screening provided by the PAT program, children who might otherwise fall through the cracks are provided with necessary services and supports. In addition, the support for pre-natal families provides the opportunity for every infant to begin life in a supportive environment. The socializations provided by the program are instrumental in providing children with the chance to interact with other children and parents with the opportunity to meet other parents. There are no other programs in Alaska besides PAT and EI/ILP that provide the opportunity for these children to learn play skills and develop the social and emotional skills such as self-regulation, turn taking and sharing that are necessary for successful lives.

Your ongoing support of Parents as Teachers is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Gail A. Trujillo
Alaska Infant Learning Program Association



*Native Village of Marshall
Marshall Traditional Council
P.O. Box 110
Marshall, AK 99585*

Phone: (907) 679-6302 Fax: (907) 679-6187

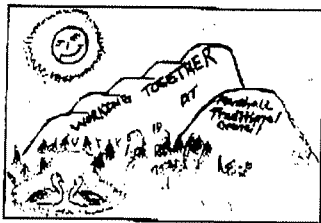
February 9, 2009

I am a proud parent that has a child that is involved in the Parents as Teachers Program. And, so far, I am very pleased at the way the program is run. My child is advanced than other kids his age. He is 19 months and knows how to count to five and refers to his fingers when counting.

He likes to talk a lot and tries to imitate what we are saying. When we tell him what a name for certain items or things and he is able to catch on fast.

So, I would really recommend Parents as Teachers program and would happily tell all people that have kids to let their kids get involved in this program

EPA Coordinator
Jeremy Woods



*Native Village of Marshall
Marshall Traditional Council
P.O. Box 110
Marshall, AK 99585*

Phone: (907) 679-6302 Fax: (907) 679-6187

From: Carmen Pitka, Social Service worker

Subject: HB 69 Parents as Teachers legislation/Hearing

February 9, 2009

Hello, my son is in the PAT program he will turn 2 this coming June and he enjoys his learning and play time and I truly believe that it starts from us the parents. He is 19 months old and he can count to five with our help and gives us a high five when we reach the fifth finger and he knows where his eyes, nose and ears are. We got him to say the letter S first and then he was able to pronounce words better, I fully support the program and we have a very encouraging lady who works for our local headstart.

Carmen Pitka



Southwest Region School District

P.O. Box 90
574 Kenny Wren Road
Dillingham, AK 99576

(907) 842-5287 • Phone
(907) 842-5428 • Fax

Aleknagik

Clark's Point

Ekwok

Koliganek

Manokotak

New Stuyahok

Togiak

Twin Hills

Southwest Region School District
574 Kenny Wren Rd
Dillingham, AK 99576

January 22nd, 2009

Representative Les Gara
716 W 4th Ave #310
Anchorage, AK 99501

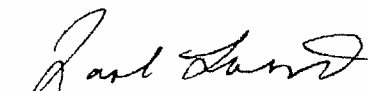
Dear Representative Gara,

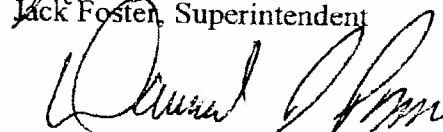
As members of the Southwest Region School District team, we are writing to ask for your support of the legislation supporting the Parents as Teachers program. This bill would support funding for Parents as Teachers programs in the communities that our school district serves.

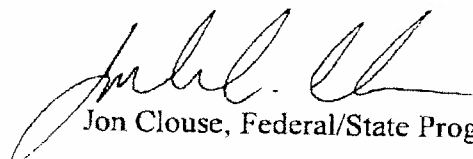
The district knows the importance of the development of young children's minds during the first few years of life and the priorities of the state need to support that development. The Parents as Teachers program has had a positive impact on the children in the communities of Southwest Region School District. The program has increased the school readiness component of the children's early education, which has a positive effect on improving school success in later years and increasing parents' involvement in their child's education. This legislation would help children start school ready to learn.

We urge you to support this legislation. The investment of educational resources into the early years of children's lives and parental involvement will benefit those parents and children for a lifetime.

Cordially,


Jack Foster, Superintendent


David Piazza, Director of Instruction & Information Services


Jon Clouse, Federal/State Programs Director

158 Berkeley Ct.
Fairbanks, AK 99709

February 6, 2009

The Honorable Chris Tuck
Alaska House of Representatives
Attn: Aurah Landau
VIA FACSIMILE: 907-465-3810

Dear Mr. Tuck,

I am writing to tell you that I support HB69. This bill will allow my family and others like us to benefit from the Parents As Teachers (PAT) program. I appreciate being a part of a program that has no income guidelines. I have seen firsthand with my second child the importance of additional screening for learning delays. I have also watched myself become a more confident parent who knows better how to handle difficult parenting issues with the tutelage given to me in my home visits with my parent educator. Please allow me to share my experiences and speak to you about the important concepts the program delivers, and the benefits of group meetings and screenings.

Even though our family income is considered too high to qualify for the only other parent education program in Fairbanks, that does not make me or my spouse a better parent by default. I may be able to provide more books and toys than another parent, but my income does very little to provide me the actual tools and knowledge I need to care for my children. Living away from family and friends, as many Alaskans do, makes the burden of raising a child even greater. PAT provides an array of opportunities to make that necessary "village" in which to raise a child.

Never having spent time around children, my initial instincts were simple: after safety and the bare necessities, I would offer books and educational toys and begin saving for college. How little I knew in those first few months! College may come, but if I don't learn the skills necessary to help my infant or preschooler how to succeed, no amount of savings can help. My role as parent is vastly more complicated and more demanding. The PAT program enabled me to find the right path. The program handout I was given when we began the PAT program after my second child turned three months sums up my parental role well:

- "As a designer, you provide interesting play materials and experiences that promote your child's natural curiosity and problem solving.
- As a consultant, you help your child learn about her world and how it works while encouraging her independence and ability to do things for herself.
- As an authority, you set boundaries for your child's behavior that are appropriate for her age and developmental level, and you help others know your child's unique characteristics and needs."

As my child develops I will have to modify the way I carry out these different roles, but with PAT, I can get advice and great ideas every month when my parent educator comes into our home. We conduct scientific experiments and explore math, language and music.


We also benefit from the group meetings that PAT hosts. These meetings help me form that "village" that I lack here in Fairbanks and provide our family with a network of other parents who have experiences to share with me and time to nurture me when I need it. And in a few instances, I know that my experiences with my children have helped another parent deal with difficult decisions. Several other mothers have asked me about degrees offered where I teach at the Tanana Valley Campus. I hope that they may someday seek to obtain degrees, knowing that they will see a friendly face there.

