

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

April 10, 2002

8:06 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Con Bunde, Chair  
Representative Peggy Wilson  
Representative Gary Stevens  
Representative Reggie Joule

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Brian Porter  
Representative Joe Green  
Representative Gretchen Guess

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Professional Teaching Practices Commission

Steven Beardsley - Anchorage  
Donna Peterson - Kenai  
Vickie McCubbin - Anchorage  
- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

Education and Early Development Board

Sally Rue - Juneau  
- CONFIRMATION ADVANCED

University of Alaska Board of Regents

Mark Begich - Anchorage  
Joseph Hardenbrook - Fairbanks  
Marlene Johnson - Juneau  
- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

HOUSE BILL NO. 293

"An Act relating to the teachers' housing loan program in the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING POSTPONED

**PREVIOUS ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

STEVEN BEARDSLEY, Appointee  
to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission  
13201 Reef Place  
Anchorage, Alaska 99515

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

DONNA PETERSON, Appointee  
to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission  
52856 Tenakee Loop  
Kenai, Alaska 99611

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

VICKIE MCCUBBIN, Appointee  
to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission  
4272 Birch Run Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99507

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

SALLY RUE, Appointee  
to the Education and Early Development Board  
7083 Hendrickson Road  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Education and Early Development Board.

MARK BEGICH, Appointee  
to the University of Alaska Board of Regents  
P.O. Box 201627  
Anchorage, Alaska 99520

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

JOSEPH HARDENBROOK, Appointee  
to the University of Alaska Board of Regents  
P.O. Box 750362  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-0362  
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the University of  
Alaska Board of Regents.

MARLENE JOHNSON, Appointee  
to the University of Alaska Board of Regents  
8800 Glacier Highway, Suite 109  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the University of  
Alaska Board of Regents.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

TAPE 02-15, SIDE A  
Number 0001

CHAIR CON BUNDE called the House Special Committee on Education meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. Representatives Bunde, Wilson, and Stevens were present at the call to order. Representative Joule arrived as the meeting was in progress.

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

CHAIR BUNDE brought before the committee the confirmation of appointees to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Education and Early Development Board, and the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

Professional Teaching Practices Commission

Number 0128

STEVEN BEARDSLEY, Appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, testified via teleconference. He explained that for the past three years he has been a member of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission and has learned quite a bit about the difficulties facing school districts around the state, especially with respect to retention of teachers. He told the members that he found the districts were knowledgeable about the ethics of teaching and that complaints which had been investigated and ruled upon by the commission were routinely and appropriately handled.

Number 0229

CHAIR BUNDE asked how many complaints have come before the Professional Teaching Practices Commission in the last three years.

MR. BEARDSLEY stated he does not have that number with him. He explained that Bonnie Barber, Executive Director of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, logs and investigates complaints, then brings meritorious cases before the commission. Most of the complaints are handled by her or commission staff.

CHAIR BUNDE asked how many meritorious cases have come before the commission.

MR. BEARDSLEY responded that the commission had a major case that took three days to hear testimony, rule upon it, go into executive session, and then come out with a decision. He estimated there have been five or six cases that were not lengthy.

CHAIR BUNDE shared a concern from school districts that as teacher shortages continue, the pool of applicants continues to fall. He has been told by the districts that they are not taking the "cream of the crop," but rather the "skim milk." Chair Bunde asked if Mr. Beardsley noticed an increase in the number of complaints that have come before board. Chair Bunde also asked if there were more complaints last year than there were the previous year.

Number 0435

MR. BEARDSLEY replied that there are more contractual complaints. He shared a common example, where teachers will go out to the Bush and find that things will not work out. It is an ethical question for them to get up and leave, because it is difficult to find someone at a moment's notice to teach in the Bush. Substitutes are hard to find.

CHAIR BUNDE asked if there were any more questions for Mr. Beardsley. He found there were none, thanked Mr. Beardsley for his service, and advised him that his name would be moved forward for consideration by the full legislature. [There was a motion later.]

Number 0550

DONNA PETERSON, Appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, testified via teleconference. Ms. Peterson explained that her appointment is a replacement for Bob Christal, who was the superintendent representative on the Professional Teaching Practices Commission. She explained that the commission is composed of one superintendent, one principal, and five teachers. Prior to this appointment, she had been sitting in at commission meetings to give a district perspective. She indicated that the commission is seeing an increase in the number of contractual violations, and is reviewing the question of whether it is an ethical violation to pick up, leave one district, and go to another. Ms. Peterson stated that the commission has come out with some guidelines for individuals and districts, and the process of dealing with complaints. Members also deal with crimes and moral turpitude and none believe that a person convicted of those kind of crimes should be with children. She stated that during the short time she has served on the commission it has been a positive experience.

Number 0718

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS asked how much time is devoted to the commission.

MS. PETERSON responded that there are three, two- to three-day meetings per year on average. Sometimes meetings are held by teleconference. The executive director sends the information prior to the meetings so the members can review the case studies prior to the meeting. It normally takes the commission an hour for each case review.

Number 0816

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON inquired about the reasons behind contractual complaints. Is the problem that the working conditions are completely different from what they expected?

MS. PETERSON agreed that is part of the recruitment and retention problem. She further indicated her uncertainty that the districts are presenting an accurate picture of what it is like to work in a lot of places in Alaska. She explained that some teachers get off the plane and then get right back on, even though they have signed a contract. Ms. Peterson shared some examples of more serious ethical questions, where a teacher goes from one district to another or signs contracts with two districts. The commission must then determine if the teacher

should be sanctioned, or if his/her certificate should be revoked so he/she will not be able to teach in the Alaska. She explained the dilemma that if the commission punishes them, the teachers are not being prepared for a job.

Number 0933

CHAIR BUNDE stated that since there is a signed contract, this is not only an ethical question, but a legal one as well.

MS. PETERSON responded that the districts pursue that kind of recourse. The commission deals with certification and whether they be allowed to work in the state of Alaska.

CHAIR BUNDE inquired if there are allowances for extenuating circumstances in breaking contracts, such as the recent experience in Kivalina.

MS. PETERSON assured Chair Bunde that the commission considers many extenuating circumstances. The question of merit when dealing with ethical violations is very important.

Number 1024

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS asked Ms. Peterson if she is comfortable with the ethics training provided to teachers, and when and where that occurs.

MS. PETERSON said that leadership classes have an ethics component for administrators and superintendents. The expectation is that it is passed on to teachers. The commission also provides a packet to the districts to provide to teachers. This year the commission worked to assure that the poster and the professional code of ethics were in every school. A newsletter goes out three time a year; for example, one of them was on procedures on breach of contract. Ms. Peterson told the members that today the Kenai Peninsula School District is conducting a full day of ethics training with 60 administrators. While each district handles training differently, the Professional Teaching Practices Commission provides the materials.

Number 1200

CHAIR BUNDE shared one concern he heard last fall concerning smaller or remote schools throughout Alaska, which was that the picture painted was not always accurate. The teachers in the

smaller or remote schools were not apprised of the reality of their teaching situation. Chair Bunde asked if there is anything the Professional Teaching Practices Commission can do to counsel districts to prevent these problems by being more realistic in their recruitment activities.

MS. PETERSON explained that the commission has a more informal role with respect to that problem; however, she indicated the commission does work with the Department of Education [and Early Development] from the certification angle with retention-and-recruitment "grants people." The commission lets them know we are seeing increases in breach of contract because of certain factors. The commission has asked them what they are doing to better prepare people to do the job they need to do and honor their contract.

Number 1407

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE asked what recommendations the Professional Teaching Practices Commission would put forward with respect to the breach-of-contract problem. He indicated the committee [House Special Committee on Education] may look at housing problems. However, he asked, based on the problems the commission has seen, what recommendations the commission might offer. Would the commission suggest work on cross-cultural communications, mentorship programs, or other issues that would be helpful in addressing the problem either on the legislative or district level?

MS. PETERSON responded that she does not see that as a charge of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, except on an informal basis. She explained that the commission reviews mitigating circumstances that need to be taken into account when determining a sanction against an individual, and that is when the commission works with districts. The commission might write a letter to the superintendents' association, the state Department of Education [and Early Development], or the legislature, but it would always be based on a contractual breach or sanction.

Number 1740

CHAIR BUNDE stated that he believes that while the Professional Teaching Practices Commission may not have the official charge, it does have the "cache" to encourage districts to reduce these problems before they begin. Chair Bunde thanked Ms. Peterson

for her time and advised her that he would move her name on for consideration.

Number 1815

VICKIE MCCUBBIN, Appointee to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, testified via teleconference. She told members that this will be her second term, if confirmed, on the Professional Teaching Practices Commission. She indicated that she has served on the commission during the previous three years. Her involvement through the commission has included work with the National Education Association of Alaska, the "educational excellence committee," and the "state teachers certification advisory committee." She said her service working with the school districts as the local "AEA" Mentor Coordinator to address the problem of retaining competent teachers has been very rewarding, and she would like to continue to support that effort with her twenty years of teaching experience.

CHAIR BUNDE stated that the committee appreciates her service. Chair Bunde asked what her reaction was to his previous comment that while it is not part of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission's charge, the commission should be willing to pitch in and try to reduce some of these problems before they begin, particularly in the contractual areas.

MS. MCCUBBIN agreed, and said the commission has spent a great deal of time in discussions with its newly appointed executive director, Bonnie Barber. Ms. McCubbin told the committee that the executive director has done a lot of proactive things to work with teachers, districts, and other professional organizations. She indicated that she sees this as a direction the commission has shown a willingness to pursue. She feels it is important to work with districts in advising them of their responsibility in letting new teachers know what's in store for them when they come [to Alaska]. She reiterated agreement that the commission should take a proactive stance, rather than trying to deal with problems in a punitive way later.

Number 1910

CHAIR BUNDE asked if she saw the University of Alaska having a role in screening candidates that have a criminal history.

MS. MCCUBBIN replied that a screening process is in place to look at prospective student teachers before they go into the

classroom. If any problems come to light during that process, it is brought to Ms. Barber for review.

CHAIR BUNDE responded that screening at that point in the student's college career is a little late.

MS. MCCUBBIN indicated that she is not aware of anything earlier in the process, but that it would be worthy of discussion at the next commission meeting. She added that as a member of the Teachers' Licensure Committee she believes it would be appropriate for that committee to focus on the issue, since its venue oversees the steps toward initial certification through the universities.

Number 2027

CHAIR BUNDE asked about the Youth Risk Survey and the concern about privacy. He asked: If teachers do not maintain confidentiality during the administration of the survey, would the commission view that as an ethical violation? Would it be viewed as significant enough to have serious sanction?

MS. MCCUBBIN affirmed that a breach in confidentiality of student information would be viewed as an ethical breach. The commission would review each case individually, look at all circumstances, and determine a sanction.

CHAIR BUNDE said that in the commission's statements regarding ethical conduct with regard to testing, it does not indicate it is unethical for teachers to assist students in taking statewide tests. Chair Bunde questioned why that would be the case.

MS. MCCUBBIN said that while she does not have the statement in front of her, she is sure the commission spent a great deal of time going over all the ethical considerations. Further, she said since the test directions preclude teachers from giving any assistance, if that were to happen [a teacher helping a student during statewide testing], even though it is not specifically spelled out in the statement, it would be considered an ethical breach.

CHAIR BUNDE asked if the fact that a teacher did not follow the specific instructions would that be considered an ethical breach.

MS. MCCUBBIN said that is correct.

CHAIR BUNDE asked if there were other questions. Since there were none, he thanked Ms. McCubbin for her service.

Education and Early Development Board

Number 2341

SALLY RUE, Appointee to the Education and Early Development Board, testified via teleconference. Ms. Rue stated that as the parent of two children who have come up through the Anchorage and Juneau school systems, she has remained an active parent from preschool through high school. She said she currently sits on the site council at the Juneau Douglas High School; however, since her second child is a senior this year, her career there is about to end. Ms. Rue went on to say that she has served two years on the Board of Education and Early Development and has really enjoyed it. Prior to that service, she served two terms on the City and Borough of Juneau board of education. She told the committee that she has a deep and abiding passion for education, has always been involved as a volunteer in this area, and would like to continue.

Number 2500

CHAIR BUNDE asked, other than the constant of "more money for salaries," what the board is considering to improve teacher recruitment and retention.

MS. RUE responded that the board has been looking at a number of things including changes in the certification process by removing some of the obstacles, for example, streamlining some of the paperwork and reducing some of the costs associated with certification. She also said working conditions play a major role in recruitment and retention of new teachers. Some of those issues include lack of adequate resources, need for professional development including mentoring with experienced and/or retired teachers, and adequate notice before classes begin. Ms. Rue pointed out that teaching is the only profession which places the least experienced people in "the deep end of the swimming pool." They are often the last to come into the school, usually with only a day or two notice, and sometimes they do not even know what grade they will teach until the last moment. In addition, new teachers do not have a lot of resources and materials to work with. Last week the board met with Vivian Montoya, the Alaska teacher of the year, who happens to be from Juneau; she spoke about her classroom, the stress she feels about teaching kids to read, and the need to get books in

the hands of kids. Ms. Rue went on to share her personal experiences as a weekly volunteer in her children's classrooms and the advantage of experienced teachers with tremendous resources that they have built up over many years. Some of the classes had whole libraries for kids to choose from. She said that some kids do not have easy access to books, and she feels it would be very helpful to make sure that when new teachers come into the classroom, they have access to a richer learning environment.

Number 2731

CHAIR BUNDE agreed that it is important to have the resources available for new teachers. He said that when his wife retired from teaching kindergarten, she passed all of that information on to another teacher. Chair Bunde asked if Ms. Rue heard earlier discussions about the youth risk survey and the concern about the "Big Brother" perception by the general public. If so, what role does she see the board taking in addressing this issue?

MS. RUE told the committee that as community leaders, the board has the "bully pulpit" to talk to people about issues and ensure that accurate information is distributed. However, with respect to this particular issue, she is unsure of any further role for the board. Ms. Rue explained that it is vital to have good information, whether as an academic to improve student performance, to prevent drug and alcohol abuse, or to assist in other issues kids face. While many communities, including Juneau, participate in the youth at risk survey, Anchorage does not, which takes out such a huge chunk of the population that the statistics statewide are not valid. She believes it would be very helpful to allow districts to give the surveys without having to work so hard to get positive permission from parents.

Number 3000

CHAIR BUNDE stated that he does not see hard work as the issue, but that the hard work did not produce the results that were hoped for. Chair Bunde stated that the Board of Education and Early Development's web site is not very timely. As of late March it still had the tentative agenda for February and approval of the minutes of the November meeting. He said he is concerned that untimely information would encourage suspicion of the education system, and encouraged Ms. Rue to take a look into the accuracy and timeliness of the web site.

MS. RUE agreed that is a point well taken and assured the committee she will look into it.

Number 3110

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS asked about the time commitment required in serving on the Board of Education and Early Development.

MS. RUE replied that the time commitment is significant. She explained that there are quarterly meetings that typically last three days, with one day as a work session. In addition, there are usually two special meetings, and a retreat each year. The board members must also review packets prior to each meeting. These materials require a substantial amount of time to read. Finally, she stated that between meetings, members follow education issues in order to remain informed.

Number 3246

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE asked if the Board of Education and Early Development has discussed the possibility of K-14.

MS. RUE indicated the board has had some preliminary discussions, but not detailed, intensive discussion of the possibility of K-14 grades. The greatest attention has been on both the front end and upper end of K-12, first, by making sure that children are better prepared to go into kindergarten or first grade, and then ensuring they have a better transition after graduating from high school. There needs to be a plan in place, whether it is college, junior college, or trade school. She expressed a need to have more discussions about this issue in the future.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE stated that there is a high drop-out rate in many communities because they do not feel connected. What role can the state board play in addressing the problem of outlying communities and ensuring there is a seamless transition from high school to college or vocational school for those youths?

MS. RUE expressed her personal opinion that there is a real need to have regional centers where opportunities are available for high school graduates to get training. She testified that there has been some discussion of regional boarding schools. However, there are concerns that the drain on local schools would have a negative effect on small communities. Ms. Rue pointed out that

it is not possible to have 13 and 14 grade levels in every community.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE asked if the board discussed this with the University of Alaska.

MS. RUE responded that a joint meeting of the Board of Regents and Board of Education and Early Development is scheduled for June in Fairbanks. Discussions with them on teacher training, teacher preparation, and other programs are ongoing. She told the committee there is more work to do on these issues.

REPRESENTATIVE JOULE expressed concern for the student who does not pass the high school qualifying exam by grade 12. He stated that if there were a grade 13 and 14, then these students would have another opportunity to pass the exams, and also would have the opportunity to pursue something either at the academic or vocational level.

MS. RUE agreed that it important not to lose students who get discouraged by not passing the high school qualifying exam. It is important to keep them in the system so that they can get the skills they need. Ms. Rue expressed a desire to see a program in place that would keep them in school, give them the skills they need to pass the exam, and give them additional skills necessary to enter the workforce.

CHAIR BUNDE thanked Ms. Rue for her service.

#### University of Alaska Board of Regents

CHAIR BUNDE then asked the appointees to the University of Alaska Board of Regents to include in their opening statement an overview of their priorities for the university in the coming five years.

Number 3942

MARK BEGICH, Appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents, testified via teleconference. Mr. Begich highlighted his service as chair on a variety of corporations, nonprofit organizations, and committees, such as the Alaska Student Loan Corporation, Assets Board, Family Resource Center, and Spirit of Youth Foundation. He explained that his focus has always been for the youths of Alaska and the educational opportunities that can be created for them. For the last five years he has worked very hard with the Alaska Student Loan Corporation to assist,

with the help of the legislature and corporation staff, to turn that organization around. These efforts should create some credible opportunities for young people, as well as those who are transitioning in their careers.

Number 4045

Mr. Begich, in response to Chair Bunde's request to address the priorities for the coming five years, stated that he sees the university system becoming an integral part in the development and assistance of economic growth of the state. He sees strategic planning of the university system as a vital element in assuring economic development. He pointed out that Representative Joule's question regarding [K-14] demonstrates the need for the university to stay connected to all regions of the state. The Board of Regents currently has a Planning and Development Committee that is embarking on the daunting task of developing a strategic plan between now and 2009. He sees this as the most important goal, since a plan of action is necessary to achieve the board of regent's goals.

Number 4226

MR. BEGICH highlighted a recent meeting that discussed concerns in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. He sees an enormous amount of opportunity for employment of Alaskans as nurses, police, firemen, paramedics, and teachers. Many of these positions are being recruited and filled by people who do not live in the state, when, in fact, Alaskans could fill those positions. While they may not have the skills yet, or may not be in the right environment to fill those jobs, he sees this as a great opportunity for the university to play a significant roll in developing a qualified workforce. He told the committee it is imperative that the university system work in all regions of the state to develop this workforce, especially smaller communities and campuses. He reiterated his desire to serve on the University of Alaska Board of Regents to ensure that the university will be a top-notch institution. He hopes that his experience working with corporations, nonprofit organizations, and the business community, and nine and a half years' service as an elected official, will be beneficial to the institution.

Number 4319

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS asked if the community college mission that used to be in place will be retained as a part of the University of Alaska.

MR. BEGICH responded that the regents had a strategic planning session earlier this year where the issue was discussed. During those discussions, his impression was that there was a great deal of support for the community college mission. He referred to the statistic that 65 percent of students at the University of Alaska Anchorage do not go on to obtain full degrees. He explained that many are in transition from one job to another or something of that nature. He sees the university's primary goal as one of educating Alaskans, and feels it is essential that these students not be forgotten. Mr. Begich went on to say that earlier this week the board met with chief executive officers of hospitals and institutions of medical care where there is a huge problem in filling positions with trained staff. The university may offer standard degree or certificate programs for a variety of needs to help train people. Part of that program will be integrating the old community college mission into the new mission of the university. He emphasized that there is a role. There are an incredible number of jobs out there. Many students will attend classes at night because they work a full-time job during the day. The university has to keep that in mind as it continues to educate Alaskans. Mr. Begich said he sees this as an important function.

Number 4530

CHAIR BUNDE stated that in Fairbanks the teacher preparation program lost its certification for a while. He asked whether Mr. Begich knows if that has been recertified or, if not, what activity is occurring to reestablish it.

MR. BEGICH stated that he did not know the status of the program.

TAPE 02-15, SIDE B

CHAIR BUNDE thanked Mr. Begich for his service and indicated that his name would be moved on for consideration by the full House [and Senate]. Chair Bunde said he would accept a motion even though all testimony had not been taken.

Number 4541

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON moved that the House Special Committee on Education forward the names of the candidates for the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Board of Education and Early Development, and the University of Alaska

Board of Regents to [a joint session of the full House and Senate] for consideration.

CHAIR BUNDE asked if there were any objections to Representative Wilson's motion. There being no objection, the confirmations of the candidates for the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Board of Education and Early Development, and the University of Alaska Board of Regents were advanced.

Number 4508

JOSEPH HARDENBROOK, Appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents, testified via teleconference. Mr. Hardenbrook gave a brief overview of his college career and involvement in the University of Alaska system, highlighting his activities with the statewide student association [Union of Students of the University of Alaska], representation on the University of Alaska Fairbanks College Bowl, and representation on the regional team for Alaska in the national tournaments in April. He stated that he looks forward to continued service as a member of the Board of Regents.

CHAIR BUNDE asked what his personal view is for the University of Alaska for the next five years.

MR. HARDENBROOK responded that a high priority is good participation from faculty, staff, and students in developing a master plan that Regent Begich talked about earlier. He feels that good support from all constituencies of the university will enable them to develop a plan that will move the university forward. One personal goal is to strengthen the Alumni Association. Citing the latest U.S. News and World Report rankings of institutions, he said the University of Alaska lags pretty far behind in alumni support and participation. Mr. Hardenbrook states that alumni recruitment and retention is one of the keystones of his service as a regent.

CHAIR BUNDE stated that as a former faculty member he is aware of the lack of available classes on Fridays, as the university has reserved this day for administrative activities for faculty. He added that he has heard this complaint from students, as well. Chair Bunde asked Mr. Hardenbrook, if as a student, the class schedule had been a problem for him, and as a regent, how would he address that.

MR. HARDENBROOK explained that class schedules vary from campus to campus. At the University of Alaska Anchorage, classes are

offered either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday, with Friday being reserved for labs and three-hour classes. At the University of Alaska Fairbanks, classes are offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or Tuesday and Thursday. He stated that he is aware that it is a concern in Anchorage, but in Fairbanks it is not an issue. He does not think that a lot of students want to take classes on Fridays anyway. Some students are supportive of the way the classes are organized because it allows them to take three-hour, once-a-week classes or four-hour labs on Friday. He stated that it allows them to have their evenings free.

CHAIR BUNDE replied that the cost of maintaining those buildings continues whether there is a class meeting on Friday or not. Even if it cuts into a student's three-day weekend, it is important to maximize the use of those facilities.

MR. HARDENBROOK agreed, but indicated he is not sure what role the Board of Regents would have on this. He added that he does stay touch with the students' concerns and will see if there is any way the administration and students can work constructively on it.

CHAIR BUNDE thanked him for his service on behalf of the students and wished him well in his college career.

Number 4044

MARLENE JOHNSON, Appointee to the University of Alaska Board of Regents, testified via teleconference. Ms. Johnson gave a brief overview of her interest and service in the education and training of Alaska's youths for the past 34 years. She stated that she has served 25 years on the local school board and education committees for the school board association [Association of Alaska School Boards]. While chairman of the Sealaska Corporation, she implemented an internship program for college students that is still ongoing today. The program has successfully placed students in very good summer jobs. Ms. Johnson has also served the University of Alaska system over the last 25 years in various capacities, such as trustee for the University Foundation, member on the Advisory Council for the School of Fisheries and Sciences, and members of the University of Alaska Southeast Site Council. She said she has served on other local, state, and national committees in the areas of education and health issues. It has been her passion to work on behalf of young people.

Number 3838

MS. JOHNSON, in speaking about five year goals for the University of Alaska, reiterated Mark Begich's comments regarding the Board of Regents' commitment to increase access to the university system for all Alaskans. She feels this goal can be implemented through a combination of increased distance education and maximization of university resources including use of facilities of what used to be the community college program. Many people want to get training, but do not want to enroll in a four-year degree program. She stated that it will be essential to increase involvement of faculty, student, and business communities for support. Ms. Johnson said she is committed to recruiting and retaining rural students in the university system, primarily through the satellite campuses and distance education. She expressed her interested in Representative Joule's suggestion of a 13-14 grade and hopes that this kind of a program could be offered through the local campuses. As a member of the Academic and Students Affairs Committee, she said she will be following up on this idea with the committee. The Board of Regents are committed to the implementation of a community college program because of the needs of students and the business community.

CHAIR BUNDE expressed his appreciation for Ms. Johnson's support of and interest in a community college program. He noted that as the university system looks to making the community college available to all Alaskans, it would require an expansion of the community college mission.

Number 3555

REPRESENTATIVE STEVENS expressed his appreciation for Ms. Johnson's support of the community college mission. He asked if she would comment on vocational education.

MS. JOHNSON advised members that the vocational education issue will be on the June agenda. She said the board needs to talk with the business communities to determine what jobs out there are not being filled. Some classes are offered at one campus, but not at another. For example, the Board of Regents are looking at how we can make sure those students in Fairbanks can take nursing courses, when the major program is in Anchorage. With distance education the university has the capacity to offer the classes throughout the University of Alaska campuses. A lot of community college training such as computer training, welding, and mechanics is actually vocational training.

CHAIR BUNDE said he had seen many students come to the University of Alaska to take only one class or certificate, but then go on to get a degree. He thanked Ms. Johnson for her long and dedicated service to Alaska's students.

The confirmations of all the appointees to the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Board of Education and Early Development, and the University of Alaska Board of Regents were advanced.

Number 3355

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Education was adjourned at 9:08 a.m.