



Yuut Elitnaurviat

P E O P L E ' S L E A R N I N G C E N T E R

Alaska National Guard • Association of Village Council Presidents • Association of Village Council Presidents, Regional Housing Authority • Bethel Community Services Foundation • Calista Corporation • City of Bethel • Lower Kuskokwim School District • Orutsaramuit Native Council • UAF – Kuskokwim Campus • Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation

March 25, 2013

RE: HB 150-TVEP Sunset Extension

ATTN: Labor and Commerce Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Yuut Elitnaurviat-People's Learning Center Inc. (YE) recently learned the House Bill 150 is being reviewed and if approved will change the sunset date for Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) from 2014 to 2024. YE is 100% in support of this bill.

YE is a fully operational vocational school located in Bethel. Our organization was created to deliver workforce development programs to our region, the most populated in rural Alaska. The legislature took a leap of faith and named YE as a TVEP recipient when the program was created in 2004. YE was still early in its development, and this investment from the state made it possible to pilot programs while our campus was still under construction. When we became fully operational in 2009 we were ready to expand and we hit the ground running. Our service numbers jumped from an average of 150 per year during development to nearly 3,000 in 2012.

YE fully utilizes all of our TVEP funding by March or April of each fiscal year. We then spend earned revenue to get us through the end of each year. As it stands we have struck a nice balance with our business model. Our staffing is small, but adequate. Our programs are robust and responsive to our regional workforce development needs. When fuel costs increased dramatically last summer and heating fuel hit \$7 a gallon, we invested in wind turbines and solar panels. The net effect has been that our costs are the same as they were the year before the increase. Our current funding level ensures we are frugal and encourages us to constantly strive to improve and explore new opportunities.

We have data and statistics demonstrating the state's investment in our activities is a good value. As it presently stands TVEP constitutes approximately 24% of our annual operating budget. In return for this investment YE provided services to 2981 individuals in fiscal year 2012. YE has developed a very sophisticated customized student tracking database over the last 7 years. The database tracks students progress through programs and after they enter the workforce. YE services include direct training for dozens of industry driven classes, career guide services, GED instruction & testing (largest program in rural Alaska), Rural Alaska's only State Certified Driving School (permit classes, behind the wheel training, ADL & CDL testing), hosting the Dental Therapy Program (the only of its kind in the US), Rural Alaska's only full apprenticeship programs for Industrial Electric, Plumbing & Carpentry, coordinating the RANSEP program (brings village based students to Bethel so that they can take advanced math and science classes), and YE now hosts Village Police Officer Trainings for the entire state.

YE carefully collects student data and keeps impeccable financial records. We take our commitment to our funders seriously and strive to ensure we are always good stewards of all public and private funds that support our endeavors. Our greatest pride however is our commitment to our students. We know



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them. We know their families. Their success is our success. We link our services and programs to encourage students to keep advancing.

George Kameroff graduated from Aniak High School and went on to complete our Certificate in Construction and Maintenance in 2012. He then enrolled in our Electrical Apprenticeship program with Chulista. Receiving the certificate allowed him to transfer 500 hours towards his apprenticeship program. .

Debbie Rushing moved to Bethel and completed her GED at YE at age 54. She is now enrolled in our Certified Nursing Assistant Program (CNA) and has a job waiting as soon as she finishes the program in March.

Eddie Stanley Jr. received his GED at YE. He then completed our Certificate in Construction and Maintenance and entered our Electrical Apprenticeship Program. The licensed electrical journeyman who is now signing off on Eddie's apprenticeship hours, Jason Martin, is a graduate of our apprenticeship program in his own right.

YE is currently partnered with the Association of Village Council Presidents to deliver a welding class. We have a cohort of 9 students who upon completion of the program will go straight to work building the boardwalks in their own community. After the guaranteed experience this summer, these new welders will have both classroom and real-world work experience under their belts. They will be highly qualified for additional high wage jobs at remote camp sites throughout the state.

Anthony Nevak was a 19 year old junior in danger of dropping out. YE recruited him into the RANSEP Program. He came to Bethel from Toksook Bay for two semesters of advanced math and science coursework. He completed both the ANSEP Acceleration Academy and the ANSEP Summer Bridge Program. Anthony graduated in 2012 and entered UAA without needing any remedial classes. He is now excelling in his freshman year of college at UAA with the ANSEP program.

TVEP funding has been critical to our success. We believe that the TVEP program is a great investment, and an effective way for the State to support workforce development in the YK Delta.

Sincerely,

Kurt Kuhne
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