Some of the most critical needs that PAT meets are the developmental screenings. These screenings played a significant role in the detection of my son's speech delay before 18 months. A yearly meeting with a pediatrician can not compete with monthly visits from certified parent educators and frequent screenings. I believe that because the parent educator could conduct screenings in our home—where my child was comfortable to respond—we detected with certainty a speech delay. We caught it early enough that after consultation with our pediatrician and a referral to a speech therapy program, my son caught up on the developmental charts in a single year. My PAT educator even worked with the therapist to ensure that everything she taught me coincided with the steps we were taking in therapy.

I can only estimate that the early detection of my son's speech delay saved the state thousands of dollars in special education programs he would have taken part in when he later attended school. His delay would have been more severe without the early detection and more complicated to correct for having been allowed to fester for years. Surely the funding of this worthwhile parent education program should be a priority of our state as we look toward the future. Alaskan children deserve the best from infancy, and children should not fall through the cracks just because their parents' income is outside of the bounds of certain thresholds.

The sons of two of my friends are currently enrolled in the Fairbanks North Star Borough's special education preschool for speech delays. Neither is a part of Parents As Teachers. Both families would be considered high income. They have benefited from none of the support mechanisms or referral processes that my son benefited from to deal with his speech delay. While they are spending time helping their boys relearn the speech process, my three year old can and I spend our extra time conducting science experiments and exploring early reasoning skills. When my daughter started kindergarten this year, she, and more importantly I, was already familiar with making patterns for math readiness. When her teacher assigned this as homework, I had the skills and understanding from having learned about it through PAT to help her make more and more complex patterns to start her on the right path. I have seen firsthand the importance of designing, consulting and providing authority for my children. Please allow other parents like me to have the same opportunity by authorizing funding to Parents As Teachers.

Sincerely,


Candace S. Crews
907-457-3135

From: Mary J. Kasayulie [mailto:mkasayulie@bbahc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2009 4:15 PM
To: David Theriault
Subject: Letter of Support

Hi, my name is Mary Jane Kasayulie. I am a former PAT teacher and a former mom of a child that was in PAT. I would fully support the PAT program. I am a firm believer in the PAT program. I have a daughter and my family benefited from the program. I have been working in Early Childhood Program for most of my career and I believe earlier the interventions the more a child can benefit from any schooling because it is the foundation of a child's learning skills.

I know work for the Infant Learning Program here in Dillingham and I know that it is making a difference in children's lives. I know that it also helps parents understand the importance of what more their children can have. Being from a small community they don't have all the programs at their grasp and to bring out Parents As Teacher educators it would make it a lot better. Teach young as the baby in the mother womb. As early childhood educators I know we can make a difference in a child. One thing I look at and let parent know if deal with the issues young and help make brighter children. As children get older they have issues with being embarrassed of being in a program but when they are young, they are just happy that someone wants to play with them.

Thank you,

Mary Jane Kasayulie
PO BOX 130
Dillingham Alaska, 99576
1-888-648-4325 or local 842-3398
FAX 1-907-842-2039

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BEST BEGINNINGS

Alaska's Early Childhood Investment

January 22, 2009

The Honorable Chris Tuck
House of Representatives
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Via e-mail: Representative_Chris_Tuck@legis.state.ak.us

Dear Representative Tuck:

I am writing in support of a statewide voluntary home visiting program for young children and their families, such as the evidence-based Parents as Teachers Program. Promoting parents as a child's first and most important teachers is a foundational aspect of the work undertaken by Best Beginnings.

Parents as Teachers does just what its name implies: it helps parents become better and more effective teachers for their young children. When parents are involved in a child's informal or formal education, the child is more likely to be an enthusiastic and engaged learner. The K-12 school system knows the value of parent involvement in keeping students in school, improving test scores, and so on. It makes sense that if parents are engaged early on when their children are young, they will stay engaged.

A large and growing body of research provides increasing evidence of three related tenets: (1) brain growth and development occurs at an astonishing pace in very young children; (2) nurturing and brain stimulation during those years has a profound impact on how children fare in school; and (3) a child's readiness for school is a powerful determinant of how he or she will fare in life.

A voluntary Parents as Teachers program has been shown to help parents of children birth to 3 provide their children with the kinds of learning experiences so vital to brain development. Preschoolers can benefit, too. There are many small communities in Alaska with too few young children to make a center-based early learning program viable. Yet those children should have access to learning experiences just as their peers in larger villages, towns, and cities do.

3350 Commercial Drive, Suite 104A • Anchorage, Alaska 99501
t. 907.297.3300 • f. 907.297.3304 • BestBeginningsAlaska.org

Best Beginnings is a public-private partnership that mobilizes people and resources to ensure all Alaska children begin school ready to succeed.

This effort is also supported by the stated goals for the Alaska Governor's Summit on Early Learning, held in December 2007, which included the following:

- All children, especially those most in need, have access to early literacy and learning opportunities in their home or in out-of-home settings;
- These services are coordinated; and
- Parents, grandparents, and extended family are engaged in young children's learning with needed support, resources, and incentives.

Please let me know if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Abbe Hensley
Executive Director

3350 Commercial Drive, Suite 104A • Anchorage, Alaska 99501
t. 907.297.3300 • f. 907.297.3304 • BestBeginningsAlaska.org

Best Beginnings is a public-private partnership that mobilizes people and resources to ensure all Alaska children begin school ready to succeed.

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KANA - 3449 REZANOF EAST
KODIAK, ALASKA 99615
(907) 486-4643
Fax (907) 486-3921
Email: Nancy.Wells@kanaweb.org

January 21, 2009

Representative Les Gara
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK

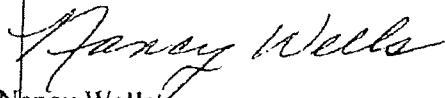
Dear Representative Gara,

On behalf of all families with young children, thank you for your support for expansion of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program. As a nation we have spent millions of dollars doing research on how young children learn and develop. We have the information proving that learning in the early years is critical to developing the ability to become a life long learner. We have the information proving that in the first years of life a child learns through active engagement with a consistent, caring parent. In this age of technology and TV babysitting it is imperative that parents have the opportunity to learn how to engage their children in age-appropriate activities that foster optimal development.

The PAT program fills this critical need in our community. It provides families with crucial, scientifically based information presented in a way that is culturally appropriate. The bi-monthly home visits and weekly group socializations offer an opportunity for parents to understand the growth and development of their children. PAT helps to build the early foundation skills that both children and families need to ensure early learning, school readiness and success.

The PAT program has become an invaluable community partner for Infant Learning. PAT expands health and developmental screenings for children and helps identify children who may need additional support at an early age. PAT teachers are an important referral source for ILP. We offer our full support to this valuable program, both in our community and statewide and look forward to many years of continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Nancy Wells
KANA Kodiak ILP Coordinator



Parents as Teachers Alaska State Office

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. • P.O. Box 200908, Anchorage, Alaska 99520
(907) 865-7345 • Fax: (907) 278-2309
www.ruralcap.com



January 13, 2009

Representative Les Gara
State Capitol, Room 500
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

To Representative Gara:

I am writing in regards to the proposed legislation to establish voluntary Parents as Teachers home visiting programs for families with children prenatally up to kindergarten entry age. As the Parents as Teachers Alaska State Coordinator I fully support the designation of state funds to support this important program and the services it provides to the children and families.

