

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE
February 07, 2003
1:24 PM

TAPE HFC 03 - 15, Side A
TAPE HFC 03 - 15, Side B

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Meyer called the House Finance Committee meeting to order at 1:34 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Kevin Meyer, Vice-Chair
Representative Eric Croft
Representative Richard Foster
Representative Mike Hawker
Representative Reggie Joule
Representative Carl Moses
Representative Gary Stevens
Representative Bill Stoltze

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative John Harris, Co-Chair
Representative Bill Williams, Co-Chair
Representative Jim Whitaker

ALSO PRESENT

William Tandeske, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety; Karen Morgan, Director, Division of Administrative Services, Department of Public Safety; Gretchen A. Pence, Special Assistant, Department of Public Safety, Department of Public Safety; Joel Hard, Col., Director, Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection, Department of Public Safety; Gary Powell, Director, State Fire Marshall, Department of Public Safety; Doug Norris, Maj. Deputy Director, Division of Alaska State Troopers, Department of Public Safety; Susan Scudder, Director, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Department of Public Safety; Shirley Holloway, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development; Dr. Ed McLain, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education & Early Development; Yvonne Chase, Deputy Commissioner, Early Education, Department of Education and Early Development; Karen Rehfeld, Director, Division of Education Support Services, Department of Education and Early Development; Kevin Sweeney, Legislative Liaison, Department of Education and Early Development.

PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE

GENERAL SUBJECT (S):

Agency Overviews:

Department of Public Safety

Department of Education and Early Development

The following overview was taken in log note format. Tapes and handouts will be on file with the House Finance Committee through the 23rd Legislative Session, contact 465-2156. After the 23rd Legislative Session they will be available through the Legislative Library at 465-3808.

LOG	SPEAKER	DISCUSSION
	TAPE HFC 03 - 15 SIDE A	
000		<u>DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY</u>
239	William Tandeske, Commissioner, Department of Public Safety	Introduced staff. He noted that he was born in the state and gave a brief personal history. He spent nearly 26-years as an Alaska State Trooper and retired a few years ago as a Major and Deputy Director of the Troopers. He has lived and worked around the state of Alaska. He has worked with all aspects of the Department through the years and has an extensive background in law enforcement.
457	Commissioner Tandeske	Explained that loyalty, integrity and courage will be the focus of the Department.
701	Commissioner Tandeske	"The internal health of this agency is reflected every day by the public face of the agency - how the people we serve view the job and us we are doing for them. I expect every employee of this department to conduct the daily business of the department, both internal and public, in a manner that reflects loyalty to the ideals and laws we live by, with integrity that is beyond reproach and with the courage to do what is right in the face of adversity."
740	Commissioner Tandeske	Emphasized the need for professionalism, and noted that it is his goal to instill a sense of pride and professionalism in every corner of the agency.
813	Commissioner Tandeske	Noted that the need for a positive approach to problem solving.
858	Commissioner Tandeske	Emphasized the need for fairness, both for in the treatment for employees and

		for the citizenry they serve. No person shall be given better or worse treatment due to any kind of status or condition. All business, whether internal or external, shall be conducted in a fair and honest manner. All decision-making processes shall be conducted in a fair and impartial manner and shall be closely scrutinized and regularly challenged to insure that they are clearly defensible
959	Commissioner Tandeske	Stressed the need to remember those that serve at the lowest levels of the organization.
1120	Commissioner Tandeske	Reviewed activities of the department: Violent Crimes Compensation Board, Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Public Safety Academy, Alaska Police Standards Council, Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory and emphasized their importance.
1359	Commissioner Tandeske	Referred to the Administrative Services Division and stressed that their function has continued to grow.
1459	Commissioner Tandeske	Discussed the Division of Fire Prevention: Fire Service training, and prevention offices. FY02 was the lowest year for deaths by fire (9 deaths).
1636	Commissioner Tandeske	Reviewed the Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection. He observed that many come to Alaska because of the fish and game resources. The sport fishing economy in Alaska is \$700 million dollars and the wildlife economy is worth \$200 million dollars.
1825	Commissioner Tandeske	Emphasized the search and rescue function of the department.
1842	Commissioner Tandeske	Observed that the Division of Alaska State Troopers offers statewide services. Pointed out that there are challenges in the state of Alaska due to the size of the state and weather conditions in Alaska as compared to other states.
2128	Commissioner Tandeske	Observed that there are special demands that tax resources: some are annual events such as fairs and concerts, which require the department to be proactive.
2215	Commissioner Tandeske	Observed that homeland security activities are being developed.
2244	Commissioner Tandeske	Emphasized the importance of drug and alcohol enforcement.
2328	Commissioner Tandeske	Summarized that the Department's mission is varied.

