

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 29, 2010

8:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Paul Seaton, Chair
Representative Bryce Edgmon
Representative Wes Keller
Representative Peggy Wilson
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch
Representative Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Cathy Engstrom Munoz, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 209

"An Act providing the Alaska State Council on the Arts the authority to adopt regulations relating to its statutory powers and duties; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 209 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 206

"An Act establishing a career assessment requirement in public schools; and relating to postsecondary courses for secondary school students."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 393

"An Act relating to charter school approval and funding."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 209

SHORT TITLE: STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS; REGULATIONS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) MENARD

01/19/10	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/10
01/19/10	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

01/19/10 (S) EDC, JUD
 02/12/10 (S) EDC AT 8:00 AM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 02/12/10 (S) Moved SB 209 Out of Committee
 02/12/10 (S) MINUTE(EDC)
 02/17/10 (S) EDC RPT 5DP
 02/17/10 (S) DP: THOMAS, MEYER, DAVIS, STEVENS,
 HUGGINS
 02/24/10 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 02/24/10 (S) <Bill Hearing Postponed>
 03/01/10 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/01/10 (S) Heard & Held
 03/01/10 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
 03/08/10 (S) JUD AT 1:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
 03/08/10 (S) Moved SB 209 Out of Committee
 03/08/10 (S) MINUTE(JUD)
 03/10/10 (S) JUD RPT 3DP
 03/10/10 (S) DP: FRENCH, COGHILL, EGAN
 03/22/10 (S) TRANSMITTED TO (H)
 03/22/10 (S) VERSION: SB 209
 03/23/10 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 03/23/10 (H) EDC
 03/29/10 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 206

SHORT TITLE: HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSM'T/POSTSECONDARY CLASS
 SPONSOR(S): EDUCATION

03/25/09 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
 03/25/09 (H) EDC, FIN
 03/27/09 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 03/27/09 (H) Heard & Held
 03/27/09 (H) MINUTE(EDC)
 04/03/09 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 04/03/09 (H) Heard & Held
 04/03/09 (H) MINUTE(EDC)
 04/15/09 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 04/15/09 (H) Heard & Held
 04/15/09 (H) MINUTE(EDC)
 01/20/10 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 01/20/10 (H) Heard & Held
 01/20/10 (H) MINUTE(EDC)
 02/01/10 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 02/01/10 (H) Scheduled But Not Heard
 02/05/10 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
 02/05/10 (H) Heard & Held
 02/05/10 (H) MINUTE(EDC)
 02/10/10 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

02/10/10	(H)	Heard & Held
02/10/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/12/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/12/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
02/15/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/15/10	(H)	Heard & Held
02/15/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/19/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/19/10	(H)	Heard & Held
02/19/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/22/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/22/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
03/01/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/01/10	(H)	Heard & Held
03/01/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/08/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/08/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
03/17/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/17/10	(H)	Heard & Held
03/17/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/19/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/19/10	(H)	Heard & Held
03/19/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/24/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/24/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
03/29/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

BILL: HB 393

SHORT TITLE: CHARTER/ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL FUNDING

SPONSOR(S): KELLER

02/23/10	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/23/10	(H)	EDC, FIN
03/12/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/12/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
03/15/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/15/10	(H)	Heard & Held
03/15/10	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/24/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/24/10	(H)	Scheduled But Not Heard
03/29/10	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

MICHAEL ROVITO, Staff
 Senator Linda Menard
 Alaska State Legislature

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented SB 209, on behalf of Senator Menard, prime sponsor.

GLEN RAMOS, School Psychologist; State Director
National Education Association-Alaska (NEA-A)
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 206.

CHRYA SANDERSON, Graduation Success Coach/Drop-Out Prevention Specialist
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
North Pole, AK

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 206.

JESSICA COOK, Technology Teacher
Anchorage School District
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 206.

SANDI RYAN, Teacher
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the hearing on HB 206.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:04:31 AM](#)

CHAIR PAUL SEATON called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Present at the call to order were Representatives Seaton, Edgmon, Peggy Wilson, Gardner, Buch, and Keller.

SB 209-STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS; REGULATIONS

[8:04:40 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON announced that the first order of business would be SENATE BILL NO. 209, "An Act providing the Alaska State Council on the Arts the authority to adopt regulations relating to its statutory powers and duties; and providing for an effective date."

