

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 8, 2006

2:12 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Fred Dyson, Chair  
Senator Gary Wilken, Vice Chair  
Senator Lyda Green  
Senator Kim Elton  
Senator Donny Olson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 252

"An Act relating to the definition of 'child abuse and neglect' for child protection purposes; and providing for an effective date."

MOVED SB 252 OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 235

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

HEARD AND HELD

SENATE BILL NO. 251

"An Act relating to immunization for meningitis of postsecondary students residing on campus."

SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 252

SHORT TITLE: DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/30/06	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/30/06	(S)	HES, JUD
02/08/06	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 235

SHORT TITLE: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BONUSES

SPONSOR(s): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/13/06	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/13/06	(S)	HES, FIN
02/01/06	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/01/06	(S)	-- Rescheduled to 02/03/06 --
02/03/06	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
02/03/06	(S)	-- Rescheduled from 02/01/06 --
02/08/06	(S)	HES AT 1:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

**WITNESS REGISTER**

Joanne Gibbens, Program Administrator  
Office of Children's Services  
Department of Health and Social Services  
PO Box 110630  
Juneau, AK 99811-0630

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented SB 252 and answered questions.

Stacie Kraly, Chief Assistant Attorney General -  
Statewide Section Supervisor  
Human Services Section  
Civil Division (Juneau)  
Department of Law  
PO Box 110300  
Juneau, AK 99811-0300

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions on SB 252.

Roger Sampson, Commissioner  
Department of Education and Early Development  
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200  
Juneau, AK 99801-1894

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented SB 235 and answered questions.

Les Morse, Director  
Assessment and Accountability  
Department of Education and Early Development  
801 West 10th Street, Suite 200  
Juneau, AK 99801-1894

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions on SB 235.

Michael Dickens, Ph.D., Superintendent  
Skagway City Schools  
PO Box 497  
Skagway, AK 99840-0497

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Supported the incentive program in SB 235.

Tom Harvey, Executive Director  
NEA-Alaska  
4100 Spenard Road  
Anchorage, AK 99517

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified on SB 235.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

**CHAIR FRED DYSON** called the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee meeting to order at [2:12:12 PM](#). Present were Senators Kim Elton, Gary Wilken, Donnie Olson and Chair Fred Dyson. Senator Lyda Green arrived during the course of the meeting.

**SB 252-DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

CHAIR DYSON announced SB 252 to be up for discussion.

[2:13:56 PM](#)

JOANNE GIBBENS, Program Administrator, Office of Children's Services (OCS), Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), introduced herself and Stacie Kraly of the Department of Law. Ms. Gibbens explained that the intent of SB 252 is simply to comply with federal law. In 2003, the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act amended a federal law known as CAPTA, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. An amendment to that federal law now requires states to have in place a process to investigate, provide services and look into cases where health care providers have reported issues to child protective services regarding illegal substance abuse and its effect on children.

She said this bill therefore ensures that health care professionals report to the child protective service agency any infants affected by abuse of a controlled substance or by withdrawal from prenatal exposure to a controlled substance. Other parts of the federal law require that OCS develop a plan of care and so forth. All requirements in the federal amendment are things OCS does already, including receiving reports on a regular basis from hospital personnel if, for example, a baby is born who generates a concern about cocaine or marijuana exposure. The key piece of the legislation is putting into statute the requirement that health care providers make those reports.

[2:16:05 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON referred to an e-mail from the Alaska Primary Care Association expressing concern that the bill may discourage some people from going to a community health clinic.

MS. GIBBENS acknowledged that people who fear being reported might not go to a health care provider for prenatal care. However, this bill, and the federal intent, is to ensure that it's the health care providers involved in the delivery or care of an infant who'll make that report. She indicated for OCS it's "safety first": if there is concern about an infant's health, the hope is that it's reported so necessary services can be provided.

She discounted the notion that OCS would be standing at the doorway, waiting for the mother to give birth. She noted that hospitals and health care providers have their own protocols for determining when a situation has reached a level where the state should be involved, which is why OCS receives calls now and responds to them. Although not an expert in substance abuse itself, she emphasized that the bill is limited to the health care providers who have the expertise to judge whether there is harm to an infant.

