

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

April 10, 2009

8:06 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Paul Seaton, Chair
Representative Cathy Engstrom Munoz, Vice Chair
Representative Wes Keller
Representative Peggy Wilson
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch
Representative Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Bryce Edgmon

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS (S):

State Board of Education

- Carol "Bunny" Schaeffer

University of Alaska Board of Regents

- Ashton Compton

- CONFIRMATION(S) ADVANCED

HOUSE BILL NO. 69

"An Act establishing in the Department of Education and Early Development a voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children; and establishing a rating system for early childhood education."

- MOVED CSHB 69(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 130

"An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools."

- MOVED CSHB 130(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 215

"An Act relating to student counts for school funding purposes; and repealing school experience for salary scales provisions."

- MOVED HB 215(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 69

SHORT TITLE: EARLY CHILDHOOD ED: RATING & HOME VISITS

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) TUCK, PETERSEN, KAWASAKI, GARA

01/20/09	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/16/09
01/20/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/20/09	(H)	EDC, FIN
02/11/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/11/09	(H)	Heard & Held
02/11/09	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/13/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/13/09	(H)	Heard & Held
02/13/09	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/10/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 130

SHORT TITLE: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) WILSON

02/13/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/13/09	(H)	EDC, HSS
04/06/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
04/06/09	(H)	Heard & Held
04/06/09	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/10/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 215

SHORT TITLE: STUDENT COUNTS/TEACHERS' SALARIES

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) WILSON

04/03/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/03/09	(H)	EDC
04/08/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
04/08/09	(H)	Heard & Held
04/08/09	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/10/09	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

CAROL "BUNNY" SCHAEFFER, Appointee

State Board of Education
Kotzebue, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the State Board of Education.

ASHTON COMPTON, Appointee
University of Alaska Board of Regents
Student Representative
Fairbanks, Alaska

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

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TUCK
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the CS for HB 69, as prime sponsor.

EDDY JEANS, Director
School Finance and Facilities Section
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: During the hearing on HB 69, responded to questions.

JOY LYON, Representative
Association for the Education of Young Children in SE Alaska
Member, Juneau Drop-out Prevention & Drug Free Schools Advisory Board
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 69.

DEBBIE BALDWIN, Director
Child Development Division
Rural Cap
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 69.

CARL ROSE, Executive Director
Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified with official support for HB 130.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:06:59 AM](#)

CHAIR PAUL SEATON called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. Representatives Seaton, Buch, Keller, Gardner, Munoz, and Wilson were present at the call to order.

[8:07:17 AM](#)

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS (S):

State Board of Education

University of Alaska Board of Regents - Ashton Compton

CHAIR SEATON announced that the first order of business would be the confirmation hearings for the State Board of Education and the University of Alaska Board of Regents.

[8:08:07 AM](#)

CAROL "BUNNY" SCHAEFFER, Appointee, State Board of Education, noted her twenty years of service with the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, in Kotzebue, Alaska. Governor Murkowski appointed her to the State Board of Education in 2004, the seat which she currently holds. Stating that she is interested in continuing her board position, she indicated a particular concern for parent choice in education. She availed herself to committee questions.

[8:09:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked her to elaborate on the term parent choice, as defined by a school board member.

MS. SCHAEFFER named the various publicly funded educational opportunities, for parents to choose from, including magnet, charter, boarding, and home schools, along with the standard K-12 system.

[8:09:48 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON referred to the drop-out situation and the relevancy of current classroom teaching styles. He asked for her comments on these two topics.

MS. SCHAEFFER stated that the achievement gap between the Native and Caucasian students must be bridged; the learning styles are very different. Further, she said that it is important to provide practical opportunities in the learning process. The

large class size can be prohibitive in these efforts, she opined.

CHAIR SEATON mentioned the discreet Native skill sets, observation and auditory, and asked her to comment.

MS. SCHAEFFER responded that every learning technique is important to understand and implement, but it can be difficult to meet the cultural differences, she opined.

CHAIR SEATON pointed out that the issue of cultural disparateness has been brought to the fore of the committee, and he stressed the need to bring focus towards a solution.

[8:13:52 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON suggested that the University of Alaska could offer a class to specifically address learning differences, as a requirement for earning a state teaching certificate.

MS. SCHAEFFER pointed out that multi cultural and Alaska studies classes are required to attain the Alaskan teaching certification. The original intent of these classes may have been to stem the Native cultural divide, but that is not what is being taught. These are distance classes, and may require refocusing.