[8:05:22 AM](#)

MICHAEL ROVITO, Staff, Senator Linda Menard, Alaska State Legislature, presented SB 209, noting that it was the companion bill to HB 311, which was heard and reported from the House Standing Committee on Education. He reminded the committee SB 209 would give the Alaska State Council on the Arts (AKSCA), Department of Education and Early Development (EDD), the authority to adopt regulations pertaining to its statutory powers and authorities. This legislation was proposed in response to a request by AKSCA and was recommended by the Department of Law. Mr. Rovito further explained that the bill was needed to help AKSCA write regulations to streamline its grant process. The bill passed the Senate unanimously and has a zero fiscal note attached.

[8:06:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON recalled that HB 311 provided a legal means for AKSCA to continue to fulfill its objectives.

MR. ROVITO said correct.

[8:06:59 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER called attention to page 1, lines 7-8, which read [original punctuation provided]:

- (1) hold public and private hearings;
- (2) enter into contract, within the limit of funds available, with individuals, organizations, and institutions for services furthering the educational objectives of the council's programs;

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked for further information on the above referenced paragraphs.

[8:07:26 AM](#)

MR. ROVITO said he was unable to provide further information.

[8:07:54 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON closed public testimony.

[8:08:00 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON moved to report SB 209, 26-LS1236\A, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, SB 209 was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

HB 206-HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSM'T/POSTSECONDARY CLASS

CHAIR SEATON announced the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 206, "An Act establishing a career assessment requirement in public schools; and relating to postsecondary courses for secondary school students."

[8:09:13 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON turned to HB 206 and recalled that the committee adopted an amendment that removed the "high stakes element" of the High School Graduation Qualifying Examination (HSGQE).

[8:10:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER asked whether the chair intended to move the bill.

CHAIR SEATON said, "Many of us still have questions ... I think that we're better off to hold that bill here, unless there's the will of the committee to do something else."

[8:10:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON suggested further discussion regarding the HSGQE. She opined the WorkKeys program takes the place of the qualifying exam, without the penalty, and gives direction to students. Representative Peggy Wilson said, "I ... would like to see it move along."

[8:11:57 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON offered to notice HB 206 for action at the next meeting. He reminded the committee of comments from the State Board of Education & Early Development (state board), Department of Education and Early Development (EED), and the department, which advised that WorkKeys will be administered in 11th grade and the scores will be part of the high school transcript. Furthermore, students are allowed to retake WorkKeys in the 12th grade at no cost when they improve their scores. Chair Seaton opined the committee's intent regarding WorkKeys is addressed by

the existing framework of the bill; in fact, moving the bill out of committee will prevent further discussion of other elements.

[8:14:29 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE EDGMON supported the comments of the chair.

[8:15:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER said she would like to vote on HB 206.

[8:15:38 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH commented that the committee has not checked in on other topics and asked if there were further reports from members.

[Later in the meeting, HB 206 was brought back before the committee.]

HB 393-CHARTER/ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL FUNDING

CHAIR SEATON announced the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 393, "An Act relating to charter school approval and funding."

[8:16:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER expressed his interest in a "recap" of [HB 393]. He related that supporters of the bill are disappointed in its progress, and asked about the possibility looking at charter school issues, one by one, next session.

[8:17:28 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON replied that the bill has not been rescheduled for hearing as further information was needed. He reviewed some of the unanswered questions regarding provisions of the bill.

[8:18:25 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER clarified that a charter school is a public school, thus it is housed in a building owned by the school district. The bill calls for additional funding in the amount of \$1,000, or up to \$1 per participating student, into a program that will allow any charter school to request a federal grant. This is necessary because one of the scoring criteria of

a federal grant is whether the state is supportive for charter school facilities; therefore, the intent of the bill was to "just get that grant in place." However, EED advised the cost of administering and distributing the funding would be high. Representative Keller opined this issue does not have to do with the ownership of the building, although charter schools can meet in private buildings.

[8:19:59 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON observed that the main aspect of the bill included a reimbursement schedule that would raise costs for school districts in five years. Furthermore, the bill mandated a financial commitment from schools districts and EED for matching grants, without a clearly designated source of funding. Also, because the grants were going to the charter schools, the question of the ownership and liability of the building was raised. Additional hearings on HB 393 were not scheduled, awaiting a response to the questions from Representative Keller's staff.

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER stated he will provide answers to Chair Seaton's questions from the drafter of the bill, and further information on the intent of the bill from its original sponsor.

[8:23:52 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON concluded that federal funding for charter schools may be limited, "since they've committed all of their money to two states for five years." In addition, states are required to participate in the federal Race to the Top grant program, but Alaska is not participating. On the other hand, he surmised the elimination of the "60 cap" was not influencing any member of the committee.

[HB 393 was held over.]

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH acknowledged the gallery and suggested the participants may wish to address the committee.

[8:24:08 AM](#)

HB 206-HIGH SCHOOL ASSESSM'T/POSTSECONDARY CLASS

CHAIR SEATON opened public testimony on HB 206.

[8:24:42 AM](#)

GLEN RAMOS, School Psychologist; State Director, National Education Association-Alaska (NEA-A), informed the committee he was speaking for himself. He said he was a school psychologist and his experience in two high schools reveals the HSGQE exacts a high cost in staff time preparing for the administration of the test. He opined the data garnered from HSGQE is already available through standards-based assessments; furthermore, the administration of the test takes instruction time away from students. He reported that educators do not see the benefit of the HSGQE; in fact, as a school psychologist, he sees its demoralizing effect on students who will become productive and successful members of society, but who will never pass the test, and enjoy the financial benefits of a high school diploma. Furthermore, some successful students decide "they're done, once they pass the test," and suffer a loss of motivation. More importantly, he reported that about 18 days of instruction are lost to assessment per year, not counting extra time to accommodate students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

[8:28:49 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON asked whether the speaker advocates for end-of-course exams to show competency.

[8:29:06 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS said the standards-based assessments achieve the goal; in fact, the data is accumulated for federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Although he said he believes in testing in order to direct instruction, the HSGQE is a duplication.

[8:30:03 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON observed that one of the arguments in support of the HSGQE is that it requires a student to demonstrate a minimum competency for graduation from high school. He asked whether scores from standards-based assessments could be substituted for that purpose, or whether there should be no demonstration of competency.

[8:30:57 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS said yes and no. He agreed that the EED can set a standards-based cut-off score to achieve a high school diploma. However, he said the necessity of proving competency depends on the student. The U.S. educational system assumes that most students will continue to higher education and assessments help students direct their level of education. Furthermore, employers are asking for an indication of a minimum level of competency. On the other hand, exit exams can be a motivating or an un-motivating factor for students.

[8:32:22 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON agreed that one of the challenges has been whether to replace the HSGQE with another assessment.

[8:33:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON expressed her concern that failing the HSGQE means students cannot go into the military or to vocational-technical training with a high school diploma. Furthermore, the exam has not improved the graduation rates. She asked whether students who fail the exam have "become real successful, or has it been a real problem with them."

DR. RAMOS explained that because he is a school psychologist, the majority of his students have IEPs due to a learning disability and many are not going to pass an exit exam. However, many are gifted individuals who go on to become productive members of society. Although he could not provide data, he opined the drop-out rate has increased "as a result of this test.

[8:35:24 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON related that about 276 students did not graduate because they did not pass the exam and about 1,900 passed the exam, but did not graduate because they failed to meet the requirements of their local school districts. Of the juniors and seniors who dropped out, about 70 percent passed all three sections of the exit exam. He observed there was an interesting mix of data.

[8:36:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH asked when the recertification of NCLB legislation would pass Congress.

DR. RAMOS said the legislation is under review by Congress and the administration. In further response to Representative Buch, he informed the committee he is a director of NEA-A and a member of the NEA national board. In that capacity, he has observed that the current federal administration is in support of pay-for-performance, of which examinations are a key component. He said he supported examinations for educational diagnoses and to direct instruction; however, to link the performance of an educator to the performance of a student or school is subject to many variables such as the child's socioeconomic status and home life. Furthermore, the emphasis on testing requires educators to spend an inordinate amount of time on direct instruction to meet the rote standards of NCLB. In fact, teaching to the test creates a narrow range of instruction and leaves little opportunity to teach for comprehension.

[8:39:40 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH observed the committee has been debating the value of seat time versus what is being accomplished. In addition, the value of mentorship in the school system is obvious, but the economics may not allow that sort of individual relationship with each student.

DR. RAMOS advised there is a positive movement occurring in public education that will change the model of how students with exceptionalities are assessed. The new eligibility criterion is "response to intervention." At the heart of this model is individually supported instruction, with weekly, on-going, monitoring. However, this is an expensive model to implement and includes looping over a number of years, for continuity of instruction.

[8:42:44 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON related that individual advocacy has been cited nationally and in Alaska as a means to positively address the majority of issues surrounding students today. In fact, some school districts in Alaska have successfully implemented programs at no additional cost, demonstrating that continuity to students can be provided without additional funding. He asked whether the NEA-A position is that advisor-advocate programs cannot be instituted "unless there's dollars attached to the program."

[8:44:41 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS said no. He agreed that there are many models to follow, but they require a total commitment from staff and community. He clarified that resources include more than money, and often mean using existing resources in a different way.

[8:46:07 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KELLER inquired about the value of security for the "longitudinal data" being developed for each child across the U.S. He referred to the Data Quality Campaign (DQC) that is a cradle-to-grave data base, and asked whether NEA-A has considered the access questions regarding the educational records of children.

DR. RAMOS said the release of data is a concern for public employees, the general public, and parents.

[8:48:07 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON asked about pay-for-performance and its effects on teacher and student interaction during non-routine tasks. He acknowledged that the committee is aware that the effect of ineffective teachers "almost condemns a kid to future failure." He asked how the committee can ensure that every teacher is effective at improving student achievement. Furthermore, he inquired as to the alternatives to the pay-for-performance model.

[8:50:49 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS suggested one means to address this is the diligent use of teacher evaluations. Teacher evaluation by the principal or lead teacher is one means to provide data that can then be used to direct appropriate professional development if necessary. He opined most teachers want to be effective at their jobs and evaluations are valuable.

[8:52:47 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON pointed out that principals can be ineffective too. He cited his personal experience with a school superintendent that had teacher personnel files purged at the end of every year. Perhaps other mechanisms, beyond reliance on an administrator, should be considered. Chair Seaton suggested shared responsibility within the school system may be a way to improve the effectiveness of teachers.

[8:55:14 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS assured the committee that shared responsibility for teacher instruction has taken place within the Alaska educational system for years. In addition, the Alaska Statewide Teacher Mentor Project has proven to be a beneficial program to improve teacher quality.

[8:56:12 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON solicited further recommendations to help the committee promote better education, and educators, in the state. He noted that another topic for concern is the fact that school records do not progress with the student from elementary school to middle school and high school.

[8:57:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH observed that peers for legislators are members of the public, and asked if there is peer mentoring for teachers.

[8:59:08 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS said he was unaware of a formal mechanism in place for peer mentoring; however, teachers are very critical of themselves, and informal peer review is effective. On the other hand, the union has a duty to represent its members if the school administration does not fulfill its legal responsibilities. At his two high schools, peer review takes place on a regular basis, including professional training and programs for self-growth. As a parting comment, he said that NEA-A is using an inordinate portion of its resources to encourage the state to return teachers to a defined benefit program that will attract and retain excellent teachers.

[9:02:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked whether schools can provide mentors for new teachers on a site basis rather than the expensive statewide mentor project.

[9:05:35 AM](#)

DR. RAMOS affirmed that new teachers are always assisted by existing staff as a natural extension of their profession. In further response to Representative Wilson, he agreed that much

depends on the school's administration; however, to understand the burdens of a teacher, one must spend a week in a school.

9:07:32 AM

CHRYA SANDERSON, Graduation Success Coach/Drop-Out Prevention Specialist, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, informed the committee she has 27 years of experience in the school district and serves 78-89 students at North Pole Middle School within the drop-out prevention program. In the past, at-risk students were identified by late attendance, absences, test scores, and discipline referrals; however, now the criteria are based primarily on attendance. She agreed that there are variables affecting intervention with at-risk students, such as family dynamics; however, providing transportation so that children can attend preschool is an effective way to build a foundation with the child and family. Ms. Sanderson said her job was to engage students, families, and teachers. Although not a certificated teacher, she is a professional support staff person mentoring and advocating for students and parents. At North Pole Middle School, certified staff members are under a great amount of pressure, as are the support professionals and the administrators. Ms. Sanderson attends parent teacher conferences and is involved with students in many ways so she knows them well. Many students have told her that they want to leave school at age 16 to get into another programs or to get jobs. Furthermore, there are students who do not fit the general mode of education, do not test well, and struggle with reading. She described her personal high school experience in the Arizona public school system and the various opportunities for students there. Ms. Sanderson opined students who struggle have deficits, and different modes of learning. Unfortunately, there are not enough programs to assess and address students who learn differently. Students with special needs are identified and accommodated, but many others do not receive that type of individual attention. One strength of middle school is the team teaching model that supports students and teachers. She said the pay-for-performance concept pits teachers against each other as there will always be different teaching styles as well as learning styles. Ms. Sanderson encouraged the teaching of core subjects, in a style adapted for the student, and career tracking from seventh grade to the age of twenty-three. Critical to the success of any child are strong family ties or a close connection to an adult. Every school district has good programs, but high drop-out rates and frustration with school continues. She stressed the importance of teaching life skills

and additional support for vocational and technical studies that diversify education to meet the needs of every student.

[9:20:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON anticipated a critical national teacher shortage due to the approaching retirement of a majority of staff.

[9:21:54 AM](#)

MS. SANDERSON reported that twenty-two members of the Education Support Staff Association are working to receive a teaching certificate. She was unsure of how the transfer from the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) would affect them. Ms. Sanderson gave a personal example of a change in job status.

[9:23:25 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER agreed that that the retirement system in Alaska cannot be recommended to perspective teachers.

[9:24:39 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON reminded the committee and members of the teaching profession that if the state directs billions of dollars into an unfunded retirement liability, there will be no increases in educational funding, and there will be decreases to teacher salaries and the base student allocation. Historically, the state has rewritten the retirement system every ten years; in fact, currently the state owes about \$15 billion of unfunded liability created by the PERS/TRS system. Chair Seaton remarked:

There are two sides to every coin, and I think that ... we're also in the responsibility here of making sure that education dollars are spent in a way that will promote education not only now, but in the future.

[9:27:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH asked about the format of schools in Arizona referred to by Ms. Sanderson.

MS. SANDERSON reported that Arizona had a full complement of technical and elective classes that allowed students to delve into various interests.

[9:30:12 AM](#)

JESSICA COOK, Technology Teacher, Anchorage School District, informed the committee she was a K-6 technology teacher and the parent of three daughters. She expressed her concern about the high school exit exam because her high school senior has passed the exit exam and would rather get a job than stay in school. Ms. Cook was also concerned by the level and method of assessment. She suggested alternative assessments are needed for students who do not test well. In her capacity she teaches teachers and students to utilize technology beyond "paper and pencil." She acknowledged the need to assess student progress; however, an exit assessment should not be administered to sophomores, and should include job skills such as technical and career opportunities. Ms. Cook stressed the assessments should address 21st Century skills for a global economy.

[9:33:33 AM](#)

SANDI RYAN, Teacher, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, stated she teaches high school mathematics and computer science. Ms. Ryan expressed her interest in "authentic-type assessments" because the assessments currently in use do not test on the curriculum, unless teachers "teach to the test," which takes time away from teaching subjects that are in the curriculum. Authentic assessments are written and scored by teachers in collaboration, and result in a grading system uniform with other state, similar to the advanced placement (AP) system. She suggested that the development of authentic assessments would standardize the value of grades and scoring throughout the state.

[9:35:49 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON surmised the assessments would be based on state standards.

MS. RYAN said yes.

[9:35:52 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BUCH asked whether Ms. Ryan intended for all teachers to have the same curriculum criteria.

[9:36:28 AM](#)

MS. RYAN explained that when members of curriculum committees write local curriculum they ensure that each piece of state and national curriculum elements are included. Locally, additions to the curriculum can be made. Standardization for curriculum across the state "tends to look from the national down." Standardized testing, though, prevents teachers from discussing and scoring answers, thereby establishing consistency across the state.

[9:38:03 AM](#)

CHAIR SEATON recalled that the Aldine School District in Texas, which was a 2009 Broad Prize winner, requires that every teacher take a class on testing to prevent undue subjectivity in grading. He offered to provide North Star Borough School District with information on coordinated grading.

[9:39:54 AM](#)

MS. RYAN thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak.

[9:40:22 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON informed the witnesses that the bill moved out of committee earlier was a companion bill, hence the brief review.

[9:41:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GARDNER referred to previous testimony on HB 206, and reported that the State Board of Education & Early Development (state board) supports the HSGQE, but would "look at something else down the road." She encouraged the committee to "think about ... that I think we are down the road."

CHAIR SEATON reviewed various assessments that could be considered to replace the HSGQE.

[9:43:01 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON opined the committee sets policy and it is the job of the state board to implement policy.

CHAIR SEATON clarified that his earlier comments referred to the incorporation of WorkKeys.

[HB 206 was held over.]

[9:44:24 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:44 a.m.