[2:19:19 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON expressed surprise that there wasn't already a statutory requirement because of requirements for reporting instances of abuse. He asked whether perhaps the bill is needed because some people in the medical field aren't reporting now.

MS. GIBBENS responded that she doesn't believe current child protection statutes specifically mention the use or effect of illegal or controlled substances on infants, including prenatal exposure or withdrawal; she deferred to Ms. Kraly for further detail. Ms. Gibbens said she'd consulted with a number of OCS offices in preparing for her testimony, and unanimously across the state those calls are being received. Although it's not specifically in law now, health care providers see it as their obligation to call so that OCS can be there to make an assessment, ensure the children are safe and perhaps get the mothers into treatment. Thus she didn't anticipate a large increase in calls due to this bill.

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CHAIR DYSON offered his belief that when a parent is abusing illegal drugs, under current statute the child is identified as

a child in need of aid. He asked Ms. Kraly whether detection of cocaine in an infant might precipitate the mother's arrest.

STACIE KRALY, Chief Assistant Attorney General - Statewide Section Supervisor, Human Services Section, Civil Division, Department of Law (DOL), pointed out that she doesn't practice criminal law. She then opined that the referral would probably be made if a toxicology report showed the presence of a controlled substance in both the baby and the mother. There'd be a report of harm and also a referral to a law enforcement agency in order to determine whether charges would be brought; those are discretionary functions of the district attorneys in the areas they cover. She acknowledged the possibility, though she wasn't sure how often it happened.

CHAIR DYSON referred to Senator Elton's concern and highlighted that providers want to get care to the right people and not scare off those who need it most. He asked what happens if prenatal care, including amniocentesis, raises a strong possibility of cocaine use before the child is born.

[2:23:35 PM](#)

MS. KRALY responded that DOL is getting calls such as reports of harm relating to a mother's consuming controlled substances during a pregnancy. From a jurisdictional standpoint, neither OCS nor DOL has authority over an unborn child. From a program standpoint, however, the family is referred to OCS, [DOL] takes the report of harm, there is an assessment and there is an effort to provide services and work with the family prior to the child's birth in order to ameliorate difficulties or issues arising in the home.

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CHAIR DYSON noted that Senator Green had joined the meeting at approximately 2:15 p.m.

SENATOR GREEN referred to page 1, line 9, and asked whether it is grammatically correct.

MS. KRALY agreed it is a clumsy sentence. She indicated DOL is working on an amendment to a companion bill in the House with the chair of the House Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee to make it more readable.

SENATOR ELTON observed that the bill is narrowly written, only applying to a health care provider involved in the delivery or care of an infant. It excludes the rest of the medical community, who also may be aware of circumstances.

MS. GIBBENS related her understanding that this bill basically repeats, verbatim, what the federal law requires; she surmised it is due to the level of expertise of the health care providers who are at the delivery or who provide care to the baby. She noted, however, that all health care professionals are mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect in Alaska.

[2:27:47 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON requested that someone get back to him to explain why the bill is so narrow. He voiced concern about the ability of a medical professional to report if that professional doesn't fit the criteria but notices a problem.

CHAIR DYSON asked whether anyone else wished to testify. He surmised that, in addition to bringing the statutes in line with current practice and federal requirements, this bill would affect federal funding.

MS. GIBBENS or MS. KRALY concurred. In response to Senator Green, she said depending on how the language is finessed in the House Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee, she'd propose that the Judiciary committee conform the language.

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SENATOR GREEN moved to report SB 252 from committee with a zero fiscal note and a note to ask the Judiciary committee to look at conforming language. Without objection, SB 252 was reported from the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee.

### **SB 235-SCHOOL PERFORMANCE BONUSES**

CHAIR DYSON announced SB 235 to be up for consideration.

[2:30:18 PM](#)

ROGER SAMPSON, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), presented the public school performance incentive program in SB 235, saying it is designed to maximize, intensify and dramatically increase achievement in Alaska.

Lauding its innovation, he said it's based on a number of other states' experiences. It aims to create an environment in which a school, as a whole, can focus on the individual needs of students and increase student achievement beyond one year's worth of growth. Based on growth, not a predetermined target, it includes all staff regardless of teaching certificates and thus includes secretaries and custodians, for example, as well as the administration of the building, such as the principal, vice principal and counselors.

