**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**
**HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**
February 13, 2012
8:03 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Alan Dick, Chair
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Peggy Wilson
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Scott Kawasaki

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Lance Pruitt, Vice Chair
Representative Eric Feige

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SUPERINTENDENT PRESENTATION: WRANGELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- HEARD

ALASKA COMMISSION ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION - ALASKA PERFORMANCE SCHOLARSHIP OUTCOMES REPORT

- HEARD

BOARD OF EDUCATION & EARLY DEVELOPMENT - CONTINUATION OF ANNUAL REPORT

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

No previous action to record

**WITNESS REGISTER**

RINDA HOWELL, Member
Wrangell School Board
Wrangell, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Introduced the Wrangell High School students who would provide a presentation regarding the Wrangell Public Schools.

LORENZO SILVA, Student
Wrangell High School
Wrangell, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided a presentation regarding the Wrangell Public Schools.

JOEL COLE, Student
Wrangell High School
Wrangell, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided a presentation regarding the Wrangell Public Schools.

BLAINE WILSON, Student
Wrangell High School
Wrangell, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided a presentation regarding the Wrangell Public Schools.

DR. RICH RHODES, EdD, Superintendent
Wrangell Public School District
City & Borough of Wrangell
Wrangell, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** During Wrangell Public School District presentation, answered questions.

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director
Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APCE)
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided testimony, during the presentation of the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) Outcomes Report.

BRIAN RAE, Assistant Director
Research and Analysis
Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APCE)
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided testimony, during the presentation of the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) Outcomes Report.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

8:03:05 AM

**CHAIR ALAN DICK** called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:03 a.m. Representatives Seaton, Wilson,

Kawasaki, and Dick were present at the call to order. Representative Cissna arrived as the meeting was in progress.

## Superintendent Presentation: Wrangell Public Schools

8:03:59 AM

CHAIR DICK announced that the first order of business would be a presentation by the superintendent of the Wrangell Public School District.

8:04:21 AM

RINDA HOWELL, Member, Wrangell School Board, introduced the Wrangell High School students who would provide a presentation regarding the Wrangell Public Schools.

8:05:22 AM

LORENZO SILVA, Student, Wrangell High School, thanked the legislature for the funding it provided to update the Evergreen Elementary School playground, which was very outdated and dangerous. This playground, he pointed out, is used by the entire community. This upgrade to the playground coincided with the Blue Ribbon award, he noted.

8:05:55 AM

JOEL COLE, Student, Wrangell High School, thanked the legislature for the funding it provided for the Wrangell High School One-to-One Laptop Program. Having laptops for all the high school students provides them the opportunity to become more familiar with technology.

MR. SILVA also related appreciation for the funding of the smart boards, which have enhanced elementary and high school students' learning and allowed familiarity with advanced technology.

8:06:36 AM

BLAINE WILSON, Student, Wrangell High School, thanked the legislature for funding the career and technical education programs in Wrangell. The programs provide the opportunity for students to work with both metal and wood. In fact, students even learn how to build boats.

8:07:14 AM

MR. SILVA then directed attention to the slide that listed the concurrent enrollment/college courses offered at the Wrangell High School. These college credits are very helpful to students, particularly since the credits would be more costly in college.

8:07:59 AM

MR. COLE highlighted the test scores in the Wrangell Public School District. For reading in 3rd grade, 6th grade, and 9th grade, 90 percent or more of the students are proficient or advanced. For writing, 90 percent of 3rd graders and 6th graders are proficient or advanced, while 80 percent of 9th graders were proficient or advanced. For math, 90 percent or more of 3rd graders are proficient or advanced, while 85 percent of 6th graders and 76 percent of 9th graders are proficient or advanced. He attributed the 76 percent in math proficiency to the fact that 9th graders have only taken through Algebra I and informed the committee that the math proficiency improves as 10th-12th graders take more advanced math classes.

8:08:47 AM

MR. WILSON then highlighted that the graduation rate at Wrangell High School was 93 percent for the 2010-2011 school year. In the five years prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the graduation rate at Wrangell High School has fluctuated between 91 percent and 93 percent.

8:10:05 AM

CHAIR DICK, acknowledging that the Wrangell Public School District is doing quite well, asked for any advice that might be passed on to other school districts.

8:10:16 AM

DR. RICH RHODES, EdD, Superintendent, Wrangell Public School District, City & Borough of Wrangell, began by emphasizing that the Wrangell Public School District is a great school system with a great staff and past administration. He noted that this is his first year as the superintendent. He said that Wrangell is a wonderful community and school board that are responsive to supporting the school children. The Wrangell Public School District, he opined, works hard to maximize the state's resources. However, at this point the district isn't sure it

can continue shop and art programs as well as some core classes that only have five students, such as Calculus or Trigonometry. Mr. Rhodes said, "You can either pay more people less or less people more." The district, he related, is working to find other ways in which to raise revenue, such as an education foundation.

8:12:26 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked if the Wrangell Public School system is project based, traditional classes with projects such as welding, or traditional classes that are integrated into the project classes.