2358	Vice-Chair Meyer	Noted that the Department of Public Safety is sometimes taken for granted, but stressed the magnitude of their work. He gave his respect for the work of the department.
2522	Representative Stoltze	Observed that it had been a rough year for the Alaska State Troopers in regards to the loss of some of its members.
2649	Representative Foster	Acknowledged the participation of the department in rural Alaska.
2278	Representative Hawker	Referred to concerns regarding the need for additional statute to allow the Crime Laboratory to utilize DNR materials. Commissioner Tandeske was unable to respond to the question. He stressed that the crime laboratory is a vital asset for the state.
2827	Representative Hawker	Questioned the fire risk of beetle-killed trees.
2931	Gary Powell, Director, State Fire Marshall, Department of Public Safety	Responded that the Department has worked with a number of groups to address the problem of beetle kill. He suggested that more work could be done with the combination of state, local and federal funds.
3057	Representative Stevens	Referred to the Academy. He questioned future plans for the facility.
3136	Commissioner Tandeske	Assured members that the Academy would figure prominently in the department's plans and that it would remain an active training facility.
3221	Representative Croft	Questioned if it would be irresponsible to propose a 5 - 10 percent cut to the department.
3253	Commissioner Tandeske	Stated that he would always advocate more resources. He noted that he had not had an opportunity to look at the impact of reductions.
3401		DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT
3431	Shirley Holloway, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development	Introduced staff. She noted that the department's mission is to support the development of lifelong learners. There are six goals to achieve this mission.
3605	Commissioner Holloway	1. To have culturally and developmentally appropriate high quality early care and education programs that improve the well being of young children statewide, ages 0-4, in which children, families, and communities are

		<p>active partners;</p> <p>2. To have clear, rigorous, credible student standards and assessments;</p> <p>3. To have a credible system of academic and fiscal accountability for students, professionals, schools, and districts;</p> <p>4. To have highly qualified school professionals who have met rigorous and credible standards and assessments;</p> <p>5. To have schools in which students, staff, families, business, and communities are active partners in learning; and</p> <p>6. To have an adequate, stable and secure source of funding for schools.</p>
3613	Commissioner Holloway	In the current year, the department has approximately 419 full time and 116 part-time positions in its 7 divisions and 4 commissions. Offices are located in five Alaska communities with the main presence in Juneau and Anchorage.
3721	Commissioner Holloway	The seven-member State Board of Education & Early Development is the head of the agency. In addition, there are three advisory members: one military and two student representatives. The governor, subject to legislative confirmation, appoints the state board members. The state board, subject to approval by the governor, appoints the commissioner. The board establishes statewide goals and education policy through adopting regulations to implement education laws.
3798	Commissioner Holloway	The Department of Education & Early Development is responsible for funding and regulating the state's K-12 schools as well as administering school debt reimbursement, grants for school construction and major maintenance, and a comprehensive system of early care and learning.
3814	Commissioner Holloway	Independent commissions reporting through the department include the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the Alaska State Council on the Arts, the Alaska

		State Community Service Commission, and the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education.
3834	Commissioner Holloway	The Department of Education & Early Development's FY 2003 operating budget is \$1,069,263,000 including about \$769 million from general funds, \$179 million from federal funds, and the balance from other funding sources. Ninety-four percent of the total agency budget, and 96% of the department's general fund budget, is allocated through grants to school districts, non-profit organizations and individuals across the state. The chart on page 4 is a snap shot of the department's current year budget:
3911	Commissioner Holloway	Observed that there is a commitment to accountability. The public education conversation has substantially changed. The discussion is how well are students learning.
3951	Commissioner Holloway	Reviewed the journey of school reform, which began in 1991 when standards were introduced. In 1996, the Department of Education refined its school reform plan to include four major components: 1. High student academic standards and assessments; 2. Quality professional standards; 3. Family, school, university, business and community networks; and 4. School excellence standards.
4137	Commissioner Holloway	In 1997 the legislature passed the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination.
4156	Commissioner Holloway	Profile of students entering school in relationship to the student's strength and the areas of their needs. Families are included in discussions.
4235	Commissioner Holloway	In 1998 the legislature passed a complete system of school accountability requiring: 1. State reading, writing and math student performance standards; 2. Benchmark exams at grades 3, 6