CHAIR DYSON offered his belief that it wouldn't include the administration of a district.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON clarified that it specifically excludes superintendents. He said this program uses annual school-based assessments conducted each spring and developed around the student-performance standards in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) that further define the standards.

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COMMISSIONER SAMPSON discussed recognition of outstanding performance and strategies used by a school as a whole - not asking teachers and employees to work harder necessarily, but providing an incentive to work differently and smarter, looking at results. This bill aims to stimulate the educational community to look at innovative practices and successful principles, such as this [bonus program], from the private sector. Noting that one strategy won't work for all 500 or so Alaskan schools, he emphasized capturing the longevity and expertise that exists in both the certified and noncertified staff in many communities.

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COMMISSIONER SAMPSON called this a no-risk program for the State of Alaska. The compensation has been determined ahead of time; if desired results aren't achieved, there is no cost to the state. It will help increase the number and preparedness of students leaving school ready to enter the workforce, he opined, and will help make the state competitive in recruiting teachers nationwide and then retaining them. He said this model is about collaboration, effective instruction and using data to drive what is done for the individual needs of kids. He discussed spreading the responsibility for helping students attain proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics.

[2:35:52 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON explained that most states don't measure growth among students, but look at predetermined targets. Under this program, he asserted, students of all abilities will continue to grow, with clear targets for each individual student. The bill also provides a tool to evaluate the effectiveness and performance of Alaska's schools. He emphasized the desire to engage every student and to meet the needs of those students and evaluate whether there is a return on the investment in education. He surmised that measuring growth would positively affect the dropout and graduation rates. The one-on-one attention and having their needs met will change students' motivation to stay in school, and will change what they do once they leave school.

[2:38:08 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON touched on how to measure growth to see whether the incentive has been earned by a particular school. He presented a scenario that compares how Student A did in a given year, compared with a previous year. He mentioned looking at different ways to group the students, whether by ethnicity, socioeconomic status or another means, to make sure nobody is left behind when looking at whether the school showed the growth necessary to earn the incentive.

He turned to how this differs from the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which looks at a group of kids who come into the third grade, compared with those from a previous year. While that appears to work well statistically in large schools, Commissioner Sampson said it's problematic in small schools, which are numerous in Alaska, and for transient populations that move within a state. Measuring individual growth also provides information to parents, allowing them more meaningful engagement with teachers, principals and others who work at the school.

[2:40:01 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON turned to page 7 of a handout in committee packets, a "value table" that ties into the core of the legislation. He mentioned working in great detail with psychometricians and statisticians to ensure the fields are level among schools, whether large or small, urban or rural, containing high- or low-performing students, having high or low populations of students with disabilities and so forth. He

expressed the desire to eliminate any disadvantage to being in a school with a certain population. Acknowledging that people want to move to different schools already, he emphasized that the value table was designed carefully to allow all schools and staffs to have an "even, fair chance at the targets."

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COMMISSIONER SAMPSON addressed the next component in the handout, a "computing index" that takes an example of a small Alaskan school and uses performance data to articulate clear statistical gains. He said the crux of the program is to move individual students to a higher performance level, no matter what the beginning level was.

[2:46:05 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON asked why a student who slides backwards would get any points.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON responded that a score of 100 represents one year's worth of growth, the expected amount; a student who goes backwards would get less than 100. He acknowledged more credit is given for growth at certain points. For example, there has been a judgment that getting to proficiency is important. Thus the only place that credit would be given is if a student advanced and then moved back to "proficient"; that student would still receive credit for one year's worth of growth. The rationale comes from the psychometricians, who say advanced students, when at the very top level of any system, often fluctuate between advanced and proficient. While a school isn't penalized for that phenomenon, it also isn't given any credit for it.

SENATOR ELTON asked why more points are given for going from proficient to advanced, compared with points taken away when the reverse occurs.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON answered that moving the first time from proficient to advanced is a true sign of growth, whereas bouncing back and forth or regressing from advanced to proficient is a phenomenon that may not necessarily be controlled by the quality of instruction.

SENATOR ELTON said that accounts for the first time the student moves forward, but noted that 30 points are given for advancing, but 10 points are deducted for going back.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON deferred to Mr. Morse.

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LES MORSE, Director, Assessment and Accountability, Department of Education and Early Development, answered that if a student moves from proficient to advanced, most likely some instruction has affected that. For a number of students who go from advanced to proficient, it is just because the student is moving toward the center.

SENATOR WILKEN referred to the value table, asking what components are measured and how they are weighted.

MR. MORSE answered that in terms of testing, it would be done using standards-based assessments for mathematics and for language arts, which is a combination of reading and writing.

SENATOR WILKEN asked whether a school's results are based solely on test scores.

MR. MORSE said yes, under this program.

SENATOR WILKEN asked about attendance and other measurables.

MR. MORSE emphasized that this program just looks at growth. Other components are measured when making accountability decisions with regard to schools.

2:53:51 PM

SENATOR WILKEN asked how often the new test would be administered.

MR. MORSE answered that it has been administered once; it will be administered again in the spring.

SENATOR WILKEN asked whether it would be wise to measure more often in order to have the variations even out over time, since the test is new.

MR. MORSE agreed it is a new test, but said it is a valid measure. He acknowledged the importance of doing reliability and validity studies. While rewards would be based this year relative to the previous year, long-term trends also would be looked at to ensure that the value chart is established

appropriately. Thus there might be some need to adjust the value chart through regulation. However, judgments this year should be made relative to the previous year; as more years are used, more students are lost with regard to the ability to measure their performance, since some might not have been in Alaska two years previously, for instance.

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SENATOR WILKEN questioned the validity of the first test given, which had mechanical problems that affected student performance. Although very much in favor of the concept, he suggested there is risk to the state if what is implemented is detrimental to the efforts of those trying to move ahead. He expressed concern that people would lose confidence in the baseline against which to measure performance.

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COMMISSIONER SAMPSON said he shared that concern. He indicated DEED had taken extensive measures, after the first test last spring, to try to analyze the impact of some of the material errors, but had seen no evidence "from a variety of sources" that indicated there would be a significant impact on how well the students did. He noted there would be a second year [of testing] this coming May, from which there'd be comparison and establishment of a baseline. Employees at schools would first be impacted the following year, at which time there'd be three years of data. He expressed confidence that each year [the department] would gain a better understanding of the situation.

He agreed that looking at multiple years is the best approach. When looking at whether other models had been successful, he reported, the attempt was to take the best characteristics and eliminate the weaknesses. They'd looked at a multi-year concept in order to gain reliability; however, because of the mobility of some of the students and employees, there was a fear that some of the incentive would be lost if this were measured over multiple years.

[2:59:19 PM](#)

CHAIR DYSON recalled discussion, perhaps in another committee, about three different kinds of tests going on nationally. He asked Mr. Morse to relate what he'd discussed with Wes [Keller, staff to Chair Dyson].

MR. MORSE reported that Mr. Keller had raised an issue of yardsticks to measure the assessment. There were three different independent studies of the yardstick being used, by out-of-state experts and people who work in the state but who hadn't been involved in development of the assessment program. Mr. Morse noted that, for the different measures used to assess students, those don't really interact with one another for the purposes of this proposed program, other than when looking at the validity of a program.

CHAIR DYSON referred to Senator Wilken's earlier question. He related his understanding that although other kinds of assessments are being done, the department is going to only use one assessment for purposes of this incentive program.

MR. MORSE agreed, clarifying that the one assessment is based on Alaska's standards that teachers use. The other assessments are used to validate DEED's current program and to compare how the students do in the other programs versus this program.

CHAIR DYSON asked what "other programs" means.

MR. MORSE replied that there is a "norm reference test" given to two grade levels; students are looked at with regard to how they rank, which this past year had a very high - over 90 percent - correlation. That's one tool. A statewide assessment is also given; it doesn't provide results by individual student, but shows how the state is doing relative to other states. Those are then looked at to see how students are doing on them compared with how they're doing on this assessment to ensure it's a valid tool and that students are performing similarly.