DR. RHODES answered that the Wrangell Public School District doesn't utilize a thematic approach rather it utilizes a lot of place-based education opportunities. For instance, large groups of students are sent up the Stikine River as the district is involved in the Float Learning Opportunity for Academic Triumph (FLOAT) school systems grant with other schools. The district utilizes a FLOAT school where students work on the thematic approaches to math and science. He related that the district is utilizing more and more of those types of approaches. The Wrangell Public School District is just completing its strategic plan, which specifies that "place-based education, technology, and curriculum all need to be intertwined." Therefore, it's the district's job to ensure all three of those components are together for students.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON inquired as to whether the concurrent college courses are offered as distance education classes or by high school teachers.

8:14:02 AM

DR. RHODES responded that Wrangell is involved with the Alaska Learning Network (AKLN) project through which teachers in Wrangell are providing courses throughout the state. He recalled that last year one high school student graduated with 55 college credits. The district, he related, would like to do more Alaska-type on-line courses rather than the classes through Lower 48 sources. Although the AKLN program is struggling to find the resources to continue the program, a Wrangell teacher will be involved with the program next year teaching German. Mr. Rhodes told the committee that the Wrangell Public School Board's strategic plan considers languages important, and therefore are being reviewed in terms of how to provide more

foreign languages. Wrangell, he related, also believes that its students are better educated and prepared for college by having the opportunity to take music and fine arts courses. The aforementioned, he said, returns to place-based education, the thematic approach, core curriculum, and experiences in life.

8:15:50 AM

CHAIR DICK asked how many teachers are employed in the Wrangell Public School District.

DR. RHODES answered that the district consists of about 28 teachers. In further response to Chair Dick, Mr. Rhodes stated that the turnover rate is very low, as the school is able to offer a competitive wage in a great community.

8:17:14 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked if the Khan Academy or traditional lecture-based approach is used, particularly in the advanced classes.

DR. RHODES deferred to the students for an answer.

MR. COLE explained that for the woodworking and welding classes, students receive credits for participation. For the mathematics and English courses, the teacher lectures on the subject and students then take a test through the University of Alaska for college credits.

MR. SILVA added that the emergency medical technician (EMT) and emergency trauma technician (ETT) classes are both offered via the local fire department. Those enrolled in the EMT and ETT classes have the ability to join the fire department as a junior firefighter.

8:18:46 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON, noting that the Wrangell students have been able to talk with other students in the state, asked how they felt about their [education] experiences in comparison to those of other students in the state.

MR. WILSON related his understanding that with the shop classes the Wrangell High School has more opportunities with larger projects than most other schools in the state. In further response to Representative P. Wilson, Mr. Wilson explained that

prior to taking a boat building class students must take a marine fabrication class. Usually, it takes about a year and multiple shop classes for a student to construct a boat.

MR. SILVA added that the boat is built by a team of students, who are overseen by the instructor. The team of students consists of freshmen and sophomores who help to build the boat of a junior or senior student who is in charge of the process. He characterized it as a great learning system.

8:20:38 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI inquired as to the students' interest in college and how to pay for it, particularly in terms of the Alaska Performance Scholarship. He noted that of the 26 graduates of Wrangell High School in 2011, 7 met the criteria for the Alaska Performance Scholarship yet none of them took advantage of it.

MR. SILVA reported that he and Mr. Cole plan to attend at least two years of their postsecondary education in-state. Since Mr. Silva, Mr. Cole, and Mr. Wilson are in the top tier of the Alaska Performance Scholarship, he noted that they would obtain the most funding from the scholarship. Mr. Silva related his plans to take advantage of the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

8:22:51 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI recalled information that 16 percent of [Alaska] students said [that due to the Alaska Performance Scholarship] they worked harder to raise their grade point averages (GPA). He asked if that was the case for Mr. Silva or other students.

MR. SILVA stated that the Wrangell High School offers many opportunities for the credits that would qualify students for the highest tier of the Alaska Performance Scholarship, as well as encouragement to take the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) multiple times throughout the junior and senior years. Therefore, he opined that students from Wrangell High School are prepared for the scholarship.

MR. COLE added the he did work to increase his GPA in order to strive for the higher limit of the scholarship.

## Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education - Alaska Performance Scholarship Outcomes Report

8:24:38 AM

CHAIR DICK announced that the final order of business would be a presentation of the 2012 Alaska Performance Scholarship Outcomes Report.

8:25:11 AM

DIANE BARRANS, Executive Director, Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APCE), Department of Education and Early Development (EED), paraphrased from the following written remarks [original punctuation provided]:

> Two years ago I appeared before you and discussed, as one positive outcome of the proposed statewide scholarship, the capacity to bring you information that would put a bright light on Alaska's current situation in terms of student performance. In April of last year the task force you established to examine higher education and career education readiness issues in Alaska included in its recommendations for Strengthening Schools that [Department of Education and Early Development] DEED, [Department of] Labor [& Workforce Development (DLWD)], [University of Alaska] UA and ACPE should produce a proof of concept for a statewide longitudinal data system in FY12.
>
> I am very pleased to join Commissioner Hanley here this morning in introducing this report to you. The 2012 APS [Alaska Performance Scholarship] Outcomes Report represents both the bright light we collectively agreed was essential and the requested proof of concept demonstrating the power and clarity of focus that can arise from education data sharing.
>
> With respect to the content of this first report, as you will learn from Brian, this is essentially a current situation analysis. The timing of the scholarship's implementation was such that students had little or no opportunity to alter their education's trajectory to ensure they could be eligible for the APS. Within this context, I found the data to include both encouraging and sobering results. Regardless, the data is now available to the public and I can assure you will inform the work of the Commission going forward. It is this type of

information that will allow us, as Alaska's higher education assistance agency to deploy our resources strategically.