In 2007, the Alaska Governor's Summit on Early Learning recommended in the home services that would provide all parents with access to home-based education and support. Parents as Teachers is an established research based home visiting program that meets that recommendation. Research has shown that families that participate in Parents as Teachers programs engage in more language and literacy promoting behaviors with their children. Furthermore, children who were involved in Parents as Teachers score higher on kindergarten readiness tests and on standardized measures of reading, math and language in the elementary grades.

In addition to these positive outcomes for children and families, Parents as Teachers has also been shown to provide an excellent return on investment; meaning the program makes economic sense. By creating opportunities for Parents as Teachers in Alaska, not only will our state will be providing families with the opportunity to better prepare their children for entering into kindergarten and to lay a solid foundation for future learning, but also making a solid investment in our future. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Melissa Pickle
Parents as Teachers Alaska State Coordinator



Debi Baldwin
Child Development Division Director
RurAl CAP
731 E. 8th Ave.
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Debi,

This letter is in support of RurAl CAP's Parents As Teachers (PAT) program to provide home-based services for families with children aged birth the three years old.

There is a need in the community for such apparent education and support program for families.

RurAl CAP's PAT program will provide families with crucial, scientifically based information on how children grow and learn. The ideas, suggestions, and activities that well trained local staff provides will help parents. There is need for consistent services to parents like workshops on Parenting Skills, Health, Nutrition, and Prenatal and Newborn Care in our community.

The program provides regular home visits that build on families' strengths and support parents in enhancing their children's early development. The program also provides health and developmental screening of children, identifying children who may need additional support at and early age. The earlier health or developmental needs are identified, the better the chance that intervention will be successful.

Sincerely,

Augusta M. Askook
Augusta Askook



CENTRAL COUNCIL
tlingit and haida indian tribes of alaska
ANDREW P. HOPE BUILDING
320 West Willoughby Avenue • Suite 300
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1726

February 12, 2009

Dear Honorable Legislators:

As the elected President of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Central Council), I am writing to express my support for House Bill No. 69 (HB 69), an act "establishing in the Department of Education and Early Development a voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children and establishing a rating system for early childhood education."

Alaska's children represent our future and with our poor graduation rates, it is important that we support any attempts to improve our children's success in education. HB 69 would give thousands of Alaskan parents a chance to provide their children with the benefits of early education. Studies have shown that children's intellectual development is especially important before age six and early childhood education has proven to have great outcomes as it has shown to increase graduation rates, college attendance, and job earning potential.

I hope that the Alaska State Legislature will consider the positive outcomes of early education and support our parents in the effort to insure a bright future for our children and Alaska.

Sincerely,

William E. Martin

President

February 6, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

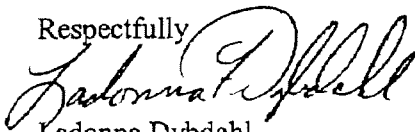
This letter is being written in support of House bill 69.

I am quite certain that the success my child is having right now in High School is due to early training through Hoonah's Parents As Teachers program. Furthermore, I know as an individual I am a better person/parent because of PAT. This is after raising 3 older children that I finally participated in our local PAT program with my youngest and at that time it was a pilot program and trial runs were being made. My daughter Liv and I participated from the time she was toddling (1994) to 3 years old. It was not only fun for her but also very helpful to me. I not only had a chance to visit with other mothers and exchange ideas on what's working as far a child rearing and discipline went but was also educated thru PAT on how to deal with and be a teacher in my own right to my child. I have encourage my older children who have now provided me with 6 wonderful grandchildren to take them to and participate in this fun educational program, not just for their child but for themselves also.

The Federal government supports schools thru "No Child Left Behind." Only stands to reason that State government should support a program like Parents As Teachers which has proven itself over and over it's success in not only our smallest resident's of Alaska but also in their parents who are the biggest teachers in their lives. This is a program that must be continued and supported by all.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully



Ladonna Dybdahl

P.O. Box 247

Hoonah, Alaska 99829

February 12, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

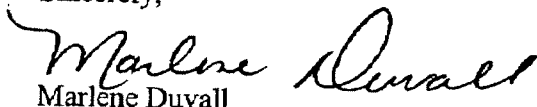
The Parents As Teachers (PAT) program in Hoonah, Alaska, is an outstanding program with trained staff who genuinely care about children and their parents.

The PAT program continues to be instrumental in helping families in the Hoonah Community by using research-based curriculum which promotes most favorable child development and constructive parent child relationships for personal (home) visits, prenatal classes for expectant parents at the PAT Center, and parent-child play groups also at the PAT Center. Another key service that PAT provides in Hoonah is developmental, vision and hearing screenings which can lead to early identification of developmental delays or health issues.

I personally have been very actively involved with Parents As Teachers from pregnancy to present day with my four year old. I can testify that my child and I have learned so much from the various facets of the PAT program. I can further testify that PAT has made a significant impact on my child's school readiness. I am confident that he will enter the Hoonah City School system with the knowledge and ability to learn expected of a kindergarten age child.

I strongly support PAT and the infinitely positive influence it has on families in this community.

Sincerely,



Marlene Duvall

P.O. Box 313

Hoonah, AK 99829

(907) 945-3330 home

Feb. 19, 2009

Dear Representatives,

My name is Mónica Zarazua and I live in Hoonah. I am a parent and am actively involved in the Hoonah Parents as Teachers (PAT) program. I am writing this letter to ask that you support and vote yes on House Bill 69.

My son Jaden and I have been attending PAT since he was born and he is now 3 years old. I really enjoy all of the fun things that they offer my family.

PAT is a wonderful organization that offers many helpful things to me and my son. They do a Tots clinic which is a clinic that allows me to have my son checked by very skilled professionals at no cost to me which I greatly appreciate. They also have a family fun night every month where my son and I can have dinner and play games and also do arts and crafts with other families from the community who are also involved in the PAT.

PAT has helped me with many things. I have learned a lot from these caring and wonderful people. They work very hard to answer all of my questions so that I can be the best parent and teacher for my young son. My son Jaden also loves

coming to PPT for our home visits and for Family fun night. We are all like one big happy family.

I really hope you consider this and vote yes on House Bill 69.

Thank you

Sincerely,
Monica J. Zarazua
& Jaden L. Washington

Monica Zarazua
P.O. Box 534
Hoonah, AK 99829
(907) 957-6349

Dear Alaska State Representatives:

First, I would like to thank you - each one of you, for your time and efforts toward improving life for Alaskans, especially Alaskan youth.