[8:15:45 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ agreed that new teachers should be required to have an understanding of the cultural differences that are an important aspect of teaching in Alaska. She asked whether the candidate would support a requirement for cross-cultural training.

MS. SCHAEFFER said that this training would be appropriate at the university level. However, for a new teacher taking it as one of the required certification classes it may be prove to be discouraging, considering all of the other compliance mandates.

[8:17:05 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON explained that early childhood education has been another major topic for the committee, and he requested her comments and interest in this area.

MS. SCHAEFFER said she is an advocate for early childhood education and stressed the importance for the initially engagement of students. Parents are the child's first teacher, however many parents do not take up that responsibility, which places it on the school. When a parent will not, or cannot, be personally responsive to their young child, prior to the required public school attendance at age six, she opined that there should be opportunities for pre-school; private and public.

CHAIR SEATON invited her to contact the committee, during the interim with any questions, concerns, or policy ideas.

[8:20:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ moved to advance the name of Carol Schaeffer, as appointee to the State School Board, from the House Education Standing Committee.

There being no objection, so ordered.

[8:21:35 AM](#)

ASHTON COMPTON, Appointee, University of Alaska Board of Regents, Student Representative, introduced herself and said she is looking forward to taking an active role on the board and representing the student's interests.

[8:22:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON praised the appointee's willingness to serve, and wished her well.

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER congratulated and expressed her confidence in the nominee.

CHAIR SEATON stated his interest in meeting her when the Board of Regents visits the capital in the coming year.

[8:23:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ moved to advance the name of Ashton Compton, as appointee to the State School Board, from the House Education Standing Committee.

There being no objection, so ordered.

[8:23:31 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at ease from 8:23 to 8:25.

HB 69-EARLY CHILDHOOD ED: RATING & HOME VISITS

CHAIR SEATON announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 69, "An Act establishing in the Department of Education and Early Development a voluntary parent education home visiting program for pre-elementary aged children; and establishing a rating system for early childhood education."

[8:25:03 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TUCK, Alaska State Legislature, thanked the committee for taking up the bill.

[8:25:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON moved to adopt Amendment 1, labeled 26-LS0281\C.2, Mischel, 4/7/09, which read:

Page 3, line 29, following "shall":

Insert new material to read:

"(1) apply for and maximize federal and private funding sources to support the program established under this section;

(2) identify and engage private partners to support the program;

(3) limit the number of participating families to 650 for the first two years of program implementation and thereafter increase the number of participating families based on demand; and

(4)"

CHAIR SEATON objected for discussion.

[8:26:02 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK explained that Amendment 1 accomplishes two mandates: First, it requires Department of Education and Early Development (EED) to maximize federal and private funding sources to support the Parents as Teachers method. The existing Parents as Teachers programs are 100 percent funded by non-state sources, which can be used to leverage state dollars in the future. Second, it limits the participating families to 650 in

the first two years of the program, augmenting the 800 families that are already being served in the state.

8:26:43 AM

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH asked how the fiscal note would be effected by the proposed amendment.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK indicated that it lowers it to \$1,950,000.

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH clarified that this reduction in funds will still provide a means to accomplish the expectations set forth.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK assured the committee that because the Parents as Teachers program is already in place, the requested funding will allow the state to directly monitor, assess, and make determinations regarding the program.

8:27:50 AM

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ queried how the 650 families will be distributed around the state.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK read from page 3, line 6, of the bill, which states:

(c) A local agency may apply for funding to provide services under the program by submitting an implementation plan for review and approval by the department.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK pointed out that existing services are in place, which may qualify for these funds, additionally, he opined that neighboring villages, observing the success of the Parents as Teachers program, will also apply. He suggested that allowing 650 slots is a generous number that may not be fully utilized.

8:29:26 AM

EDDY JEANS, Director, School Finance and Facilities Section, Department of Education and Early Development (EED), responded to Representative Buch's previous question, stating that the amended fiscal note will be \$1,950,000, and will be submitted following the committee meeting.

CHAIR SEATON asked whether the department has any concerns regarding Amendment 1.

MR. JEANS replied, no, and said it is clear that the intent is to provide a competitive grant process.

[8:30:25 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON mentioned that the department's existing request for proposal (RFP) to establish pilot programs for four year old kindergartener classrooms, should not get confused with what is included in this bill. He clarified that stimulus money may exist for assisting communities to adopt and institute the Parents as Teachers model, but it is important to understand that continued funding is not being guaranteed by the state. The current Parents as Teachers programs are federally or privately funded, and those resources would need to be cultivated to sustain stimulus established programs. The development/implementation of a template for parent/home based programs are held separate from the department's RFP and intent, he underscored.