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COMMISSIONER SAMPSON clarified that only one assessment instrument, given to all students in grades three through ten, would be used for this incentive program.

CHAIR DYSON offered his understanding that some other assessment instruments are given to some students in order to validate what is being done with all students.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON affirmed that.

[3:05:31 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON, in response to Senator Elton, explained that the [incentive program] only looks at the previous year and the current year to determine growth. In response to Chair Dyson, he clarified that there would be no advantage in having all high-performing students in a school.

CHAIR DYSON remarked that he'd been talking to parents in one of the only elementary schools in his district that met the requirements of the federal NCLB Act; apparently, a large number of students have now transferred into that school. He suggested in two or three years those new, motivated students could start affecting the performance at the school.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON mentioned calculating adequate yearly progress (AYP). With this proposed incentive program, he said, he didn't believe it would affect any school if higher-performance or transfer students came in. This program intends to look at each student, regardless of low, medium or high performance.

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CHAIR DYSON commented that there is a wonderful principal at the school he'd mentioned, and teachers with vision for the students, producing the very kind of environment he imagined Commissioner Sampson to be seeking. He said parents are "voting with their feet" to get their children into that school.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON said Alaska has schools that are doing things differently, looking at individual needs of kids, using data to drive their instruction, engaging students and spreading that responsibility - they are showing true growth. Agreeing the desire is to replicate that, he said the intent of SB 235 is to encourage others, through monetary compensation and recognition, to find out why there is success at the school Chair Dyson had described, for example. He mentioned using different types of resources - mainly data - to meet the needs of the students in order to accelerate growth.

[3:09:54 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON turned to page 10 of the computing index in the handout. He explained that computing the values for each student from the previous year to the current year gives the scores in the points column; adding that and then dividing by the number of tested students provides a school index score. Page 11 shows four identified performance levels. It was found

that multiple levels seem to provide incentive in the process. A school index score of 103 shows a strong growth level, with other levels labeled high, excellent and outstanding. Page 12 shows compensation given for each level of performance for both certificated and noncertificated employees. The trick with any incentive program is to find the threshold at which the goal is obtainable without being a giveaway, he added.

He informed members that many states are looking at ways to increase student achievement through performance. North Carolina, which has seen strong results and has been working at this for more than a decade, is the one Alaska is most closely modeled after, although even that program "pits one against the other," he said. He reiterated that the desire is to take what is best and incorporate it.

3:12:40 PM

SENATOR ELTON referred to Texas and asked whether tying growth index levels to a point system might create an incentive to get rid of non-performing students.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON reported having looked hard at such a possibility; he doesn't believe that will be the result. If a student is in the system for a full academic year and doesn't achieve, the penalty is severe. A school cannot focus on one or two performance areas and still hit a compensation level. For example, a school couldn't take just the kids who are right below the "proficient" level and get them up to that level. Statistically, all of the performing groups would have to be addressed.

SENATOR ELTON inquired about possibly assigning a score of minus 20 if someone drops out, thus penalizing the school.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON clarified that efforts have been to establish components over which the school has control. Although some might argue that there is control over students who may drop out, he wouldn't want to see school staff being penalized for something over which they didn't have control, such as violence in the home.

3:15:50 PM

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON turned to page 14, why other models fail, and noted that up to 20 years of experience had been looked at. Reasons for failure included: the program wasn't based on

growth, so a school with low-performing students was at a disadvantage; targets were unrealistic; there were conflicts among staff, and some had to lose for others to win; the programs excluded administrators; there wasn't reliability in "the instrument"; compensation wasn't sufficient to change behavior; or whoever was sponsoring the program didn't have sufficient commitment. Thus in creating Alaska's model, those components were considered.

He concluded by saying a baseline will be established from this year's results. Costs will vary every year because it is unknown how many schools will meet the target. He surmised, however, that if more schools meet the target than anticipated in the fiscal note, everyone will be happy to deal with that problem.

[3:18:19 PM](#)

CHAIR DYSON observed that there'd be no fiscal impact the first year.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON concurred, pointing out that the first payout would be in June of 2007.

CHAIR DYSON noted it is like putting in place a contract with the teachers. If the legislature refused to fund the rewards in the "out" years, it would be breaking faith with the people who'd given of themselves to increase growth for the students. It requires a good-faith commitment. He asked how long North Carolina has been doing this.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON said since 1996, to his belief.

CHAIR DYSON asked about data that quantifies savings there, since those students might require less remedial work for college or have a smaller impact on the social support system.

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON answered that there is some data from North Carolina, which has seen an increase in student achievement since the program began. He didn't have the data with him, however.

[3:20:44 PM](#)

SENATOR WILKEN referred to an overview given by Commissioner Sampson. He remarked that if everyone isn't confident in what happens, this will fall apart quickly and require a decade to

put back together. Noting that he had to depart, he said next time he'd like to talk about plans to "sell" the program and get people to appreciate it.

[3:23:00 PM](#)

COMMISSIONER SAMPSON agreed with the concern about the "small target" and said he didn't want to miss this opportunity.

CHAIR DYSON opened public testimony to two testifiers.

MICHAEL DICKENS, Ph.D., Superintendent, Skagway City Schools, thanked Commissioner Sampson for the innovative program. Noting problems over the years with teachers' salaries and changes to the retirement system, he complimented Senators Wilken and Green for trying to meet those concerns. He said the bottom line is that teachers and the people in the building make education worthwhile and effective for students. Talking about difficulties when recruiting teachers outside Alaska, Dr. Dickens surmised this incentive program would help. He highlighted that this program gets all employees in the school going in the same direction. Expressing great support for the program, he pointed out that even in high-performing districts this will require motivation, and it won't penalize teachers whose students have traditionally performed well.

[3:29:12 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON asked whether there might be an unintended consequence of pressure on other parts of the school that aren't being tested, such as foreign languages.

[3:30:39 PM](#)

DR. DICKENS replied that he'd thought about it. He mentioned positive outcomes in his school district from a Foreign Language Acquisition Program (FLAP) grant. He said he'd been looking at postdoctoral work on brain research and discovered many aspects to engaging a student in learning. Important types of learning occur when students are exposed to art, music and foreign language, or when doing scientific lab work, for instance; he mentioned drama and sports activities as well, and looking at what keeps students in school and motivated. He suggested the real advantage of this type of program is that it expands who benefits.

[3:33:55 PM](#)

TOM HARVEY, Executive Director, NEA-Alaska, informed members that he would provide written comments. He pointed out that Commissioner Sampson met with 350 delegates around the state this past weekend, presenting this proposal and receiving significant feedback; Mr. Harvey would try to provide a compilation of that feedback. Commending Commissioner Sampson for his research and for trying to avoid the pitfalls of plans that failed, Mr. Harvey cautioned that booby traps doubtless remain, including hormonal influences and outside influences that change how a student performs on a test.

He agreed with Senator Wilken about hitting the target and not destroying confidence. North Carolina's system took several years to develop, and the present executive director of the National Education Association (NEA), John Wilson, was director of the North Carolina Association of Educators when then-Governor Jim Hunt started the program; for several years, the association and North Carolina state government came together to develop that plan. The present federal funding system requires that the state association participate in developing the plan, Mr. Harvey said, an opportunity he'd welcome.

He suggested adequately funding the base services of the educational program. He highlighted the planning and implementing of innovative strategy, saying it was achievable in the Chugiak School District because of its large grant; he proposed looking at that type of program, using funds from the base student allocation, to improve student growth and achievement.

CHAIR DYSON informed Mr. Harvey that his written comments would be distributed after they were received.

[3:38:27 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON remarked that it seems there is a belief that Alaska's schools aren't getting good results because there is no incentive program. He said some of the hardest working and most underappreciated people in Alaska are those working in the schools.

[3:40:15 PM](#)

CHAIR DYSON requested that members relate questions or concerns to him or Commissioner Sampson as soon as possible. He noted

that many members also sit on the Senate Finance Committee and thus will see this legislation again.

SENATOR ELTON clarified that his concern is about others affected by the bill, including teachers and parents. He asked that those people, who likely would be more comfortable talking about the concepts to the current committee, be given that opportunity.

CHAIR DYSON held SB 235 in committee.

CHAIR DYSON adjourned the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Standing Committee meeting at [3:42:45 PM](#).