I am writing to ask that you please VOTE YES ON HB69 Alaska Parents As Teachers. I am a parent that participates and benefits from Honorable Parents As Teachers.

PAT has helped me from the time I was pregnant with my son until present (my son is 4 1/2 years old now) with being an effective parent and teacher to my son. PAT has trained staff and a wonderful resource library to draw from. Home visits are so helpful and Parent-Child Playgroups are well planned, educational and fun for kids. My son's favorite place to go during the week is to his playgroup on Fridays.

Thank you for supporting HB 69 - Vote Yes.

Marlene Duval

PO Box 313, Hoonah, AK 99829

907.945.3380

Dear Representatives,

Feb. 19. 2009

First and Foremost, thank you for your work with Alaskan children. I am writing you to ask for your support and vote on house Bill 169 (Alaska Parent as teachers).

I am a parent actively involved in Hoonah's PAT program. This program has helped me become the parent I am today. I have learned patience, love, and how to help my children learn and grow.

P.A.T. offers several programs such as handling pregnancy, breastfeeding, and learning the developmental stages of your child. They offer a tots clinic to conduct an ages and stages screening at no cost to my family.

I have two daughters and one son. My daughter Zada is seven years old, My second daughter Shayla is five. I have one son named Mitchell 3 1/2 months.

All of my children have participated in P.A.T. All of my children enjoy family fun nights, which is also presented by the Hoonah PAT.

All parent educators have worked hard to ~~be~~ answer my questions. It

really helps me be the confident
parent I want to be!

Please consider a yes vote to
house bill 69!

Melissa Thaalesen

Po box 513

Hoonah, Alaska 99829

1-907-209-8745

Dear representatives,
I'm a father of two. My name is Casey
I and my family are involved in P.A.T. in Hoonah
Alaska. We enjoy the program. I want you to
support House Bill 69. I am learning a lot about my
own children and how to deal with the issues
you could have from being a father of two girls.
I am also learning more about babies & mothers
than I ever thought possible... I hope H.B. 69
passes...

Casey Badde

P.O. Box 418

Hoonah, Alaska 99829

Dear Representative:

I am pleased with the program
parents as teachers. The one in Hoonah, is helping.
It helps the children that in school.
And at home.

The classes they have is helpful.
and family time is being together at
meal time & play time.

I've worked with my boys and
later their children and even my Great
children. I am a great Grant parent.

Deborah A. Dalton

ph. 945-3360

post office Box 154

Hoonah, AK 99829

Feb 19, 09

Dear Representatives,

Thank you for your work for Alaska children. It is programs such as PAT that help provide the educational programs a child needs to succeed in the (school) K-12 levels.

Please support House Bill 69 Alaska ~~as~~ parents as Teachers. The program PAT has become wide spread and is fairly new, I know it is greatly important to have such programs to help children develop a stable education.

I am a parent in Hoonah PAT and the program has helped my son in many ways, Social interaction, Communication, and helped in preparing him for the school setting.

Thank You

Carrie Lindoff

Box 221

Hoonah, Alaska

99729

Dear Representatives

Thank you for your work with Alaska's children. Please Support House Bill 69 Alaska's Parents As Teachers Program

We are Parents concerned over funding for the Parents As Teachers Programs here in Alaska. We strongly believe that through programs like these new parents like us could benefit.

This Program has helped us out with a prenatal program, lamaze, that helped out a lot during labor. Helped with our daughters learning & social skills, provided reading material to check out. Family nights where we can socialize with other families & make toys and games for our children.

Also taught classes to make regalia and how to weave something that we can pass on to our child. We think it's an excellent program

Christine & Warren Belford

P.O Box 335

Hoonah, AK

99829

Feb 19 2009

Dear Representatives

Me gusta este programa porque
se trata de ayudar a los niños

y padres de familia a como

Tratar de educar o enseñar

a sus hijos lo cual a mi

persona creo que es un

exdente programa para todo

el pueblo que tanto lo

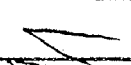
necesitan y pienso que todos

los niños estan felices de

venir o que lo visiten a su

hogar para brindales su gran

ayuda

Vote yes on HB 69 Alaska
parents as teachers. Andrew A. 

Feb 19 2009

Dear Representatives

I like this program because it helps children and parents of the family to teach their children. The program helps parents to educate and teach their children. For this I personally feel that it is a ~~excellent~~ program for the whole community. Please think of how happy it makes the children when they come to the program and when Parent Educators visit their homes. We need your help.

Vote Yes on HB 69 Alaska Parents
As Teachers. Andres Espinosa Solano
Po box 453
Hoonah AK 99829

(Translated by Talina Sky Espinosa)

Dear Representatives,

My name is Wilma G. Davis, As a former Parents As Teacher Educator, I would like to thank you all for your support ^{for} our Alaska children. My experience as Parent Educator gave me the advantage of having a very successful child care program in Juneau. I became a strong advocate of young children and their families.

The PAT program gave me all the knowledge and the information about early childhood education and the importance of age appropriate activities to enhance their development. Being

there for the parents make a big difference in how they worked with their children at home. Reassuring them that they are their children's best teacher is the greatest job of the Parent Educator.

Thank You Again.

Respectfully Yours,
Wilma G. Davis
P.O. Box 592
Hoonah AK. 99829

P.S.

Please support / vote yes on HB 69

Alaska Parents As Teacher.

From: Stacey Lane [mailto:lanes907@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wed 2/11/2009 9:43 AM
To: louie_flora@legis.state.ak.us
Subject: in support of HB69

I was hoping to give a verbal testimony, but I've got to get to work now. So please accept this e-mail as my testimony of support for this house bill.

A little background information:

My name is Anastasia Lane. I was raised in Seward, and am now raising my own family here as well. I have two children who have been involved in the local Head start program and parents as teachers programs. As many of you know, developmental disorders and learning disabilities are on the rise. My oldest child is on the Autism Spectrum, and it was from the wonderful educators in the Head start program that first alerted me that my child was significantly behind her peers in her development. On the other hand, the year before she was enrolled in Head Start, the "educators" at a different daycare/preschool program repeatedly told me that my child was "just fine"... "and I was worrying over nothing". This was obviously detrimental to my daughters' future as I chose to believe them, because that's what I wanted to hear. Had I not been told by these so-called "educators" that she was "just fine" ; we would not have lost over a year of therapies that could have significantly helped her. I am truly grateful to the teachers at Head Start for seeing what other educators could not. I fully believe in a "checks and balance" system, because of my personal experiences. I believe that an agency or person who wants to be an early childhood educator should be held accountable for their success or failure as an educator as well as supports be in place for them.

