



31st Alaska State Legislature  
House Finance Budget Subcommittee  
Department of Education and Early Development  
FY20 Operating Budget

***Chair:***

Rep. Dan Ortiz  
Capitol Room 513  
465-3824

***Members:***

Rep. Harriet Drummond  
Capitol Room 108  
465-3875

Rep. Andi Story  
Capitol Room 13  
465-3744

Rep. Grier Hopkins  
Capitol Room 409  
465-4457

Rep. Chris Tuck  
Capitol Room 24  
465-2095

Rep. Tiffany Zulkosky  
Capitol Room 416  
465-4942

Rep. Josh Revak  
Capitol Room 110  
465-3879

Rep. DeLena Johnson  
Capitol Room 405  
465-4958

Rep. Ben Carpenter  
Capitol Room 400  
465-3779

***Committee Aide:***

Caroline Hamp  
465-2357

House Finance Subcommittee  
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)

Friday, March 8, 2019 Meeting

**Written Public Testimony  
Libraries, Archives, and Museums**

Post Office Box 149  
Hyder, Alaska 99923  
Phone: (250) 636-9148



In Canada reply to:  
Post Office Box 861  
Stewart, B.C  
VOT 1W0.

February 28, 2019

Representative Dan Ortiz,

**The residents of Hyder are opposed to the elimination of State funding for the Online With Libraries (OWL) program. Without this subsidy our community could not afford internet at the Public Library, which is the only fast, reliable internet connection in town. Hyder does not have cell phone service; no one here can connect to the internet using a cell phone. The OWL subsidy is critical for our rural community to keep in touch with the rest of the State.**

Internet service in Hyder is only via satellite. Home satellite internet is slow, and unusable for sending or receiving large files. Home service is also expensive, approaching \$100 per month which is financially out of reach of many Hyder residents. The community is listed as a Distressed Community by the Denali Commission, with 98% of residents earning less than minimum wage year round.

The Public Library internet is the only site in town capable of handling Distance Learning classes, Home Schooled students, Videoconferencing, and conducting any business which is beyond the capability of a home internet connection.

In summer the Public Library internet connection is used – and greatly appreciated by – a large number of tourists

Beginning in FY 2018 our Public Library has used an internet provider that is less expensive, yet has provided excellent service for our needs. Consequently our OWL subsidy decreased from \$890 /month to \$720 /month. We have done what we can to keep costs down, and see that as a better alternative than completely cutting off the OWL program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wes Loe", written over a horizontal line.

Wes Loe  
HCA President

Representative Ortiz  
Room 513  
February 28, 2019

Dear Representative Ortiz,

As an Alaska resident for the past 20 years, I am asking for your help in opposing the Governor's budget. His proposed budget makes too many reductions, too deeply while offering no vision for Alaska's future. The proposed cuts to education and health are particularly drastic since lowering the quality of Alaska's schools and universities will limit our future, lower our quality of life and health, increase crime, and shrink our economy. While I recognize that we must control our state spending, we should do so in a managed and deliberate manner, implementing our budget reductions over the next four years while we are improving our economy and increasing revenues.

I am asking for your support in opposing the Governor's budget for our schools and universities. *If* it is necessary to cut their budgets further than what has been done the last 4 years, then please limit any reductions to a maximum of 5 percent for the next fiscal year while outlining what additional reductions will be needed over the next three years. We must take care that we do not fail in fulfilling our constitutional mandates. Alaska's future is more than just a math problem!

In addition to my concern for the broad budget cuts for our schools and universities, there are two state library programs that deserve to be restored in the Department of Education and Early Development budget. Online with Libraries (OWL) and Live Homework Help are two highly effective programs that were cut completely from DEED's budget. I am asking for your support to restore at 95% OWL's funding (\$636,500) and funding for LHH (\$131,290). Again, it is critical that we manage the budget cuts over the next four years in a deliberate manner, charting a course for a stable economy for Alaska's future.

Sincerely,



Steve Rollins  
12840 Lupine Rd  
Anchorage, AK 99516  
Email: ansjr3@gmail.com

PS. I support keeping the PFD at \$1600 or even less!

**From:** Terry and Krystie DePue <[eagle123@hughes.net](mailto:eagle123@hughes.net)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 28, 2019 9:48 AM  
**To:** [tjaked@hughes.net](mailto:tjaked@hughes.net)  
**Subject:** Supplemental funding for internet in rural communities

Good Morning -

I am the technology librarian for Eagle Public Library in Eagle, AK. In our very remote community the library provides the only public access to internet. We do not have cell service and having the internet available for those who cannot afford to have internet in their homes is essential. Our community members will not be able to apply for jobs, communicate with family members, file essential governmental paperwork, research how to fix a heater when in breaks, access banking accounts, purchase an airline ticket, and the list goes on. I agree that we need a common sense budget, at home when things get tight we have to pick and choose where the money is spent so that we can avoid debt. I agree that the Alaskan government has been funding programs that need to be trimmed. However cutting everything in one chunk may not be the best option for our state and residents. My question is now that internet is no longer a luxury item how is the library that is run on a volunteer basis going to come up with the extra money to provide internet to the community? We use the erate funding that covers 90% of the cost of internet, but as we choose our internet provider for this coming year we will need to come up with an additional \$5000 to provide even bare minimum internet service (25mb down/5mb up) out of our meager budget of \$19000. As we accept funds from erate we are not allowed to charge for the internet to make up the difference and our library cannot absorb the additional costs. We are not requesting help in a luxury item, but an essential service, the internet is now a utility like electricity. Our community members require access to this service and the most economical way is through the library as an access point.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Krystie DePue  
Eagle Public Library  
Eagle, AK 99738  
907-547-2306