[8:32:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER stated his understanding that the funds for the bill will be administered by EED.

CHAIR SEATON said that is correct, and whether the bill is ratified this session, or not, a template will be developed, and districts will have options available in order to meet their priorities.

[8:34:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON read the proposed language being added to the bill via the amendment, which states, "(d) The department shall (1) apply for and maximize federal and private funding sources to support the program established under this section;" and asked how it will apply.

CHAIR SEATON explained that this is corollary to the grant program that the department has in place as an RFP, and will provide options to school districts. He predicted that HB 69 will not be enacted this session, but the RFP will allow the districts to pursue early childhood program possibilities.

[8:36:23 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER inquired whether the bill would be better served if it were to be held in committee for further review.

CHAIR SEATON established that, as of this meeting, the committee will have allowed adequate review and amendment opportunities, and if the committee supports the intent of HB 69, it would be appropriate to move it to the next committee of referral.

CHAIR SEATON opened public testimony

8:38:05 AM

JOY LYON, Representative, Association for the Education of Young Children in SE Alaska, Member, Juneau Drop-out Prevention & Drug Free Schools Advisory Board, stated support for HB 69, and stressed the importance of providing direction to families during the early years of parenthood. The Parents as Teachers program is considered the gold standard, and leadership for this approach, from the state, would be helpful. Programs are established under short term grants, but long term support is needed for sustainability. State funds could be leveraged with grant money, she suggested. Additionally, passing the bill will support enrollment of children in the Imaginarium (ph) Library program. Each child enrolled receives a book every month, establishing a pattern for literacy, which dovetails with the Best Beginnings approach. She reported that her office routinely fields calls from parents requesting support and resource materials. The Parents as Teachers program is empowering, respectful, cost effective, and appropriate for everyone. She estimated that 10,000 new kindergarteners enter Alaskan schools each year, who could be better prepared by having participated in an early childhood program.

8:42:56 AM

DEBBIE BALDWIN, Director, Child Development Division, Rural Cap, stated support for HB 69, and indicated that Rural Cap considers funding for Parents as Teachers to be an important investment for the fiscal year 2009-10. She acknowledged the various public forums that recommend and support services for early childhood education and the importance for providing services both in and out of the home. The out of home options have been increased via support for Head Start funding, as well as the governor's pilot pre-kindergarten program. However, the options for in-home programs have not progressed. She stated her belief that, because of the demands on the educational Title I stimulus

funding, the districts will not make Parents as Teachers programs a top priority. Early work with parents in a home environment has proven to be effective, she reported, as proven throughout the state/nation via the programs that are in place. Early engagement of the parent is essential, and the home environment as the best place for education to begin. Handing a four year old off to a classroom environment is not the key to their future success, or a lower drop-out rate, she opined. Head Start has an effective in-home component and family involvement aspect; a model worth emulating. Keeping a parent engaged in their child's education for a sustained period, as well as empowering them to be advocates for their child's learning, is essential. Further, she stressed that establishing parental involvement, during the crucial developmental age timeline, would be difficult to attain through a classroom model. RurAL Cap supports the committee's interest for investing in programs to provide high quality, in-home services, for parents who choose to participate.

[8:49:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER touted that Parents as Teachers plays a vital role in Alaskan education. However, this program is dependent on local contributions, he pointed out, and asked if the parental involvement is a fundamental aspect of the funding component.

MS. BALDWIN responded that Parents as Teachers does not have a mandate that a specific amount of in-kind or non-federal/non-state funding be donated by the community; Head Start does have this requirement. However, communities do tend to be generous, and contributions of goods and services occurs on a regularly basis. The communities tend to become very involved in Parents as Teachers, and it is not unusual to receive voluntary help, or monetary support from the local Native agencies, village councils, businesses, or individuals.

[8:52:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER acknowledged that 47 programs exist in the state, and he asked whether factors can be identified to suggest what makes Parents as Teachers successful in some communities and not others.

MS. BALDWIN citing two reasons, said short term funding is one issue, which makes it difficult to build a meaningful community program. The primary funding source, to date, is a three year

federal project program, not a program funding stream. It would be important to have follow up funds to keep students in the program, and to afford progress monitoring. Secondly, the most successful program continues to be Head Start; which has an extremely effective training and technical assistance network. The Parents as Teachers program does not have this capacity, nor does it have a centralized analysis program to collect data and generate reports. RurAL Cap has established a Parents as Teachers state office to work towards improving this area.

[8:56:04 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER asked whether Parents as Teachers, a long established program, has been supported in other states with a steady funding stream and if there is a correlation on the outcomes.

MS. BALDWIN acknowledged that the program has been in place for twenty years, and said she is studying how the funding has been continued in the various areas to provide a sustainable program. She offered to provide information to the committee on the ways and means that states employ. It is her goal, she said, to gain a full understanding of the funding sources, and opportunities, that are available for Parents as Teachers. In response to Chair Seaton she agreed to submit a written response to Representative Keller's full line of questioning.

CHAIR SEATON closed public testimony.

[8:59:34 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON removed his objection to Amendment 1. There being no further objection, Amendment 1, labeled 26-LS0281\C.2, Mischel, 4/7/09, was adopted.

[9:00:25 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON moved to adopt conceptual Amendment 2, as follows:

Page 2, line 18, before "services,"
Delete "identified"
Insert "identified"

CHAIR SEATON called for objection. There being no objection, conceptual Amendment 2 was adopted.

[9:00:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ indicated that the fiscal note is also amended.

CHAIR SEATON acknowledged that the fiscal note now reflects \$1.9 million, provided verbally, with the official document to follow.

9:01:50 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER stated opposition to HB 69 based on the need for further information regarding funding opportunities for the Parent's as Teachers programs.

9:02:30 AM

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK commented that the intent is to expand resource and knowledge opportunities to parents. The 650 expansion figure will allow existing programs to capitalize on the funding. He opined that this will maximize the private and public partnerships and allow state funds to be leveraged.

9:04:12 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER stated support for the bill, despite her utopian desire for young children to be at home with an attentive parent. The original concerns that she harbored for the ability to afford in-home support of an educational nature, when case workers are unable to provide regular home visits to families in need, has been laid to rest she said. The turning point was testimony taken in a previous meeting, from a Galena school district representative, who reported how the rural-urban divide has been erased among the first and second grade students, due to the Parents as Teachers program. She elaborated:

I think when kids start from a variety of different places, and they come to school with no assistance, we just see that the gaps ... continue [through their educational career]. I think that this is a very cost effective program ... well demonstrated in other parts of the country. One of the things that I didn't know in my initial opposition was that we have it in 17 sites right now. ... A lot of the e-mail we get are from people talking about the state interfering with families; I don't see it that way now. I understand we ... are acknowledging and working with the

strengths that families offer as the first teachers for their [children]. ... This approach just builds on that.

[9:06:31 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER pointed out that Parents as Teachers may be funded by a bill that was just passed, and he stressed his support for the program.

[9:07:37 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH stated that various early childhood education entities exist, along with administrative machinations, and asked if the RFP process allows the department appropriate coordination/oversight of all the facets involved across the state.

MR. JEANS responded that the department is already pursuing the direction of early childhood education. The department has included a parent resource center in the pilot pre-kindergarten program. The difference is the home visit component. However, the department's intent is to offer a menu of options for early childhood development, he reported.

REPRESENTATIVE TUCK agreed that a tapestry of options is needed and the department is working to that end.

[9:09:52 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON clarified that he supports the program, and stated his interest in learning from RurAL Cap why certain communities find success and what is the key to that success. Involving the department will also ensure the qualifications of individuals administering early childhood programs.

[9:11:37 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ moved to report CSHB 69, Version 26-LS0281\C, Mischel, 2/9/09, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the amended fiscal note. There being no objection, CSHB 69(EDC), Version C, was reported from the House Education Standing Committee.

The committee took a brief at ease from 9:12 to 9:16 a.m.

[9:16:49 AM](#)

HB 130-STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

9:17:02 AM

CHAIR SEATON announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 130 "An Act relating to questionnaires and surveys administered in the public schools."

9:17:15 AM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON introduced the CS for HB 130, paraphrasing from a prepared statement, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

To refresh your memory, HB 130 will change the parental consent requirements for surveys in schools from active to passive for anonymous surveys.

During the first hearing of HB 130 in this committee there were a couple of questions about the language in section 1 and section 2 of the bill. There was further discussion on the necessity of the language "or an employee of a school district" in Section 1.

The committee substitute before you has standardized language in Section 1 and Section 2. The CS retains the language "or an employee of a school district" because the drafter didn't want to unintentionally exclude employees of the district.

This change in the bill language did not change the meaning of the bill in any way.