When my second child was born, the Head start program had already been removed. I signed up for voluntary Parents as teacher program because I was very concerned about his development. I didn't know what "typical development" was as my experiences thus far had been significantly skewed. I truly welcomed our "home visits" and not for one moment did I feel it was an invasion of my privacy. I would save up my questions throughout the week to ask at our "home visits" and absorbed the information like a sponge. Those home visits were a ray of sunshine in an otherwise frightening time for my family. I believe the teachers and agencies who provide these services should be held accountable; whether it be an agency, an individual, or a parent. I am in support of establishing a rating system for early childhood education; and hope you will pass HB69 in support of many families in Alaska.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Lane
907-224-8626

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

From: Jane Bailey [mailto:jbailey@chugachschools.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2009 9:03 AM
To: David Theriault
Cc: mpickle@ruralcap.com; bcrumley@chugachschools.com;
dtreece@chugachschools.com
Subject:

I am writing in support of Alaska's Parents As Teachers.

Twenty-one employees from our Early Childhood Partnership districts (Chugach School District, Bering Strait School District, Kuspuk School District, and Lake and Peninsula School District) were able to participate in an excellent training provided by Rural Cap called Parents As Teachers November 3-11, 2008. The PAT home intervention program and family group meetings are being implemented in 14/24 sites (58.33%) in the partnership districts. It will be implemented next year in the remaining sites. Our partnership currently serves 150 students ages 3 and 4.

We were only able to offer this service due to an ANE grant we received. We are currently in funding year 1 of 3.

The following are quotes by participants in the training:

Julie Egli, Unalakleet: "I believe with proper implementation, PAT may be the answer to our search for a quality research-based program to help our preschool children transition successfully into kindergarten."

Tonya Christensen, Port Heiden: "If we can get parents more involved, children will have more success in school."

Evelyn Chamberlain, Aniak: "PAT has lots of ideas on how to read to a child to issues such as toilet training biting, etc."

Valerie Engebretson, Nondalton: "There is so much we take for granted in our busy lives that we don't see all the great things we can share and learn with our children. PAT is a great experience for you to share with your child."

LeeAnn Galusha, Chenega Bay: "I love the resources that PAT provides."

Anna Gregorieff, Tatitlek: "Great material, great info!"

Unknown: "PAT empowers parents and gives our children the early interventions they need."

Wayna Fremin, Aniak: "The children in our communities deserve to be given this opportunity! Thanks for providing our district with this training."

Glenda Egli, King Salmon: "PAT provides a wealth of resources to support parents with their child's early learning and growth."

--

Jane Bailey
ANE Early Childhood Co-Coordinator
OIE Brighter Beginnings Coordinator
Chugach School District

From: Jan Thoenke [mailto:jlthoenke@atsi.tv]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2009 12:32 AM
To: David Theriault
Subject: Parents As Teachers Program

Dear Representative Gara,

I am writing this letter in support of establishing voluntary Parents As Teachers home visiting programs for children ages prenatally to age five in the state of Alaska.

I am the Director of Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three, an Early Intervention-Infant Learning Program in Homer, Alaska. I am also a Developmental Specialist for this agency. We currently provide early intervention services such as physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, special instruction and family service coordination to children in southern Kenai Peninsula that are experiencing developmental delays.

We also have a "Universal Access" program, which is operated under our "Parents As Teachers" program model. This program is offered to children and families prenatally to age three, regardless of delay. We team this program with our weekly playgroup activities, and have had huge success with identifying and meeting the needs of families in our community whose children may not meet the 50% developmental delay requirement that "Part C" early intervention dictates.

Our agency educator provides home visiting services utilizing "Parents as Teachers" curriculum as an added service to our weekly playgroup activity. This service is offered universally to families, with the only requirement being age (prenatal to age three for our agency).

The benefits of having this service available to families has been astonishing, to say the least. I can tell you with all certainty that this truly falls in the category of "proactive" care and support to families with young children. We are able to begin the journey with the family right from the start; ideally prenatally. This journey includes education in prenatal topics, breastfeeding, preparing for your newborn, fatherhood, postpartum depression, child development, parenting techniques, etc. The journey with our agency's home visitor/educator includes family support, community resource connection, a rich lending library of toys/equipment/books and other educational resources. We also join with other related agencies such as Public Health Nurses, to offer joint home visits to further support child and family needs.

The results of this effective service have been exciting. Our agency is able to establish a relationship early with a family, helping them to become more familiar with child development and early education needs. We are involved early in the child's life, and therefore if we have concerns about development, we can address the needs quickly and often with results that will bring the child to age appropriate development in a shorter span of time. We have been able to identify children and refer them to early intervention through this program.

Additionally, our program offers services of developmental screening through the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which is an unfunded mandate. We have seen an increase in the number of referrals to our agency over the past year by 300%. The referrals are received from our local Office of Children's Services, and are children under the age of three that have experienced substantiated abuse or neglect. In other words, they are the children who are under age three, whose families are referred to OCS. Birth 2 Three provides developmental screening to these children and provides services as appropriately determined by the results of the screening.

Many of these children are not yet significantly delayed in development, but are living within a family that poses a high risk environment. It may just be a matter of time until a developmental delay exists with many of these children. The "Parents As Teachers" home visiting program is often a great fit for these families, whose child may not qualify for early intervention. Home visiting allows for relationship building

with the family, support and mentorship. The burden that this lifts from our OCS system has been established already and results have been positive.

As wonderful as this sounds, I would like to address the limitation that our agency is experiencing. This involves adequate funding of our "Parents As Teachers" home visiting program. We must locate other sources of funding, which for Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three, is sought after through United Way of Kenai Peninsula and the City of Homer. Although very much appreciated, this has not adequately funded the need of the "Parents As Teachers" program. We could be offering a great deal more to families; frequency of home visits, more resources, educational materials, activities, and increasing our enrollment of families. Additionally, our funds for this program are being threatened with the existing trends of the economy. Birth 2 Three may not be able to continue to offer this service to families in the future without support.

"Parents As Teachers" is a program that is modeled after best practices, is family-centered and family-strengthening. I believe that if we can get behind this initiative and bring this home visiting model to our state of Alaska, while funding it appropriately, we will see positive results. These results could be obtained within a fairly short time-span and with cost-effectiveness, quite possibly acting as the catalyst in moving our state toward reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

Thank you for your consideration, passion and hard work on this initiative. If you have any questions, comments, or need further information, please don't hesitate to call me.

Respectfully,

Jan Thoemke, Director
Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three
3691 Ben Walters Lane, Suite #4
Homer, Alaska 99603
(907) 235-6044
(907) 235-2644 fax
jthoemke@acsalaska.net

From: Mary J. Kasayulie [mailto:mkasayulie@bbahc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2009 4:15 PM
To: David Theriault
Subject: Letter of Support

Hi, my name is Mary Jane Kasayulie. I am a former PAT teacher and a former mom of a child that was in PAT. I would fully support the PAT program. I am a firm believer in the PAT program. I have a daughter and my family benefited from the program. I have been working in Early Childhood Program for most of my career and I believe earlier the interventions the more a child can benefit from any schooling because it is the foundation of a child's learning skills.

