

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 171(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/15/02

Referred: Today's Calendar

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES KAPSNER, Stevens, Kookesh, Joule, Whitaker, McGuire, Berkowitz, Fate, Wilson, Meyer, Croft, Murkowski, Kerttula, Hayes, Guess, Morgan, Dyson, Foster, Halcro, James, Hudson, Cissna, Crawford, Moses, Davies, Harris, Williams, Coghill, Green, Mulder

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to a curriculum for Alaska history; and providing for an effective**
2 **date."**

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

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

6 FINDINGS AND INTENT. (a) The legislature finds that

7 (1) an education rich in history and government is vital to the development of
8 a representative democracy and a civil society; knowledge of a person's own state history and
9 government is fundamental to informed and effective participation in state and local affairs;

10 (2) Alaska's human history is at least 10,000 years old and reflects the
11 diversity of Native, European, American, and Asian cultures; the study of Alaska history
12 should be as rich as Alaska's origins and evolution as a political community, and it should
13 take into consideration the ancient, historic, and modern interactions of Native, European,
14 American, and Asian cultures, economies, governments, and values; every student graduating

1 from an Alaska secondary school should do so with a demonstrable understanding of Alaska's
2 rich and unique history;

3 (3) the face of Alaska is changing demographically, economically, and
4 socially; the speed of change makes it imperative for Alaska's citizens and leaders to have a
5 sound understanding of the state's history;

6 (4) a knowledge of history provides a context for understanding where
7 Alaskans came from and what Alaskans value about the diversity and richness of the state;
8 that knowledge can help Alaskans make decisions individually and collectively that will
9 protect and enhance what Alaskans value both now and into the future;

10 (5) a civics component to an Alaska history curriculum, including how
11 Alaska's economy and Alaska's form of government developed, is crucial to understanding
12 how to deal with today's issues, including urban and rural cooperation and the state's fiscal
13 challenges;

14 (6) an educated Alaska populace with a full appreciation for the history of
15 Alaska will make better decisions for the good of all Alaska citizens, both rural and urban;

16 (7) an understanding of Alaska's history will help Alaska avoid mistakes of
17 the past and will contribute to a prosperous, successful future for all Alaskans;

18 (8) Alaska schools are positioned to transmit knowledge of Alaska history to
19 the majority of people who will inhabit Alaska in coming generations;

20 (9) 22 other states currently require by statute the teaching of state history;

21 (10) over the past decade, a number of instructional resources have become
22 available and could be used to teach courses on Alaska and Alaska Native history.

23 (b) It is the intent of this Act

24 (1) to ensure that every future Alaska high school graduate receive instruction
25 in Alaska history through a locally adopted curriculum that meets the state social studies
26 standards;

27 (2) that Alaska school districts should receive the instructional support needed
28 to put an Alaska history curriculum in place and to prepare teachers to maximize the effect of
29 the curriculum;

30 (3) to encourage public and private involvement and support for
31 implementation of an Alaska history curriculum;

1 (4) to provide for a broad based Alaska history curriculum that includes study
 2 of the state's geography, resource development, economics, government, anthropology, art,
 3 Native history, and cultural relationships.

4 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.255(a) is amended to read:

5 (a) A charter school operates as a school in the local school district except that
 6 the charter school (1) is exempt from the local school district's textbook, program,
 7 curriculum, and scheduling requirements; (2) is exempt from AS 14.14.130(c); the
 8 principal of the charter school shall be selected by the academic policy committee and
 9 shall select, appoint, or otherwise supervise employees of the charter school; and (3)
 10 operates under the charter school's annual program budget as set out in the contract
 11 between the local school board and the charter school under (c) of this section. A
 12 local school board may exempt a charter school from other local school district
 13 requirements if the exemption is set out in the contract. A charter school is subject to
 14 secondary school competency testing as provided in AS 14.03.075 and other
 15 competency tests required by the department. **A charter school is subject to Alaska**
 16 **history education requirements under AS 14.30.440.**

17 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

18 **Article 6A. Alaska History Education.**

19 **Sec. 14.30.440. Alaska history education.** (a) Each governing body shall
 20 develop a standards-based Alaska history education curriculum within grades 9
 21 through 12. The curriculum must include a Native studies component. The
 22 curriculum shall be implemented as a part of regular classroom studies and must
 23 require that each student complete the curriculum with a passing grade as a
 24 requirement for graduation.

25 (b) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, a governing body may waive
 26 completion of the curriculum described under (a) of this section as a requirement for
 27 graduation for a student who transfers into the district from another state or country
 28 after completion of the student's junior year.

29 (c) In this section,

30 (1) "curriculum" means a course of study that, by the completion of the
 31 12th grade, is the equivalent of at least one semester;

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

2 * **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
3 read:

4 **APPLICABILITY.** This Act applies to students who begin the ninth grade on or after
5 July 1, 2003.

6 * **Sec. 5.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2002.