		<p>and 8 to measure student progress against the standards;</p> <p>3. Each school to make public a report card that tells parents about student progress and other information about the performance of the school;</p> <p>4. A state-adopted ranking program to designate each school as distinguished, successful, deficient and in crisis; and</p> <p>5. A developmental profile on all entering kindergarten and first grade students.</p> <p>• The legislature created a quality school grant program -- and later, a learning opportunity grant program -- to help students meet the goals of the accountability system.</p>
4242	Commissioner Holloway	In January 2002, Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act, the most sweeping school reform act in our nation's history. Some have reacted negatively. The reason for the law is that across the nation the top third students are doing well, the middle third are okay but the bottom third have been failed.
4241	Commissioner Holloway	<p>The essential components of the No Child Left Behind Act include:</p> <p>1. An aligned system of academic content standards, academic student achievement, standards, and assessments of student performance;</p> <p>2. Annual assessments of student progress in attaining the student academic achievement standards;</p>
4357	Commissioner Holloway	3. School, district, and State accountability decisions based on the performance of specific subgroups of students designed to ensure that all students are proficient in reading or language arts and mathematics by 20 13-14; and
4428	Commissioner Holloway	4. A system of rewards and required, progressive sanctions to encourage and support high-and low-performing schools.
4522	Commissioner	Governor Murkowski and his Administration

	Holloway	<p>have embraced NCLB and its promising goals and he has pledged to achieve those goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promise of "No Child Left Behind" - - though stated differently --is the same goal Alaska has expressed in its own school reform plan for a dozen years. <p>She noted that the plan requires assessments and report cards. She emphasized that students need to make progress.</p>
4620	Commissioner Holloway	<p>NCLB and the state's school reform plan have some similarities. Both require:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performance standards for students in core academic areas; 2. Assessments to measure whether students are meeting standards. NCLB requires assessments in grades 3 through 8 and a high school exam. The state system required assessments in grades 3, 6, 8 and high school; 3. School report cards; 4. A school designator system; 5. Quality instructional staff; and 6. Partnerships between schools, parents, communities and businesses.
	TAPE HFC 03 - 15, Side B	
4643	Commissioner Holloway	<p>Explained that low scoring students were not identified when scores were averaged. NCLB differs most from our state accountability system because NCLB has greater consequences for schools whose students do not perform well on state exams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCLB requires showing achievement in 10 different subgroups: 1) the school as a whole; 2) white; 3) black; 4) Native American; 5) Asian/Pacific Islander; 6) Hispanic; 7) Alaska Native; 8) limited English proficient; 9) students with disabilities; and 10) low economic status.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCLB requires schools to show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in each and every subgroup. A school that fails to meet AYP in any one subgroup is placed in the same improvement status as a school that fails to make AYP for all 10 subgroups.
4607	Commissioner Holloway	Explained that schools that do not meet AYP two years in a row in any one of the 10 subgroups go into "school improvement status." Such schools need to provide parents with a choice of schools and/or supplemental services. The federal government is granting Alaska an allowance for small and remote schools that cannot practically offer a choice of another school.
4544	Commissioner Holloway	Added that the federal government is offering an allowance for small schools.
4524	Commissioner Holloway	Schools that continue on school improvement status for two years and beyond face increasing sanctions, including taking immediate corrective action. Schools that stay on improvement status for four and five years eventually must plan and reconstitute the administration of the school. Reconstitution includes such action as forming a charter school and replacing school leadership and staff.
4456	Commissioner Holloway	In addition to the differences in accountability approaches between NCLB and the Alaska system, NCLB impacts the decision-making for parents of schools designated for school improvement.
4431	Commissioner Holloway	Explained that Alaska is working to blend the state school improvement system with NCLB because Alaska desires, and NCLB requires, a single system of state accountability.
4403	Commissioner Holloway	On January 31, 2003 Alaska submitted its Alaska Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook, January 2003, which proposes how Alaska will implement NCLB in the state of Alaska.
4349	Commissioner Holloway	Alaska and the federal government now will work to approve Alaska's plan by May 1, 2003 through a federal process called "peer review." The peer review team will visit the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development on March 12, 2003.

4325	Commissioner Holloway	Administration has made it clear that the state of Alaska wants to meet the desired outcomes of "no child left behind". However, there are difficulties in Alaska due to the number of small schools in the state.
4138	Commissioner Holloway	Observed that the department submitted a plan for a comprehensive system of student assessment and accountability to the U. S. Department of Education January 31, 2003.
4128	Commissioner Holloway	Added that a peer review team made up of representatives from the U. S. Department of Education and other educators will visit Alaska on March 12 to review and finalize this plan. It will review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark and norm-referenced assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics for grades 3-9, and a High School Graduation Qualifying Examination beginning at grade 10. • A developmental profile instruments for children entering school at either kindergarten or first grade.
4013	Commissioner Holloway	Noted that the department had begun the process for developing and selecting an annual English language proficiency test for English Language Learners (ELL) students. She discussed the school designator system.
4003	Commissioner Holloway	Observed that they had refocused and refined the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination, in line with the requirements of SB 133 to test essential skills.
3950	Commissioner Holloway	Developed alternate and optional assessments for students with disabilities.
3927	Commissioner Holloway	Discussed early learning and noted that research tells that it is successful.
3901	Commissioner Holloway	Noted that efforts in early development have increased the safety of children in early childhood programs; enhanced the quality through higher standards, specific training, and educational requirements; and provided technical assistance to these programs.
3818	Commissioner Holloway	Spoke to the challenge of attitude. She emphasized the need to get rid of the excuses for why a child cannot learn. "We must believe that all children can

