

JOINT
HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
HOUSE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
April 17, 2002
1:45 P.M.

TAPE HFC 02 - 87, Side A
TAPE HFC 02 - 87, Side B

CALL TO ORDER

Co-Chair Mulder called the meeting to order at 1:45 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Representative Eldon Mulder, Co-Chair
Representative Bill Williams, Co-Chair
Representative Con Bunde, Vice-Chair
Representative Eric Croft
Representative John Davies
Representative John Harris
Representative Ken Lancaster

HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Representative Con Bunde
Representative Joe Green
Representative Gretchen Guess
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Brian Porter

HOUSE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Representative Fred Dyson
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative John Coghill
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Vic Kohring
Representative Gary Stevens
Representative Peggy Wilson

SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Senator Lyda Green
Senator Bettye Davis
Senator Loren Leman
Senator Jerry Ward
Senator Gary Wilken

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Hudson
Representative Foster
Representative Carl Moses
Representative Jim Whitaker

ALSO PRESENT

Representative Lisa Murkowski; Senator Donny Olson; Shirley Holloway, Commissioner, Department of Education & Early Development; Richard DeLorenzo, Superintendent, Chugach School District; Tom Vander Ark, Executive Director of Education, Gates Foundation; Nathaniel Moore, Student, Chugach School District; Debbie Treece, Teacher, Chugach School District; Devon Totemoff, Student, Chugach School District; Doris Bander, School Board Member, Chugach School District; Virginia Bitter, School Board President, Eileen Totemoff, School Board Member, Parent, Chugach School District; Dottie Prosman, School Board Member, Chugach School District

GENERAL SUBJECT(S):

The following overview was taken in log note format. Tapes and handouts will be on file with the House Finance Committee through the 22nd Legislative Session, contact 465-2156. After the 22nd Legislative Session they will be available through the Legislative Library at 465-3808.

JOINT
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Standards Based Education
Gates Foundations' Contribution to Education in AK
Baldrige Plan Used by Chugach School
District to Improve the Educational Program

LOG	SPEAKER	DISCUSSION
	TAPE HFC 02 - 87 SIDE A	
000	Co-Chair Mulder	Called the Committee meeting to order at 1:45 P.M.
128	Co-Chair Mulder	Noted that the Chugach School District received the Baldrige National Quality Award in Washington D.C. He noted that it was a very prestigious award and only three school districts in the United States has ever received that award. Co-

		Chair Mulder told members that it was an opportunity to hear an education success story.
238	Co-Chair Mulder	Introduced the speakers, Tom Vander Ark, Education component, Gates Foundation; Nathaniel Moore, the student that received the award; Debbie Treece; and Richard DeLorenzo, Superintendent, Chugach School. Co-Chair Mulder advised that the Chugach School district is one place where no student is left behind.
321	RICHARD DELORENZO, SUPERINTENDENT, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Spoke about the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Mr. DeLorenzo commented on the rigorous process in attempting to achieve the award. He introduced the Board members of the Chugach School District, Devon Totemoff, student; Virginia Bitter, School Board President, Eileen Totemoff, School Board Member; and Dottie Prosman, School Board Member.
525	NATHANIEL MOORE, STUDENT, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Introduced Mr. Tom Vander Ark, Executive Director of Education, Gates Foundation.
602	TOM VANDER ARK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, THE GATES FOUNDATION	Noted that the Gates Foundation is interested in "helping" learning. The Foundation works internationally in health and learning. In health, the Foundation works internationally in vaccine preventable diseases. In learning, the Foundation works in two areas, libraries and education. He noted that they would be making a grant for Alaska libraries this summer. Mr. Vander Ark pointed out that the Foundation works in every state and territory in the nation to make sure that every library is up to date with computers. Mr. Vander Ark stated that the Foundation looks forward to working with the State of Alaska in these library projects.
709		Mr. Vander Ark commented that in education, the Gates Foundation is interested in helping every student succeed. A few years ago, the Foundation made grants to the school districts. He noted that a few years ago, the Gates Foundation searched the country for examples of success in the education system and found that one of the best examples in the U.S. was the Chugach School District. That district had

		designed a system that works for all students.
785	Mr. Vander Ark	Their approach continues to improve over time. The most serious issue in the United States at this time, is attempting to find systems that work for the students. The Chugach system holds promise for the entire nation. Mr. Vander Ark added that the Gates Foundation appreciates being able to offer some support to that district to teach other districts how to accomplish that. The Chugach approach teaches about the success of scale. He reiterated that the Chugach has created an educational system that works for all students.
810	Mr. Vander Ark	Noted that the focus of the Gates Foundation has been narrowed to the high school level only. That level is the worse part of the United States system and that level is the most difficult to change. The Chugach work is important to transform school districts and can be a great model to help improve American secondary schools. He added that the work done by the Chugach School holds great promise for small rural schools.
859	Mr. Vander Ark	Noted that the Gates Foundation supports the concept of small schools. He noted that they encourage the development of smaller schools throughout the Nation. Alaska has a benefit of having many small schools, already and the Chugach model holds great promise for the small school idea. He spoke to the idea of breaking larger schools into smaller units. The Chugach School District work holds promise for creating success of scale and for rethinking American secondary schools.
1023	Vice-Chair Bunde	Asked if there would be discussion regarding the other school districts, which the Gates Foundation is currently working with.
1104	Mr. DeLorenzo	Noted that they would be discussing that later in the presentation.
1123	NATHIEL MOORE, STUDENT, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Addressed Page #1 of the handout: Obstacles to High Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unhealthy Family/Community • Student Apathy • Lack of Parental Involvement • Lack of Meaningful Curriculum

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Needs of Students • Funding • No Site Plan • Poor Professional Development • Teacher Burnout
1209	Mr. Moore	<p>He added that the original Chugach School District was based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit or "Seat Time" • Graded System • Disconnected Reporting • Text Book Curriculum • No School to Life Plan • Individual needs not met • Institutionally Centered <p>Mr. Moore outlined the difference with the current 21st Century Chugach School District system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Based System • Developmental Levels • P-14 Report Card (DRC) • Standards-Based Resources • Comprehensive School to Life • Individual Learning Plans • Student Centered
1308	DEVON TOTEMOFF, STUDENT, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Spoke to the School to Life Program, Phases 1, 2 & 3.
1423	Mr. Moore	Interjected that there currently is no Phase 4, however, some students travel abroad to complete the program.
1455	Co-Chair Mulder	Asked how old were the students when they travel to the Anchorage House.
1507	Mr. Moore	Explained that there is not a specific age. With the report card, there are levels that must be passed through and that student needs to be a certain level to be in that House.
1528	REPRESENTATIVE JOE GREEN	Asked if he chose the country, which Mr. Moore would be traveling too.
155-	Mr. Moore	Replied it was presented as an option.
1603	DORIS BENDER, SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Commented on the difference from the original school district to the current district which is more student centered rather than institutionally centered. She stressed that the Chugach School Board was concerned that their children were not being educated. The district did not know how to accomplish what they wanted for their kids. The system seemed