I know work for the Infant Learning Program here in Dillingham and I know that it is making a difference in children's lives. I know that it also helps parents understand the importance of what more their children can have. Being from a small community they don't have all the programs at their grasp and to bring out Parents As Teacher educators it would make it a lot better. Teach young as the baby in the mother womb. As early childhood educators I know we can make a difference in a child. One thing I look at and let parent know if deal with the issues young and help make brighter children. As children get older they have issues with being embarrassed of being in a program but when they are young, they are just happy that someone wants to play with them.

Thank you,

Mary Jane Kasayulie
PO BOX 130
Dillingham Alaska, 99576
1-888-648-4325 or local 842-3398
FAX 1-907-842-2039

Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information pursuant to state and federal laws. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies.

Dear Representatives

Thank you for your work
for Alaska /children /ect.

I am a parent in the
Hoonah Pat Center.

The program has Helped
me in many ways such as
from the time I got pregnant with
my child, they gave me all
the information I need to
learn what I was to expect.
an every month they give me
stuff on what my child should
be doing.

I am thankful to have
this program here they
teach me on how to deal with
my kids when they are bad.
this program makes my life
easier. Thank you again

Thank you
Amelia Lafferly
po Box 425
Hoonah AK 99829
945-3126

Cathy Henderson
P O Box 505
Kake, AK 99830

February 5, 2009

Representative Chris Tuck
Fax (907) 465-3810
Attn: Aurah Laneau

Dear Rep. Tuck,

I am a Head Start Teacher Aide in Kake. Our program has received four three year old children in the past two to three years as early entries to our program which serves ages three to five year old children. The early entry children have entered our program as soon as they turn three vs. having to wait on the calendar school year before they can start. The reason for their early entry is because they have been identified as having some sort of developmental or physical delays. These children are identified through either the Early Infant Learning Program or the Parents as Teachers Program. The early intervention they have received has allowed them to overcome delays that left unaddressed likely would be carried with them throughout their lives. While children are still young they can learn to correct behaviors and impediments. If not addressed early problems become habit.

I feel early identification of correctable concerns is the primary asset to having the Parents as Teacher Program (PAT). In addition, the program is a very much needed partnership with the parent. Most parents have no idea what is developmentally appropriate for their children. Developmentally appropriate means knowledge of: at what stage a child is ready to learn what, when it is best to introduce new things and how to do so in order for the child to best ingest it. To put it as simple as possible, the PAT program can help a parent see that the basics like talking to, interacting with and reading to your child from the beginning of life is instrumental to their learning ability.

Please, on behalf of Alaska's children; help provide this valuable tool to the communities that have no idea what they are missing.

Sincerely,

Cathy Henderson
Cathy Henderson

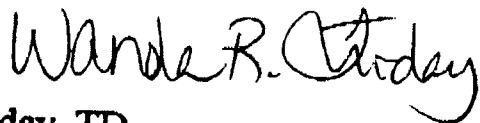
February 9, 2009

Dear Representative Tuck,

Hello, my name is Wanda Friday and I am the Teacher Director at the Head Start Center here in Kake. I am writing in support of the Parents As Teachers program (House Bill 69). I think it is a very valuable program – it not only benefits the infants/toddlers & their families, but parents and parents-to-be as well! I am the PAT home visitor's supervisor here in Kake and I am required to accompany her on 3 home visits & to observe three of her group socials. I have seen first hand what activities and information is provided to parents & children. The home visitor wears many, many hats! She provides activities for the parents to do with their child on the visit & for them to also continue doing throughout the week (until their next visit) which helps the child strengthen & develop specific skills. The home visitor also provides parents with information about their child's development. On every visit, each child receives a storybook that they get to keep, which promotes literacy! Last, but not least, the home visitor is an advocate for children & parents, whether it is helping families with an immediate need (such as emergency assistance for fuel or food) or helping them get a referral for medical services.

The PAT program is valuable to me because they help us find children for our program. Most importantly, the PAT program works with the Infant Learning Program to help identify children with special needs and they both work together to make sure children and their families receive all of the services they need. We have wonderful success stories here in Kake regarding children who have transitioned from Infant Learning & the Parents As Teachers program into our center. The sooner needs are identified, the sooner children can receive the services they need to help them succeed in school and in life. Thank you for your time and thank you for supporting this wonderful program!

Sincerely,



Wanda R. Friday, TD

Kake City School District

*P.O. Box 450
Kake, Alaska 99830
(907) 785-3741*

February 7, 2009

Representative Chris Tuck
Capitol Building Room: 426
Juneau, AK 99801

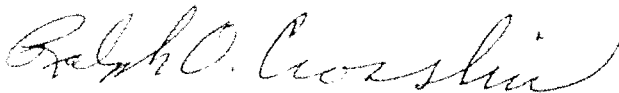
Dear Representative Tuck:

I write this letter in support of House Bill 69: Parents as Teachers. It is well known that parents are their children's first teachers. Sadly, however, many parents lack the skills and/or knowledge to send their children to school ready to learn. The voluntary Parents as Teachers home visiting program for families with children prenatally up to kindergarten entry age highlighted in IIB 69 appears ideally suited to fill this gap.

Please know that the Kake City School District fully supports HB 69 and urges its passage. The future of our community, state and nation requires our best efforts to secure rich educational opportunities for our children beginning at the earliest possible age, ideally in the family home.

We in Kake are thankful for the current Parents as Teachers and Head Start programs operating in our district and feel that an expansion of the Parents as Teachers program state wide would bring forth results far exceeding the funds required to implement the program. Please contact our district office if we can provide additional support.

Respectfully,



Ralph O. Crosslin
Superintendent

Kake City School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer

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

From: rose wassillie [<mailto:togiakrose@yahoo.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2009 10:56 AM

To: Rep. Les Gara

Subject: Parent As Teachers program

Thank you Rep. Gara for your support in this program. My child has been in the program since she was one years old she is now four years old. Her desire is to go to "big school". She enjoys the program so much. This has encouraged me as a parent to become involved in school activities. This is positive and very encouraging program for children and parents. Once again, Thank you for your support.

PAT Parent Rose Wassillie

1 Peter 5:7 "casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."

Aurah Landau

From: Audrey Jones [audreyjaz@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 4:04 PM
To: Rep. Chris Tuck
Subject: Fw: home base schools

My name is Audrey Jones from Fairbanks, Alaska. I had my son in the home base program (Parents as Teachers) starting when he was 2 years old. I am a stay at home mom and it was eye opening for me to realize how much I could teach him at home.

The program helped me teach him colors, shapes, sorting and more importantly how to play and explore with him. I've played some but, I'm always trying to clean the house, run the errands, cook dinner, do the laundry and I never saw play with him as important. If it wasn't for this program, him and I would have driven each other nuts.