		learn."
3733	Commissioner Holloway	Noted the need for a single, comprehensive system of assessment and accountability, including criteria for meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).
3729	Commissioner Holloway	Discussed technical assistance and support for schools or districts identified under Title I School Improvement provisions. Emphasized that it would do not good to designate schools if we do not help them get better.
3657	Commissioner Holloway	Reviewed a new district compliance monitoring system based on provisions of NCLB. Alaska is a local control state. Many of the requirements expect the Department of Education and Early Development to take on a new role.
3618	Commissioner Holloway	Spoke to new policies and procedures for all teachers and paraprofessionals to adhere to in order to become "highly qualified" as defined by NCLB.
3609	Commissioner Holloway	Discussed criteria to apply to schools to determine if they are "persistently dangerous."
3554	Commissioner Holloway	Reviewed supplemental service providers.
3533	Commissioner Holloway	Stressed the need to work with district staff on strategies. Reading is central.
3507	Commissioner Holloway	Provided a summary of key issues: How to implement? Work with school district staff to develop strategies that will provide all students with opportunities to learn and read state standards at the appropriate age/grade levels.
3422	Commissioner Holloway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training and assistance on the requirements of state law and regulations and the federal No Child Left Behind Act. • Develop Alternate assessments for grades 4, 5, 7, and 9. • Development of science performance standards by the end of 2005-2006. • Development of a statewide science assessment based on state standards by the end of 2007-2008. • Development or selection of an annual assessment of English language proficiency for English Language

		<p>Learners (ELL).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration of test security and assessment administration training, annually. • Compiling and reporting student assessment and school report card information, annually. • Refocusing and aligning the Benchmark assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics with the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. • Establish district-monitoring systems to comply with requirements of NCLB
3349	Commissioner Holloway	Discussed key issues facing the department: Implementation of the No Child Left Behind initiative, Comprehensive Statewide Assessment system, School Accountability/designator system, teacher preparation, recruitment, retention, and public school funding.
3337	Commissioner Holloway	Reviewed access to and the quality of early care and learning programs.
3323	Commissioner Holloway	Observed that the department faces a tough road and emphasized that partnership would help all.
3304	Commissioner Holloway	Noted that there are many stars in the ranks of teachers, principals, superintendents, support staff, childcare and preschool teachers.
3217	Vice-Chair Meyer	Referred to teacher shortages and questioned the extent of the problem.
3137	Commissioner Holloway	Noted that the recruitment and retention grant has made some headway. There is a new web site: Alaskateacher.org, which is helping districts to advertise openings. Five Alaska Native teachers are working on a program to help link outside teachers to their communities.
3014	Dr. Ed McLain, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Education & Early Development	Further discussed the grant, which was \$2 million dollars for a rural practicum to support student teachers. The grant includes mentoring to support new teachers and is a one-stop contact in the department.
2904	Commissioner Holloway	Added that there was also a federal grant.
2847	Representative Stoltze	Asked the status of home school regulations.
2818	Commissioner	Noted that the department does not

	Holloway	regulate home schooling. The department does have a correspondence study curriculum.
2729	Representative Joule	Expressed the belief that children can learn regardless of their background, but pointed out the issue of equality and questioned how to achieve education where there is no or little economy.
2630	Commissioner Holloway	Acknowledged that how to make public education in small villages relevant is a large issue and suggested the need to tie learning to the culture. She added that there are arguments as to what can be delivered in the villages.
2530	Representative Joule	Observed that it is difficult to tie education to the culture with standardized testing. He questioned if bilingual education schools could contract services for education.
2424	Commissioner Holloway	Responded that the department could not find any thing that prohibits a contractual relationship with tribal entities to provide education. She felt that it would be worth exploring.
2336	Representative Joule	Referred to recruiting, training and growing teachers. He questioned where Alaska is in terms of pay.
2312	Commissioner Holloway	Did not know exact ranking, but summarized that Alaska has lost its competitive edge.
2247	Representative Stevens	Observed that education is undergoing a great deal of change. He expressed concern with the transitional period between governors. He pointed out that education must rise beyond politics. He asked if the state is transitioning smoothly so that children will not pay the price.
2105	Commissioner Holloway	Felt that the transition had been positive. She thanked the Committee for the opportunity to discuss the history and the need to "stay the course". She emphasized that there will be some need for corrective action. The Governor supports the "no child left behind" approach and understands the bipartisan work that has been done.
	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM