

**MINUTES**  
**SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**March 17, 2006**  
**9:02 a.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Lyda Green convened the meeting at approximately [9:02:57 AM](#).

**PRESENT**

Senator Lyda Green, Co-Chair  
Senator Gary Wilken, Co-Chair  
Senator Con Bunde, Vice Chair  
Senator Fred Dyson  
Senator Bert Stedman  
Senator Donny Olson

**Also Attending:** ROGER SAMPSON, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development; MARY FRANCIS, Executive Director, Alaska Association of School Administrators; CARL ROSE, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards

**Attending via Teleconference:** From Anchorage: JOHN ALCANTRA, Government Relations Director, National Education Association - Alaska

**SUMMARY INFORMATION**

SB 304-AIRPORT PARKING SHUTTLES/AIRPORT CHARGES

The bill reported from Committee.

SB 235-SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BONUSES

The Committee heard from the Department of Education and Early Development and the education industry. The bill reported from Committee.

#sb304

SENATE BILL NO. 304

"An Act relating to the privileges of airport parking shuttles and to fees or charges imposed on a person who is not a lessee or holder of a privilege to use the property or a facility of an airport."

9:04:49 AM

This was the second hearing for this bill in the Senate Finance Committee.

Co-Chair Wilken moved to report the bill from Committee with individual recommendations and accompanying fiscal note.

There being no objection, SB 304 was REPORTED from Committee with previous zero fiscal note #1 from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

9:05:01 AM

#sb235

SENATE BILL NO. 235

"An Act relating to a public school performance incentive program; and providing for an effective date."

This was the first hearing for this bill in the Senate Finance Committee.

9:05:25 AM

ROGER SAMPSON, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development informed the Committee that his testimony would complement the information reflected in the handout and accompanying power-point presentation titled "Alaska School Performance Incentive Program Measuring Individual Student Achievement" [copy on file].

Page 2

*What is the Program?*

School Performance Incentive Program

- Performance incentive pay for improved student achievement beyond a year's growth
- Entire staff in a school receive incentive (all or none) includes administrators, teachers, classified
- Target based on individual student growth
- Compares the same student from previous year to current year
- All schools qualify if they meet growth target
- Measurement tool is the Standards Based Assessments (SBA) given annually in April

Commissioner Sampson explained that the School Performance Incentive Program (Program) "is designed to increase student achievement" from year to year. All grade levels at every public school in the State would be eligible for the Program. Allowing a school's entire staff to be eligible for the compensation would "encourage" them "to work as a team in order to move a school forward to reach the incentive program".

Commissioner Sampson stated rather than basing the Program on a "preconceived target" like the federal "No Child Left Behind" program or "something that the Department or the Legislature would identify ahead of time", this Program is based on growing each child "to a higher performance level".

Commissioner Sampson noted that Standards Based Assessments (SBA), which are conducted each spring, would be the tool utilized to determine whether "a school meets the performance level". The SBA was selected because it is an established test that is "aligned with the Alaska state performance standards and the grade level expectations". This test would "accurately reflect" whether students "were learning the Alaska standards".

Commissioner Sampson noted that considerable discussion occurred in regards to how student achievement going forward would be measured. "Best practices tells us that we should have multiple measures." The goal would be to have multiple indicators of whether the "growth was real and accurate." Efforts must be taken to insure "that those measures really do get the students to what we are valuing and willing to compensate for". SBA is "the only instrument that we have that does that consistently at this time."

Commissioner Sampson likened the Program to a television retailer who implemented an incentive program to encourage his sales team to sell more product. The owner of the store would be willing to pay for such things as sales classes or practice demonstrations that would assist the staff in increasing sales. In a similar manner, professional development classes, and other measures could benefit the School Performance Incentive Program. "The bottom line is that we want kids to achieve and that's what we're willing to compensate for." While attendance, graduation, and parental involvement are important, they do not ensure that a child would "achieve well".

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#### Benefits

##### School Performance Incentive Program

- Target not reached = no state financial liability
- Create a strong workforce for Alaska
- Enhance teacher recruitment efforts
- Accountability: directly linked to high levels of achievement
- Promote collaboration, effective instruction and spread responsibility across grade levels and content areas
- Requires focused instruction aligned to Alaska standards

Commissioner Sampson communicated that the Program would benefit both the State and its children. Continuing, he noted that the State would only be required to provide monetary incentives were targets reached. The Program "would assist in moving students through our system and being closer to being work force ready or work force ready with essential skills."

[9:10:08 AM](#)

Commissioner Sampson stated that the Program would assist recruitment efforts, as people would be aware that Alaska has a monetary incentive program based on student achievement. Another benefit of the Program would be that it "is designed to spread the responsibility for reading, writing, and mathematics across a very board base of the school workforce."

Commissioner Sampson declared that incentive programs are successfully utilized in the private sector and this "strategy" could also be successful in the public sector. He characterized the "Value Table" depicted on page four as being "the core of the program". The Value Table depicts six "performance categories" in which students who have taken the SBA would be placed. Those categories are: "Far Below Proficient Minus"; "Far Below Proficient Plus"; "Below Proficient Minus"; "Below Proficient Plus"; "Proficient"; and "Advanced". "The concept" would be to move a student from whichever category they qualified for "to achieve at the next highest level, or, if they are at the "Advanced" level, to keep them" at that level.

Commissioner Sampson explained that the base line is 100 points. Thus a score below 100 points would indicate that, "a student did not gain a year's worth of achievement in that year". A score above 100 would indicate that the "student gained more than one year's worth of growth."

Commissioner Sampson informed the Committee "there could be some movement and development on this Value Table that would put more emphasis above 'Proficient'." Currently "the emphasis is on below 'Proficient'." In other words, the effort would be to get "students to proficiency". Currently four of the six categories reflected on page 4 concentrate on getting kids to proficiency. Only two categories address getting students above proficiency. That emphasis "could be adjusted".

Commissioner Sampson stated that "very valid comments" have been raised as to whether the Department has been "willing to accept a standard that's not high enough; not rigorous enough by looking at the proficiency." His response is that "this model in fact goes beyond Proficient, trying to move our kids to Advanced." The federal No Child Left Behind program does not do that. While the Department "could increase those categories to put more emphasis on moving kids beyond Proficient", the fact is that currently there are few schools in the State that have "large percentages of students that are performing at the Advanced level."

Commissioner Sampson stated that the "Computing Index" charts depicted on pages 5, 6, and 7 basically "walk" through the model. The chart on page 5 reflects a small school with ten students who took the SBA. Those students tested at a variety of proficiency levels, as reflected in the "Last Year" column. The

information on page 6 reflects those students' "Last Year" proficiency levels and how they performed the subsequent year, as reflected in the "Current Year" column. This information would be applied to the page 4 "Value Table" chart in order to determine the "Points" that would be assigned to an individual student. This is reflected in the chart on page 7.

Commissioner Sampson continued that the points assigned to each student would be added together and divided by the total number of students. This would provide the School Index Score, also depicted on page 7.

Commissioner Sampson communicated that the Value Index was carefully crafted "so that you could not focus on a single" category of students; those in the "Proficient" category for instance. The purpose of this would be to prevent a school from concentrating its efforts on advancing a particular group of students. "You need to address all the kids in that school in order to hit the compensation levels."

Page 8

Performance Levels  
School Performance Incentive Program

<u>Growth Index Level</u>	<u>Index Point Value</u>
Strong	102 - 104.99
High	105 - 107.99
Excellent	108 - 109.99
Outstanding	110 and Greater

Commissioner Sampson stated that, based on Department research indicating "you need more than one plateau to hit", the performance and compensation levels were separated into four categories. "Otherwise, people will see it as too far to reach, too difficult."

[9:16:07 AM](#)

Commissioner Sampson identified the four categories as "Strong, High, Excellent, and Outstanding."

Page 9

Performance Level Incentive

<u>Level</u>	<u>Certified</u>	<u>Non-Certified</u>
Strong	\$2,500	\$1,000
High	\$3,500	\$1,500
Excellent	\$4,500	\$2,000
Outstanding	\$5,500	\$2,500

Multiple levels provide greater incentive and achievable graduations, but recognize real growth in achievement.

Commissioner Sampson stated that the various compensation levels for certificated and non-certificated staff are depicted on page 9. The objective would be to provide compensation incentive levels "high enough" to encourage educators and staff "to go to work everyday and consider a different way to work, not a harder way to work." People tend to acquire "patterns of work" and "changes are hard".

[9:17:42 AM](#)

Page 10

#### Expected Outcomes

- All staff have ownership of instruction and share responsibility for results
- Incentive to work differently, embrace innovation and create partnerships to improve student achievement
- Accountability and incentives to cause all students to reach proficiency and higher levels of advanced achievement
- Expand responsibility for the three Rs to all staff
- Instruction designed and delivered to meet student needs

Commissioner Sampson reviewed the expected outcomes. Rather than the goal to be to make staff work harder, the goal would be to encourage staff to work "differently and smarter". This program could provide the "environment" through which high schools and middle schools might "look different", as administrators, teachers, and classified staff could work together to deliver instruction.

Commissioner Sampson identified the expected outcome, "instruction designed and delivered to meet student needs," as

being the most important. This program could create the environment in which even high school teachers who have 140 students could find ways to accomplish the outcome. The Program would provide "the framework" through which "the shift must be made from teaching concepts to teaching students."

Page 11

#### Why Other Models Fail

- Not based on student growth
- Unrealistic targets
- Conflict among staff: Some must lose for others to win
- Exclude building administrators
- Instrument used to measure is not reliable and consistent
- Compensation not large enough to provide incentive for change
- Weak commitment to the program

Commissioner Sampson stated that the Department developed the Program after reviewing 20 years of research. The question of why incentive programs have worked well in the private sector "but have had mixed reviews at best" in the public sector was asked. The reasons depicted on page 11 were identified as contributing factors to the failure of other models.

Commissioner Sampson declared that failed school models had "a predetermined target that was not based on student growth". Thus, "a school that had high performing" students had "an advantage from the very beginning". The fact that this program is based on growth "levels the field".

[9:20:56 AM.](#)

Commissioner Sampson communicated that programs established with "targets that were too high" defeated teachers; programs with low expectations were criticized as being "unrealistic" or not getting the desired results by the public or those who funded the programs. Models that rewarded individuals rather than a group with merited compensation created "conflict among staff". While that type of a compensation model has been the most common, it raised the most concern within the education community, as a teacher with a demonstrated "successful

strategy" whose students tested well in math and other subjects might be unwilling to share their strategy with other educators due to the fact that the program might limit rewards to top performers. Such a model would "not promote collaboration".

Commissioner Sampson noted that a model would create problems were it not "fair, consistent, and reliable". To that point, he stated that the Department has developed a "strong instrument". The "weakness" is that "we don't have multiple instruments".

Commissioner Sampson would not support advancing a program whose compensation levels were inadequate to promote changes in behavior. Inadequate compensation could result in a failed program. Another consideration is that there must be commitment to the program.

Page 12

#### School Performance Incentive Program Recap

- Based on growth in student achievement
- Empowers expertise of educators and school personnel
- Includes all staff: all make it or no one makes it
- SBA used to measure growth

Commissioner Sampson stated that the information on page 12 recaps the program. Because the program is based on growth, "the playing field is level". A school with "the lowest group of performing students" would not be disadvantaged or advantaged. The program is based on where students were last year and where they are this year. This Program would both "inspire and provide the environment to really utilize the expertise that we have." The "outstanding educators", "incredible secretaries, custodians, instructional aides, and administrators" should be "encouraged to work together and figure out how to move our kids forward". The belief is that this school-based Program would provide the environment through which to accomplish that goal. It would involve every staff member and every employee of the school. The established SBA would be the tool utilized to test the program.

Commissioner Sampson noted that the Program would focus on reading, writing, and mathematics. Concern has been raised in regards to the fact that students "need more than" those basics. Nonetheless, the overall consensus is that "success in other

content areas could be greatly limited if in fact our kids" are lacking in those three core areas.

Commissioner Sampson concluded his remarks.

9:24:15 AM

Senator Bunde communicated his "enthusiastic" support of the Department's "incentive ideas". However, he shared "a caution" he had received from a [unidentified] teacher who stated that "teachers are bright; they'll figure out a way to gain the system". Some may "basically cheat and get the bonus without getting the student achievement".

Commissioner Sampson acknowledged that the Department is apprised of this concern. Similar concern was raised in regards to other programs such as the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE). Many thought that cheating might occur in regards to the HSGQE, as it is "a very high stakes situation". That has not been the experience. "Very very strong security procedures" were implemented. In addition, a professional "who is being less than honest with us" could jeopardize their license. He allowed however, that such behavior could occur.

Commissioner Sampson continued that as the Program develops over the years, a teacher or group of teachers who were cheating "would become evident very quickly" ... to their peers. "Falsifying" a student's record this year would become "blatantly" obvious in subsequent testing. "The consequences are very grave." He was confident that "our professionals would remain professionals".

9:26:50 AM

Co-Chair Wilken voiced appreciation for the Commissioner's efforts in developing this program. Drawing upon his private business experience, he avowed that employee incentive programs do work. People figure out how to work smarter rather than harder, and the effort "propagates" itself throughout the work force with the result being that "the rising tide lifted all boats". That would be the goal of this Program. In order to ensure that this Program not fail, he suggested that it begin as a pilot program. This would allow it to be tested and perfected before implementing the Program Statewide. This approach would assist in developing a Program that educators would desire to

participate in rather than one they might fear. "Confidence" in the Program must be developed.

Co-Chair Wilken informed the Committee that he had requested the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District to conduct a "critical analysis" of the Program. Four areas of concern were identified: the first was "narrowing the curriculum down to the Value Table"; the second was cheating; the third was in regards to "the fairness of the Value Table" across all ranges; and the fourth concern was about "rewarding mediocrity". Other school districts might have these or other concerns. Therefore, he reiterated that a pilot program involving perhaps nine schools rather than 450 schools would provide an opportunity to further finesse the Program. In conclusion, he professed being "suitably comfortable and uncomfortable with" the Program. He voiced confidence with the concept, and hoped that with additional input from others, the Program would be implemented and viewed as a success.

[9:30:42 AM](#)

Senator Stedman asked whether employees at the school district's central office would be monetarily rewarded were only one school of many in their district to qualify for the incentive bonus.

[9:31:09 AM](#)

Commissioner Sampson stated that, as proposed, all schools in each district would be eligible for the Program.

Senator Stedman clarified that his question specifically pertained to language in Sec. 2(b) page two, line 19 of the bill.

(b) The department shall establish a procedure by regulation for a school performance incentive payment by the department to personnel employed at the central office of a school district in which at least one school has met the requirements for distribution of a school performance incentive payment to employees of the school. The amount paid under this subsection may not exceed five percent of the total paid to all employees at all schools eligible under this section for the school performance incentive payment in the district. A payment under this section ...

Commissioner Sampson replied that "the rationale" behind this provision was to reward people, such as reading specialists who, while being based at the central office, serviced various schools. "In a dialogue with the Department and the Superintendent of that district, if in fact there were people who were housed in the central office that played a significant role in any of the schools within that district in meeting that performance incentive that they ought to share in that compensation." The compensation would be limited to those employees who played "a significant role in any school's meeting" the performance incentive levels.

[9:32:42 AM](#)

Senator Olson remarked that certain programs such as incentive programs are "more accepted" in one environment than another. To that point, he shared that "there is a fair amount of resistance" to this program from the school districts in the Senate District he represents. Therefore, he inquired as to how he might convince these entities that this program would work.

Commissioner Sampson affirmed that some schools and school personnel have not been receptive to this program. For the most part, school district "superintendents have been very supportive of the concept". Continuing, he noted that due to the fact that the fiscal note reflects a three million to fifteen million dollar range "depending on the number of schools that might meet that performance, there is a perception that that money is available, and it is available for schools or for educators". Therefore, were such money available, the question would be whether to provide it through the performance program, through direct grants to the school," or through the Base Student Foundation Formula allocation. He has attempted to explain that while the funds might be available, they are tied to the "condition that performance in student achievement is attached to it".

Commissioner Sampson stated that the National Education Association (NEA) leadership has taken a position opposing this Program. Even though NEA provided "an opportunity" for him to present the Program to them, their position is that additional money allocated for education should be utilized for such things as increased teacher salaries. Continuing, he noted that many "rank and file teachers" in schools are "very supportive of" the program. One response to those who oppose the Program would be

to clarify that "there is no penalty if you don't make it". The argument that a school that did not make it would be compared to other schools is moot, as a variety of school comparisons currently exist. The desire is that schools would recognize the benefits of the Program. In addition to providing benefits to students, educators would receive compensation "for something they love to do, which is assist our kids in growth".

Senator Bunde pointed out that "the NEA leadership is also against the HSGQE", and "any sort of accountability".

[9:36:33 AM](#)

Senator Bunde asked whether this was a voluntary program that a school could opt into.

Commissioner Sampson stated, "all schools would be eligible". A school would not be required to declare their participation.

Senator Bunde suggested that since "money is a finite and limited commodity", the amount available should be reduced and schools should be required "to actively opt in" by submitting a competitive application of merit. As a result, a reduced fiscal note would address some of the concerns about the Program. In addition, schools could choose not to participate.

[9:37:45 AM](#)

Senator Olson inquired when the determination about whether the Program was a success would be made.

Commissioner Sampson anticipated that the Program should operate for a minimum of three years. That would provide time in which schools could develop and share "successive strategies". In addition, a three-year period would also prevent "false indicators" from being presented.

Co-Chair Green observed that other than specifying a maximum compensation level that could be paid to certified and non-certified employees, no specific detail was included in the bill. She asked whether this was intentional.

Commissioner Sampson noted that it was intentional. Were this legislation adopted, "the specific implementation detail would be developed through regulation".

Co-Chair Green asked whether it could be anticipated that the implementation would follow the model depicted in the presentation.

Commissioner Sampson affirmed that it could.

Co-Chair Green communicated that allowing the details to be specified in regulation could be "troublesome" in the sense that a subsequent commissioner "might take it another direction". The concern however would not be too great, as any changes "would still be subject somewhat to legislative review."

Co-Chair Wilken "appreciated Senator Bunde's question" as to how schools might qualify for the Program, for he had understood that the Program would be implemented Statewide immediately upon adoption. Continuing with Senator Bunde's suggestion, he understood that one year after being adopted, only fifty to 100 schools might be participating in the Program.

Commissioner Sampson clarified that the scenario exemplified by Co-Chair Wilken would occur were the application process proposed by Senator Bunde adopted. However, it would not occur in the Program as currently proposed.

In response to a comment from Co-Chair Wilken, Commissioner Sampson stated that the program, as currently proposed, is not an opt-in program. "All 488 schools would be eligible".

Co-Chair Wilken, while acknowledging that all schools would be eligible, asked whether they would "be active participants".

Commissioner Sampson "hoped that they would be active participants". He asked for further clarification of the question.

Co-Chair Wilken asked how the Department would respond to a high school that might say, "I don't want to play".

Commissioner Sampson explained that, were this Program implemented as currently presented, any school that "meets a performance level ... would be eligible" for compensation. The school could refuse to accept the compensation.

Co-Chair Wilken understood therefore that every school would be eligible for the program and that any school meeting the performance levels specified in the program would be eligible for the compensation.

Commissioner Sampson affirmed.

Co-Chair Wilken concluded that each school's performance would be measured regardless of whether they actively desired to participate or not.

Co-Chair Green acknowledged that a group of students from the New Directions Resource Center were in attendance at the Anchorage Legislative Information Office.

[9:42:42 AM](#)

JOHN ALCANTRA, Government Relations Director, National Education Association - Alaska (NEA-Alaska) testified via teleconference from Anchorage and stated that the organization, which has 13,000 members, "believes that it is essential that the State of Alaska focus its education resources on student achievement. That focus should emphasize programs that are proven avenues to increase student achievement, such as a qualified teacher in every classroom, supported by qualified administrators and classified personnel. Research tells us that this is the number one factor in student achievement. Next is small class sizes, which provide the opportunity for one on one attention."

Mr. Alcantra stated that the list would also include "professional development for all staff which includes teaching strategies to motivate students with varying learning styles; planning time which allows for collaboration by staff to plan implementation of innovative strategies; early childhood reading readiness programs which provide the foundation skills for years of student achievement; intervention programs which provide remediation opportunities that lead to student success and provide encouragement; mentoring programs for new hires, which provides the employees access to a skilled colleague who can demonstrate winning strategies. To focus on proven programs, school districts need to be adequately funded. NEA-Alaska believes that before the State considers new program, that they should adequately fund our schools."

[9:44:27 AM](#)

Mr. Alcantra commended Commissioner Sampson "for his efforts in avoiding the pitfalls of past failed performance incentive programs. He realizes that school climate is one of the affected factors in a school. The Commissioner's inclusion of the entire school staff in the incentive program is acknowledgment that everyone in the school helps set the learning climate. High student expectations is another of the factors of affected schools. The proposed program focuses on student growth and the expectation that students can exceed the expected annual growth. However, the reality is that trying to fashion an objective performance incentive program in the public schools is like being a tomb robber. There are too many traps to avoid. The greatest obstacle is the changing environment of the student. The school cannot control the home life of the child, the school cannot control the happenings outside the school that impact the student, and the school cannot control the emotional changes in the student. Yet the growth of the student would be measured by a single test given on a certain day. Senator Lisa Murkowski acknowledged the shortcomings of such a measurement in determining adequate yearly progress. We must avoid such a measurement in rewarding our school employees."

Mr. Alcantra noted that when Commissioner Sampson presented this program to the 350 delegates representing the entirety of the State's school districts at NEA-Alaska assembly in February 2006, "he received a lot of critical feedback". The delegates stated that the number one factor in student achievement is that educators "must be confident in the tools they are providing. They are skeptical of the success of this tool's actual impact on student achievement. The bottom line was the resources should be used in proven programs that can get to every school not just certain schools. The concerns voiced by the delegates included this program competes for scarce resources, the program provides an incentive for good teachers to transfer to schools that receive the incentive, veteran teachers who have a proven record presently transfer out of Title I schools. It is natural for an employee to want to be part of a championship team. The program implies that teachers are not presently trying to teach the best student achievement. Teachers are doing their best. They need more time to teach and more time to collaborate. The program is not an effective recruitment tool when compared to competitive compensation and a pension plan that provides a retirement with dignity. In closing, I would urge Senate Finance Committee to consider the returns on investments and proven programs such as the teacher mentoring program, tracking and retaining quality

educators, reading readiness program, and early childhood programs. Invest in these proven programs for all schools before you invest in this program which mirrors failed programs in other places." He thanked the Committee for their "time and consideration".

[9:47:14 AM](#)

Senator Olson agreed "to a certain degree" that established programs should be supported, however, he noted that society has progressed beyond concentrating on "the three Rs". Continuing, he voiced concern about the number of dropouts in Rural Alaska. Existing programs are not addressing that situation.

Mr. Alcantra shared Senator Olson concerns; the dropout rate is one of many problems "that plague our schools". However, he was uncertain as to whether the program proposed in this bill would address the dropout problem. Senator Olson's position that new programs should be entertained, as they might be successful, was understandable.

[9:49:18 AM](#)

MARY FRANCIS, Executive Director, Alaska Association of School Administrators, (Superintendents Organization) stated that, while there is a variety of opinions in regard to this program, most superintendents "recognize and support" the proposed program "for its positive outcome in an entire school staff". People who have worked in a school liken it to being a family consisting of "teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, food service workers" and others who contribute to the positive environment of the school. The growth model of the program is important. Noting that she had once worked in the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD), she shared that "schools in areas in which student achievement perhaps is not as high as in other areas of the State actually would be the ones to benefit from this program". Performance data she had presented to the LKSD school board "was not particularly admirable, but, following a year, I presented this incredible growth data and that had such a positive impact on not only kids, but the professionals who worked with them. The concept of rewarding and acknowledging the whole school's role in the growth of the student that exceeds one year is very important." The majority of the members of the Superintendents Organization "support the concept of what this program is trying to achieve. We do however

think that its funding ought to be outside" of the need for a substantial increase in the Base Student Foundation Funding allocation.

[9:51:57 AM](#)

CARL ROSE, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards spoke in support of the bill. He shared the results of research about positive learning environments. A researcher with Education Trust presented two factors that contribute to student achievement: one is "the impact that a quality teacher can have on the development of a child". Having such a teacher for three consecutive years "puts a child on a path of success that is quite remarkable. Conversely, three years of instruction with a poor teacher puts them on a course that may be irreparable in terms of kids ever catching up". "Instruction is critically important."

Mr. Rose stated that the other factor "is the environment". The aforementioned research indicates that, while "the focus on instruction is critically important", schools that are "in economically depressed areas, areas of ethnicity, inner city schools, that perform at the highest rates in states around the nation," also benefit from "the attitude that people bring to a school". That attitude "says that we're not going to pay attention to the socioeconomics, we're not going to pay attention to race, and we're not going to pay attention the difficulty that we face in our schools, we're going to focus on what kids need".

Mr. Rose continued that while "alignment is critically important in regards to curriculum, instruction and assessments"; people's attitude is also important. This bill "is an attempt to try to change the behavior, the attitude of people, not so much to say that we have to pay you to behave like this...". People in the private sector who are paid on commission provide "a different kind of service" than those who are not. He was "not suggesting that we have to pay our professionals to do a better job, but I think the word that we use at the Association when we work in communities, is you should do things intentionally, with forethought". While most people attempt to raise their children as best as possible, were parents' actions "intentional", their actions "would be more deliberate. We'd ensure that things happen." That is the concept being furthered by this proposal. "We're asking people" who are "part of a school community to be

intentional in their actions, to focus in on what kids need, to identify when they are struggling, to get them the help when they need it, right now." "The whole concept" of this bill "has merit". While it could be "a struggle" to implement the program on a statewide basis, "the intent is to try to create a positive learning environment. The research suggests that quality instruction and a positive learning environment makes all the difference in the world for young people who have no control over the education that they are going to receive."

Mr. Rose stated that "reams of research" that would relate to the "diverse settings" of this State are available at [educationtrust.org](http://educationtrust.org).

[9:56:45 AM](#)

Senator Olson asked whether the Program proposed in this legislation has been implemented in other places, and if so, what the results have been, as this is "a fairly expensive endeavor."

Mr. Rose replied that he could not provide information about where similar programs have been implemented. He could, however, testify that numerous schools and communities have celebrated student growth. This program would implement a compensation program in an effort to "deliberately get people to work together. When you talk about a growth model, it's important that everyone make progress in a school it's an entire school. Its not just one group of teachers, it's the entire school." In response to the concern that teachers would desire to work with "a championship team", he noted that, "schools that are performing Below Proficiency are the places that these initiatives are going to be critically important, because those are the areas of growth." It is "difficult to move high performing schools much further up the line in large increments; those low performing schools have tremendous room for growth, and I think that's what we're after."

Senator Bunde shared that, several years prior, he had visited an inner city school in New York City, which was located in "a drug invested" area with criminal activities. While "the school was surrounded by a cyclone fence", the kids in the school were high achievers who were polite and eager to "demonstrate their knowledge" to teachers and visitors. It was something different that what we could easily call the "typical New York school". He

recounted the saying "if you keep on doing the same old thing, you're going to get the same old results...we have an opportunity here to not do the same old thing."

Co-Chair Green concurred.

AT EASE [10:00:35 AM](#) / 10:00:40 AM

Co-Chair Wilken moved to report the bill from Committee with individual recommendations and accompanying fiscal notes.

There being no objection, SB 235 was REPORTED from Committee with previous \$15,000,000 fiscal note #1 from the Department of Education and Early Development.

Co-Chair Green reviewed the Committee schedule for the following week and noted that SB 305-OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION TAX was scheduled, pending referral.

#

**ADJOURNMENT**

Co-Chair Lyda Green adjourned the meeting at [10:02:13 AM](#).