He is now four years old and in the headstart program, but we have made a connection with each other that I think we would have missed out on if it had not been for the home base program. A speech impediment was recognized early on and the home base teacher helped us find a speech therapist for my son.

Plus, I always looked forward to the home base visiting us just to have an adult to chat with during the week. She gave me helpful ideas, encouragement and sometimes a shoulder when none others were available.

The program also offered us socials to attend, once a month, to get together with other kids and their parents. They offered lunch or dinners and opportunities to play in groups. He has transitioned nicely into a headstart program through these socials and the structure and regularity that our home base teacher provided.

Thank you for funding these programs that reached out to a home bound mother that luckily was accepted as a recipient of their services.

A sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
A sheltering angel, so nothing can harm you.
~Irish Blessing



Representative Chris Tuck

State Capitol Building

4th Floor, Room 426

Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: (907) 465-2095

Dear Representative Chris Tuck,

I am writing to ask you to support continued funding for the RurAL CAP Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program. My daughter and I are participants in the Anchorage PAT Program and I want to share with you some of the ways the program has impacted our lives.

Our PAT Family Visitor provides home visits every other week. At each visit she shares information on brain development and how I can foster my daughter's growth and development. We always learn a new activity that is specific to my daughter and her milestones. Each visit also includes a book or literacy activity and often we get a book to keep and add to our own collection. We enjoy each visit and the fun activities our PAT Family Visitor shares with us.

The PAT Program holds group socializations at least twice every month. These provide opportunities for children and parents to get together, play, learn something new and have fun! We are looking forward to our next group social at the public library where we will learn about all of the activities they provide for children.

Our PAT Family Visitor has also been a huge support to me in the loss of one of my children. She has offered me resources and even more importantly an ear to listen when I'm having a rough day. Although I don't think I will ever completely heal from this loss; the PAT Program has provided me with some of the tools I need to be the best mother I can be for my daughter.

The PAT Program has taught me that I am my daughter's first and best teacher. My daughter was born 10 weeks premature and is flourishing; I am certain that our participation in the PAT Program has given her an advantage and has given me the tools and resources I need to better support her growth and development. The PAT Program has empowered me to be an advocate for my daughter.

I hope that you will share this with your colleagues and please encourage them to also support funding for the RurAL CAP PAT Program.

Sincerely,

Alicia Notti

RurAL CAP PAT Parent



Carolyn Robison

From: PAT Anchorage
Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2009 1:41 PM
To: Carolyn Robison
Subject: Parent Letter of support

Hi Carolyn, I don't know who to forward this to but I'm sure you do! I may be sending you one or two more. Thanks! -Rozel

From: Jeudy_Baby [mailto:jeudy_baby@asdk12.org]
Sent: Thu 2/12/2009 11:41 AM
To: PAT Anchorage
Subject: Parents As Teachers

Chris Tuck,

I am writing this letter to express how bless i am to be in the PAT program. I am a single mother of one and also young. I teach bilingual for elementary level kids but didn't know how to teach my 1 year. Rozel is a wonderful person to learn from she is very understanding flexible and down to earth. I am very happy that she is the type of person she is which reflex on the program. She always shared different resources with me and does research on various things that i might need. My daughter is learning three different languages and is also speaking all three of them. We love coming out to our PAT nights and learn new ways that I can help my daughter with and also she knows that she'll end up with a free book. I've learned how to use just regular stuff around the house to teach my daughter to learn how to be more independent and grow. I've learn so many ways that I can spend with her just doing little things that she can use later on in life i am so bless and eternally thankful that I could be in a program that teaches me how to be a better mother something I personally pray about everyday. I'm bless for the guidance. When Rozel left me a message wondering if i could write to you and sharing with you why I think that the PAT program deserve the states Grant I was very happy to write because the program changed my life and my daughters it's helping us learn from each other. I even use some of the wonderful learning tactics with my little kindergartens so it works. Again the PAT program deserve the State grants and every other grants out there. Thank you Have a great day.

Baby Jeudy
Muldoon Elementary School
Bilingual
(907) 742-1406
Jeudy_baby@asdk12.org

Aurah Landau

From: NicShelt9@aol.com

Sent: Monday, February 16, 2009 7:07 PM

To: Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Chris Tuck; Rep. Bob Buch; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Wes Keller; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Peggy Wilson

Subject: HB 69 Alaska Parents as Teachers

Representatives of the House Education Committee,

I needed to summarize for other public uses my last week's testimony regarding Parents as Teachers. I thought it may be of some use to you for your future deliberations on HB 69.

I have worked in the Parents as Teachers program for the past 14 years. I was fortunate enough to be the first parent educator hired when Hoonah implemented PAT in 1995, the first program in Alaska. The program has now expanded to 47 communities across Alaska.....because it works!

PAT is a win-win program: parents are empowered to take control of their children's learning from birth. Parent educators offer families personalized visits, which are conducted at the location of the parents' choosing. Usually it is in the home, but visits also occur at Head Start, child care centers/homes, McDonald's, or church basements. Visits occur where the families choose to visit. The advantage of the homes is that parent educators can coach the parent with the parent-child activity using the materials normally found in the child's environment. 70% of Hoonah's visits occur at homes; 30% occur at other places.

PAT is a "strengths model" which stresses that parents are the experts of their children, and that families will set their own goals for their children. Empowerment results when the parent educator is the resource who offers research-based strategies and options. It is the parents who choose which options are appropriate for their family and circumstances.

I became a National Trainer for the Parents as Teachers National Center in 1995. I periodically train new parent educators in Alaska and the lower 48, although Alaska is my priority. The training is intense, and parent educators must pass daily assessments, a role-play of a personal visit with a family, and be evaluated as competent to deliver the PAT services to families. Not every participant in the trainings is certified, and the standards are strict. Parent educators are not state employees or caseworkers, but are local residents hired by the local program who operates Parents as Teachers.

Parents as Teachers works with all family configurations: single parents, teen parents, grandparents raising grandchildren, foster and adoptive parents, and extended families rearing children. Each family's goals are different; each personal visit is different as a result.

Parents as Teachers works equally well with families who choose differing education avenues for their children: home schooling, public schools, or private schools. PAT is the first step in parents taking control of their children's learning at birth. Private schools aren't an option in Hoonah, but PAT has been popular with home-schooling parents here. One of our current PAT parent educators and one of our previous parent educators also homeschooled their children, a clear indication

that the partnership works very well.

School readiness is so vital to children. Independent research shows that children who participate in Parents as Teachers enter Kindergarten ready to learn, and they have great success throughout their elementary years. This is true regardless of which educational option families choose at age 5.

I urge you to vote yes on HB 69. The Parents as Teachers' vision is that "All children will learn, grow, and develop to their full potential." All Alaskan communities can achieve this as a reality through Parents as Teachers.

If I can provide any information about the Parents as Teachers program, the training component, or other aspects of PAT, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and for your work on the Education Committee on behalf of Alaska's youngest citizens.

Nicki Shelton, National Trainer
Parents as Teachers
PO Box 101
Hoonah, AK 99829

(907) 945-3380

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Aurah Landau

From: David Theriault
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2009 8:15 AM
To: Aurah Landau
Subject: One more letter of support


Dear Representative Gara,

I am writing this letter in support of establishing voluntary Parents As Teachers home visiting programs for children ages prenatally to age five in the state of Alaska.

I am the Director of Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three, an Early Intervention-Infant Learning Program in Homer, Alaska. I am also a Developmental Specialist for this agency. We currently provide early intervention services such as physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, special instruction and family service coordination to children in southern Kenai Peninsula that are experiencing developmental delays.

We also have a "Universal Access" program, which is operated under our "Parents As Teachers" program model. This program is offered to children and families prenatally to age three, regardless of delay. We team this program with our weekly playgroup activities, and have had huge success with identifying and meeting the needs of families in our community whose children may not meet the 50% developmental delay requirement that "Part C" early intervention dictates.


Our agency educator provides home visiting services utilizing "Parents as Teachers" curriculum as an added service to our weekly playgroup activity. This service is offered universally to families, with the only requirement being age (prenatal to age three for our agency).



The benefits of having this service available to families has been astonishing, to say the least. I can tell you with all certainty that this truly falls in the category of "proactive" care and support to families with young children. We are able to begin the journey with the family right from the start; ideally prenatally. This journey includes education in prenatal topics, breastfeeding, preparing for your newborn, fatherhood, postpartum depression, child development, parenting techniques, etc. The journey with our agency's home visitor/educator includes family support, community resource connection, a rich lending library of toys/equipment/books and other educational resources. We also join with other related agencies such as Public Health Nurses, to offer joint home visits to further support child and family needs.

The results of this effective service have been exciting. Our agency is able to establish a relationship early with a family, helping them to become more familiar with child development and early education needs. We are involved early in the child's life, and therefore if we have concerns about development, we can address the needs quickly and often with results that will bring the child to age appropriate development in a shorter span of time. We have been able to identify children and refer them to early intervention through this program.

Additionally, our program offers services of developmental screening through the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), which is an unfunded mandate. We have seen an increase in the number of referrals to our agency over the past year by 300%. The referrals are received from our local Office of Children's Services, and are children under the age of three that have experienced substantiated abuse or neglect. In other words, they are the children who are under age three, whose families are referred to OCS. Birth 2 Three provides developmental screening to these children and provides services as appropriately determined by the results of the screening.



Many of these children are not yet significantly delayed in development, but are living within a family that poses a high risk environment. It may just be a matter of time until a developmental delay exists with many of these children. The "Parents As Teachers" home visiting program is often a great fit for these families, whose child may not qualify for early intervention. Home visiting allows for relationship building with the family, support and mentorship. The burden that this lifts from our OCS system has been established already and results have been positive.

As wonderful as this sounds, I would like to address the limitation that our agency is experiencing. This involves adequate funding of our "Parents As Teachers" home visiting program. We must locate other sources of funding, which for Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three, is sought after through United Way of Kenai Peninsula and the City of Homer. Although very much appreciated, this has not adequately funded the need of the "Parents As Teachers" program. We could be offering a great deal more to families; frequency of home visits, more resources, educational materials, activities, and increasing our enrollment of families. Additionally, our funds for this program are being threatened with the existing trends of the economy. Birth 2 Three may not be able to continue to offer this service to families in the future without support.

"Parents As Teachers" is a program that is modeled after best practices, is family-centered and family-strengthening. I believe that if we can get behind this initiative and bring this home visiting model to our state of Alaska, while funding it appropriately, we will see positive results. These results could be obtained within a fairly short time-span and with cost-effectiveness, quite possibly acting as the catalyst in moving our state toward reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

Thank you for your consideration, passion and hard work on this initiative. If you have any questions, comments, or need further information, please don't hesitate to call me.

Respectfully,

Jan Thoemke, Director
Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three
3691 Ben Walters Lane, Suite #4
Homer, Alaska 99603
(907) 235-6044
(907) 235-2644 fax
jthoemke@acsalaska.net

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

From: Jane Bailey [mailto:jbailey@chugachschools.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2009 9:03 AM
To: David Theriault
Cc: mpickle@ruralcap.com; bcrumley@chugachschools.com;
dtreece@chugachschools.com
Subject:

I am writing in support of Alaska's Parents As Teachers.

Twenty-one employees from our Early Childhood Partnership districts (Chugach School District, Bering Strait School District, Kuspuk School District, and Lake and Peninsula School District) were able to participate in an excellent training provided by Rural Cap called Parents As Teachers November 3-11, 2008. The PAT home intervention program and family group meetings are being implemented in 14/24 sites (58.33%) in the partnership districts. It will be implemented next year in the remaining sites. Our partnership currently serves 150 students ages 3 and 4.

We were only able to offer this service due to an ANE grant we received. We are currently in funding year 1 of 3.

The following are quotes by participants in the training:

Julie Egli, Unalakleet: "I believe with proper implementation, PAT may be the answer to our search for a quality research-based program to help our preschool children transition successfully into kindergarten."

Tonya Christensen, Port Heiden: "If we can get parents more involved, children will have more success in school."

Evelyn Chamberlain, Aniak: "PAT has lots of ideas on how to read to a child to issues such as toilet training biting, etc."

Valerie Engebretson, Nondalton: "There is so much we take for granted in our busy lives that we don't see all the great things we can share and learn with our children. PAT is a great experience for you to share with your child."

LeeAnn Galusha, Chenega Bay: "I love the resources that PAT provides."

Anna Gregorieff, Tatitlek: "Great material, great info!"

Unknown: "PAT empowers parents and gives our children the early interventions they need."

Waynna Fremin, Aniak: "The children in our communities deserve to be given this opportunity! Thanks for providing our district with this training."

Glenda Egli, King Salmon: "PAT provides a wealth of resources to support parents with their child's early learning and growth."

--

Jane Bailey
ANE Early Childhood Co-Coordinator
OIE Brighter Beginnings Coordinator
Chugach School District

From: Jan Thoemke [mailto:jlthoemke@atsi.tv]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2009 12:32 AM
To: David Theriault
Subject: Parents As Teachers Program

Dear Representative Gara,

I am writing this letter in support of establishing voluntary Parents As Teachers home visiting programs for children ages prenatally to age five in the state of Alaska.

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Respectfully,

Jan Thoemke, Director
Homer Children's Services/Birth 2 Three
3691 Ben Walters Lane, Suite #4
Homer, Alaska 99603
(907) 235-6044
(907) 235-2644 fax
jthoemke@acsalaska.net