		to be "falling apart". She noted that their previous superintendent was retiring and they chose Roger Samson as the replacement. Ms. Bender stated that they told him that they wanted every child in the district to be able to read at all costs. She stated that the hired Mr. DeLorenzo as the assistant superintendent of the school. The education system was totally changed, and that the Department of Education & Early Development provided the needed waivers. The education system was totally changed and that the business end of the school district was also going through the same change. The money can be accounted for.
1822	Mr. Moore	Referenced the continuous Improvement Cycle (PDER) which has relevant standards that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Instruction • Meaningful Reporting • Multiple Assessments
1918	DEBBIE TREECE, PARENT & TEACHER, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Interjected that the (PDER) represents where the Baldrige Award came in. That established accountability and new language for the administration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan, • Review, • Re-evaluate. and • Refine. These became the four highlighted aspects of a successful program. All four pieces must be addressed in order for there to be a successful cycle.
2005	Mr. Moore	Referenced Page 3 - the Organizational Performance Results scores from 4 th graders CAT test taken in 1994-95. That was the year that the system was started. Again in 1998-99, the same students took the test again and the results improved immensely.
2046	Mr. Moore	Page 3 - the high school qualifying exam percentages.
2108	Mr. Moore	Referenced Page 4 - SAB Snapshot, which shows how the performance report card looks. There are ten areas on the report card and the squares represent different levels. The report card indicates levels that the student needs to graduate and also indicates what a student can do above and beyond in order to graduate.

2210	Mr. Moore	Page 4 - Shows a copy of the high school diploma and the school district level required proficiency performance.
2252	Ms. Treece	Noted that prospective business employers like to know the strengths of the students that they hire and the manner in which the diploma is written helps to see that at a glance to see the strengths.
2323	Ms. Treece	State that a video would be shown. The video would run for a total of eight minute. No minutes were taken during the video.
2441	Mr. DeLorenzo	Commented that students must feel connected to their peers and the adult involved with them. There must be relevance and passion involved in teaching. The best systems help the student develop their passion for life.
2537	Co-Chair Mulder	Commented on the amount of community involvement in the school district.
2548	Mr. DeLorenzo	Responded that the critical portion of the success is about building a relationship. The community was invited to be a part of the schools to create a win-win situation so that they could become a part of the program. That took one year. Now they want to know what role that they can pay to help their kids be successful. Everyone has that aspiration and value. Without the shared vision, it would have not happened.
2647	Mr. Vander Ark	Pointed out that Chugach began a "conversation" with their community with basic questions. Most school districts take State standards for granted. School districts that are working well never make that assumption about the standards. They begin a conversation with their community regarding how the world has changed and what needs to be done to keep up with it. Then, a shared sense of standards was developed to create broad ownership.
2759	Vice-Chair Bunde	Pointed out that schools are reflections of their communities and questioned how the communities were "won" over to the value of education.
2931	Mr. DeLorenzo	Noted that his area, there were 75% of the people living below poverty level. People want to be successful and they want opportunities. It can be done with good leadership. The parents have become leaders and advocates because they were

		involved. Taking time and being part of the process is the key to success.
3044	Representative Davies	Asked for more information about the teacher training aspect of the program.
3059	Mr. DeLorenzo	Once the profile of the teachers was understood then they know how to make a difference. Mr. DeLorenzo claimed that their teachers do 30 days of in-service; and that only 10 of days are part of a negotiated agreement required by contract. The reason that they come to that is because they got to design and implement what they want to teach. That relationship with the teachers has been critical. The District just signed a 3-year performance pay contract to benchmark the teacher's work. The District is looking for teacher focus, innovative and agile with best practices.
3204	Representative Harris	Commented on the assistance given students after granulation.
3229	Mr. DeLorenzo	Noted that the kids are being tracked. They fill out surveys about what they are doing after graduation and how they could be better prepared at the high school level. It is part of a system's approach.
3304	Representative Harris	Asked what the difference between the old system of education and the current one being used by the district.
3325	Mr. Moore	Observed that students now know what they need to do to succeed. Students understand better where they are in the system.
3392	Mr. DeLorenzo	Interjected that the system tells the students that they own the system and that it is a system of life. That is what an educational system should be about.
3458	Ms. Totemoff	Noted that she is not being rushed into her work and that she is able to work at her own pace and take her time. She noted that she had transferred into the system and it was difficult to adjust to however, she was always met at her own level.
3619	Mr. DeLorenzo	Thought that the old system was not designed to teach all students, but rather to be an industrial model, to sort and segregate kids. To educate all children, the system had to be redesigned to meet each child's level. That must happen in order to make every kid in

		America successful.
3655	Representative Green	Observed that the teacher is the key lynch pin. He questioned how the teachers were brought into the system and what happened to those teachers that did not have the desire to change.
3726	Mr. DeLorenzo	Explained that teachers were brought in gradually. He observed that their teachers could fall into one of three categories: 20% - cheerleaders, 60% - show me, 20% - "over my dead body". Those people are critical and often have the strongest personalities. If they were not able to come along, they are asked to find another system. He pointed out that most teachers came along. He added that this is the first year that the Chugach School District is not going to the job fair. Every year, they offer one contract for two teachers, because they want to work in the system as it makes sense.
3923	Mr. DeLorenzo	In response to a question by Representative Green, Mr. DeLorenzo explained that they start with a best practices model. Each student knows where he or she wants to go and direct instruction is given at each level. He added that students work with each other to come along as a team.
4132	SENATOR LORAN LEMAN	Noted that lack of parental involvement had been a barrier. He asked how parents were encouraged to become invested into the system.
4209	EILEEN TOTEMOFF, PARENT, CHUGACH SCHOOL DISTRICT	Commented that parents wanted to see a change for their children and the community told the superintendent that they wanted to see change for their children. The program began with the "honor to excellence" idea. The community agreed that they had not been previously successful with the kids.
4449	Senator Leman	Questioned the affects of transfers in and out of the system.
4507	Mr. DeLorenzo	Responded that the difficulty is in the junior high school level when they cannot read. The student's effort and energy is important. Students are helped to move along the continuum, but they are shown where they need to go. He stressed that they are on the leading edge of the educational forum, but that they are figuring it out as they go along. There

		are not models.
	TAPE HFC 02 - 87, Side B	
4714	Mr. DeLorenzo	Observed that their seniors are busy working toward beating the standards.
4534	Vice-Chair Bunde	Quoted, that if the students in the rest of Alaska "spend as much on trying to make the standards as they do on basketball" then there would not be a problem.
4459	Mr. DeLorenzo	Advised that at this time, there are five school districts that have gone to the Department of Education & Early Development to request waivers. He stressed that it is a "huge" paradigm shift. Additionally, there are nine districts that are also interested. He added that Mr. Vander Ark would accompany him to listen to these people in their desire to improve their systems. The Seattle School District is very interested and they have implemented many initiatives to implement the program. He maintained that best practices could work anywhere. He claimed that the goal was to get 20 percent of the State's school districts to work toward better education practices. The Chugach District has received inquiries from all over the world.
4201	Mr. Vander Ark	Informed members that the Gates Foundation makes investments where there is need, leadership and an ability to make an impact. He stated that there is a potential to duplicate the success of Chugach as they now have a demonstrated model.
4005	Mr. Vander Ark	Noted that the Gates Foundation is interested in addressing needs in the high school years. He spoke to "rigor and relationship". The high schools that succeed are personalized and performance based. The manner in which to attack the "senior year dilemma" is to make those students responsible to demonstrate learning. In the past 100 years, we have only asked students to accumulate credits. Now most high schools offer optional tracks of varying difficulty. Schools offer different tracks toward graduation with less adult guidance. He maintained that students are choosing the path of less resistance. Chugach has

		changed from an accumulation of credits to a demonstration of attainment.
3755	Mr. Vander Ark	The goal is to prepare every student toward a goal of college to the student and post secondary success. There needs to be a variety of pathways from school, to higher education to work. He spoke to the "early model" in that every student's leaves with two years of college education. In many communities it would mean bringing college to the student.
3607	Mr. Vander Ark	The intent is that students leave academically prepared for college but also have a real world exposure and can make good choices. He encouraged the Legislature to develop some incentives and schools to develop partnerships with higher education to create more diverse pathways.
3521	REPRESENTATIVE SHARON CISSNA	Asked how the rural students can be prepared for urban life.
3424	Mr. DeLorenzo	Replied that it must return to the going back to the values of the community. He claimed that there are five values that are important to everyone including students, teachers and business-people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic skills, • Individual needs of the children, • Personal social development, • Transition technology, and • Cultural expression.
3308	Mr. DeLorenzo	Observed that the challenge is to provide an economic base for everyone in order to be able to live wherever they want.
3231	REPRESENTATIVE PEGGY WILSON	Noted that the teacher turnover went from 54% to 12% and this year no new teachers were needed. She asked if the pay had increased.
3211	Mr. DeLorenzo	Noted that step and column raises were frozen and replaced with performance. They all make a certain performance pay. There is a clear road map of what an excellent teacher looks like. Teachers can earn up to \$6 thousand dollars extra without increasing their step and column. The Chugach teachers decided to average the teacher's scores and give the same amount to all. The incentive is for the high scoring teachers to mentor the low performing teachers in order to bring the whole up. All the money placed into teachers pay, goes into performance pay.

		The goal is to attempt to have the teachers be the highest paid in Alaska based on performance, not time.
3037	Representative Wilson	Questioned how scores are achieved.
2930	Mr. DeLorenzo	Discussed that there are 70 continuums with 6 levels. Each teacher is scored after a four-hour evaluation. If they score 4, then the next time, they know where they need to go score higher. He noted that they would reevaluate one month later because they want their teachers to score well.
2934	Mr. DeLorenzo	Clarified that Chugach models a 13-14 to one student/teacher ratio. The kids are responsible for their success. He did not think that the size of the class had a lot to do with the success. He noted that larger systems are duplicating the results with larger ratios. He acknowledged that there are advantages with the fewer student/teacher ratios.
2834	Representative Green	Observed that the merit pay is successful but questioned how in a large school district such as Anchorage, could the teachers and union be encouraged to accept it and evaluate it fairly.
2746	Mr. DeLorenzo	Explained that teachers were involved in the process and then the Unions bought into the model. He clarified that as the leader "selling" the package, it took a year to convince them to develop the model. During the teacher service days, it was discussed how to benchmark what the best practices for teacher evaluation should be, synthesize that information, create a model, and then refine it. The success of it resulted because they bought into it as a result of being a part of the process.
2655	Ms. Treece	In response to comments by Representative Green and teacher turnover, Ms. Treece explained that as a teacher she was part of the entire process. The group decided to base success on performance. She stressed that the teaching staff decided together to come together as a team.
2406	Representative Davies	Observed that the Gates Foundation has provided a significant amount of money and asked how other larger districts such as Seattle are dealing with the costs.
2306	Mr. DeLorenzo	Explained that part of the Baldrige process is that the school district must

		demonstrate that the results can be replicated without the additional funds. That is part of the mission and it must be proven. The Chugach School District gives away more than \$2.8 million dollars a year to help other districts. The Chugach District could continue to exist without any additional funds. He maintained that district receives \$3,600 dollars per new student, which is below what Anchorage receives.
2113	Mr. DeLorenzo	Pointed out that through the Gate's Foundation, there are 5 coalition districts. The Foundation gives money based on the average daily membership (ADM). That money is used to take time to do the intensive in-service training to understand what the model looks like. There are community meetings to create the system. It could be continued without the money. Today, there are nine districts that are doing it without any money.
2019	Representative Davies	Asked if it was important to have some "transition" money.
1959	Mr. DeLorenzo	It would help to accelerate the process.
1933	Mr. Vander Ark	Interjected that the districts are "remodeling" their academic systems. It would be like remodeling your house without any new funds and would require a lot of "sweat" equity. Mr. Vander Ark commented on the many wonderful small schools throughout the country. There are 2400 charter schools, private and catholic schools, and all of those schools operate on a shoestring. They all operate under the same per pupil allocation as the larger schools. The larger schools need to be funded differently. In a big district, there is a different formula for distributing the money. With the money broken up into little parts, it is difficult to start and operate a small school. If the district average was determined and then given to the small districts, they could then figure it out. At some point, there becomes a "big dis" economy of scale. Big schools have a larger percentage of non-classroom adults and teachers to their staffing model. In the smaller schools, everybody teaches.
1702	Mr. Vander Ark	Spoke to the capital side of the process.