9:18:46 AM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON moved to adopt CSHB 130, 26-LS0405\S,Mischel,4/7/09.

CHAIR SEATON objected for discussion.

9:18:59 AM

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER questioned the effectiveness of the language [page 1, line 4] "a school district may not administer ...", when the school district is comprised of individuals. She

expressed concern for excluding potential volunteers, perhaps a retired teacher, who would administer a survey.

CHAIR SEATON pointed out that the language continues as [page 1, line 5] "or permits the administration of a questionnaire or survey ...". The intent appears to be providing teachers with clarity that they are not allowed to conduct a survey in their own classroom.

[9:21:04 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON removed his objection. There being no further objection, CSHB 130, Version S, was before the committee.

[9:21:28 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON opened public testimony.

[9:21:33 AM](#)

CARL ROSE, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), stated support for HB 130, and explained that active consent is a high standard, which yields a very low return regarding "vital information that we need to have." Passive consent still allows parents to object or deny that their children take advantage of the opportunity, but it still provides the possibility for obtaining information. Another issue regards evaluation of the results. Districts rely on survey results for planning purposes. In order to have meaningful analysis a substantial percent of participation is required. Sufficient sampling allows districts to determine effectiveness of programs, identify needs, and strategize accordingly.

CHAIR SEATON closed public testimony.

[9:24:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ moved to report CSHB 130, 26-LS0405\S, Mischel, 4/7/09, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 130 (EDC), Version S, was reported from the House Education Standing Committee.

The committee took a brief at ease from 9:25 to 9:27.

[9:27:17 AM](#)

HB 215-STUDENT COUNTS/TEACHERS' SALARIES

CHAIR SEATON announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 215, "An Act relating to student counts for school funding purposes; and repealing school experience for salary scales provisions."

9:27:31 AM

CHAIR SEATON opened public testimony, and seeing no one presenting themselves to the committee, he closed public testimony.

9:27:38 AM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON moved to adopt Conceptual Amendment 1, which states:

Delete Sections: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6.

Retain: Section 5

CHAIR SEATON objected for discussion.

9:28:00 AM

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON provided an update for the committee, paraphrasing from a prepared statement and the new sponsor statement, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

To refresh the committee's memory, HB 215 will repeal salary scale limitations for hiring new out of state teachers. Additionally it will average student counts in the spring and fall to determine school funding numbers for the following school year.

With this bill to we are trying to proactively address the issues of high drop out rates and teacher recruitment.

HB 215 repeals salary scale limitations for hiring new out of state teachers, allowing for more competitive recruitment efforts.

HB 215 will help school districts hire staff for hard-to-fill positions. Specialty positions, such as therapists and special needs teachers are in high demand in school districts across the country, and we have a shortage here in Alaska.

Current statutes limit the amount of out of state professional experience that may be used to establish a teacher's position on the salary scale. No matter how long they have been teaching, out of state teachers with a bachelors degree can only receive credit for six years of out of state experience. With a masters degree that is increased to eight years.

By repealing this antiquated statute, districts will be able to negotiate salaries on a case by case basis, this will help keep Alaska competitive with the rest of the country when vying for needed educational professionals.

[9:29:53 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON acknowledged that the original bill addressed two issues, and Amendment 1 effectively rectifies that situation. The different topics will be appropriately served through this action, he said, and expressed appreciation to the sponsor.

[9:31:26 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER stated her interest in supporting the aspects that are being amended out of the bill.

CHAIR SEATON maintained the importance for keeping the issues separate, and indicated that the deleted sections will be continuing topics during the interim, and brought back before the committee next session.

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH noted that the amendment will require a title change, as well.

[9:32:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ asked for an explanation of the term school experience, when applied to the salary scale.

REPRESENTATIVE WILSON explained that a new teacher to the Alaska system, who has taught elsewhere, should expect to receive a monetary increment credit for each year of experience.

[9:33:02 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON removed his objection to conceptual Amendment 1. There being no further objection, conceptual Amendment 1, to HB 215, was adopted.

[9:33:45 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MUNOZ moved to report HB 215, 26-LS0456\T out of committee, as amended, with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal note. There being no objection, HB 215 (EDC), Version T, was reported from the House Education Standing Committee.

[9:34:30 AM](#)

[Following completion of the agenda items, discussion ensued regarding interim meeting topics, and related conference dates/agendas of importance to state educators and committee members.]

[9:47:07 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON thanked the committee members and meeting participants for their dedicated service to the state.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:47 a.m.