		He claimed that small schools can be built and operated for less money, however, it must be done differently. It must begin with the assumption that every high school does not need 40 acres and a swimming pool. Those assumptions created much money in fixed costs. Small schools need to be more creative and worked more closely with the community and community based organizations. He stressed that it is currently happening all over the country and the small schools are accelerating throughout the country.
1552	Representative Davies	Asked about the effect of the buy in on discipline issues.
1536	Ms. Treece	Explained that the frustration level has decreased with the new concept. Reaction comes from a negative way. She acknowledged that there does continue to be issues that must be addressed in the classroom. With the new model, the teachers have more time to find out what the problem is.
1421	Mr. DeLorenzo	Mentioned the training in conflict resolution. He commented that there are opportunities for the student to apply all their new skills.
1338	REPRESENTATIVE REGGIE JOULE	Voiced his appreciation for the work of the district. He noted how Chugach had undertaken changing the entire system and understood the challenges of that work. He asked if there were universities that the students were being geared toward.
1144	Mr. DeLorenzo	Responded that Job Corp has a 98% placement rate. There is some training doing the placement well. The students have enough resiliency skills that they will be successful in whatever situations they move toward. He claimed that the drop out rate declines when students are introduced to the Baldrige system. The kids are now successful in areas that there were not previously successful.
1002	Vice-Chair Bunde	Referenced university students and faculty ratio.
942	REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL	He thought that the learning plan brought all the parties together. He asked how the special education factor would be addressed.
907	Mr. DeLorenzo	Noted that they have created a system, which eliminates the special education component. All teachers are special education teachers and all students are

		"special". The teachers are taught to be diagnostic education teachers so that they can help the kids with the means that they have. There are simpler tools to use. He noted that he has worked at creating a system to eliminate the special education system. The special education system does not work for the majority of the kids. It labels and stigmatizes and they end up dropping out of school. In the new model, children are special and the teachers attempt to help them develop their passion and needs to be successful in life.
758	Ms. Treece	Noted that she is not only a teacher but also a parent of a special needs child. Living in the Whittier district, that school district accommodated his needs. Every child has strengths and weakness. Removing the labels makes each child feel unique. She commented on self-empowerment for each student.
645	Representative Coghill	Agreed for the need for the "road map" and parental involvement. He thought that there was a trust based on communication in the community.
615	Ms. Treece	Responded that the individual learning plan is a tool. Parents come on board when the actually see the success of their child.
525	Mr. DeLorenzo	Many students have testified that their lives were turned around. He argued that special education does not meet kids at their performance level. The Chugach system is works in a "good way".
422	Representative Wilson	Commented that special education rules are federal. She asked how that could be rolled into a program.
352	Mr. DeLorenzo	Responded that the majority of students are not certified. Some severe students are certified under speech, but the majority of the students are not certified as their needs are being met in other ways..
331	Vice-Chair Bunde	Voiced his appreciation for everyone who was willing to participate in the discussion. He asked the role of the Legislature in continuing the success of the program.
255	Mr. DeLorenzo	Responded that this vision must be taken as a quality schools initiative, establish some type of outside evaluation to look at the school districts in Alaska

		and how they score, send it to the Baldrige group to determine a performance schedule for each district. The best districts should be given additional money to help other districts get better. He argued that the \$26 million dollars being spent on education would not make a difference if it were just being repackaged like before. The entire funding formula for schools needs to be revamped. Such action could make Alaska the leader in the United State. Mr. DeLorenzo offered to help show how to create that new paradigm.
120	Vice-Chair Bunde	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u> The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 P.M.