I want to commend Brian Rae's work on this project as well as his data management and research colleagues at DEED, Labor and UA.

8:27:57 AM

BRIAN RAE, Assistant Director, Research and Analysis, Alaska Postsecondary Education Commission (APCE), Department of Education and Early Development (EED), paraphrased from the following written remarks [original punctuation provided]:

This report represents the efforts of several agencies, and in particular the staff in their respective research sections. This would include, at the department of EED, its Office of Assessment, Accountability and Student Information; UA – Statewide Institutional Research and Analysis department DOL&WD – Research and Analysis Section.

The report contents reflect the input of the [Senate Bill] 221 Outcomes Subcommittee recommendations. Given the short duration of the data that we have to work with – only one semester of postsecondary experience for APS eligible students – this report contains only a subset of the performance measures that will become available in future years.

The report presents the data in what we hope are the broad areas of interest to its readers

Where do APS students come from?
Who's eligible, and who's using it?
Where are they attending?
How much was awarded, and for what types of enrollment?
Is the APS affecting educational attainment?
Does the APS affect workforce success?
In this report, for these last two items – educational attainment and workforce success – we can only provide you with baseline information. In future years, the outcomes of APS students can be compared to this baseline to determine how the scholarship is affecting them.

> Finally, we present results of a survey conducted near the end of the fall semester of APS eligible students.
>
> One observation on the report – in order to share the data collected by the various agencies while still providing time for the work required to compile and analyze the information, this report reflects Alaska high school graduation data as of October 4, 2011, and APS recipients' data as of November 11th.
>
> As of February 1st, there were [206] students who had received APS funds.
>
> Moving on to the report, the first topic area we addressed was where APS eligible students RESIDE.
>
> In Exhibit 1, we summarize the APS eligibility and recipient information based on their school district.
>
> In terms of magnitudes, there are few surprises – with nearly 40% of the state's high school graduates, the Anchorage SD [School District] also has by far the largest number of eligible graduates and the largest number of recipients, with Fairbanks a fairly distant second. At the other extreme, twelve of the state's districts had fewer than 10 graduates.

MR. RAE, clarifying Exhibit 1, informed the committee that ACPE must abide by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which forbid the disclosure of information that might provide personally identifiable information or tendencies about students. Therefore, the asterisk in the Exhibit 1 table doesn't necessarily mean there were a zero number of students. For example, although there is an asterisk for Wrangell APS recipients, there were students from the Wrangell Public School District who were awarded and did take advantage of the APS. The asterisk signifies that the number was small enough that it couldn't be reported without potentially releasing personally identifiable information. Mr. Rae resumed paraphrasing from the following written remarks [original punctuation provided]:

> Statewide, 29% of last year's graduates were eligible for the APS, but there are differences across the districts.
> Ketchikan, Copper River, Sitka, Denali, and Kodiak Island districts each had eligibility rates above 35%,

while Petersburg, Unalaska, Skagway and Haines had eligibility rates above 40%.

Exhibit 2 presents the data from the first exhibit by regions of the state. A map of the regions is in Appendix E, on page 32 of the report.

8:32:08 AM

I find this chart to be one of the more interesting ones in the report. Because there are such large differences in the numbers of graduates coming from the various districts, it's easier to make cross region comparisons using percentages. In exhibit 2, we see that the Southcentral region had the highest percentage of graduates who were academically eligible to receive an APS award – 31.7%, and the Far North region had the lowest – 11.4%.

Still, school district results within these regions differed. For example Nome in the Far North region had an eligibility rate 5 percentage points above the statewide average.

However, when we consider the percentage of those students who were eligible who then went on to actually use the scholarship, the Far North and Interior regions are the clear leaders. Nearly one-half of the eligible students in these two areas take advantage of the APS.

The second topic area in the report was the CHARACTERISTICS of APS eligible and recipient students.

8:33:11 AM

As shown in Exhibit 3, female graduates are slightly more likely to be eligible to receive the APS than are male graduates. However, any gender differences disappear when we consider the likelihood that an eligible student would make use of the scholarship – just over 1/3 of both sexes, when eligible, went on to use the scholarship.

However, when we reviewed the graduates' eligibility data by their ethnicity, we saw wider differences in

the eligibility rates. On average, 28.8% of all graduates were APS eligible, but nearly 38% of Caucasian graduates were eligible, compared to 8.3% of Alaska Native and American Indian graduates.

Still, similar to the analysis of APS usage by gender, once a student becomes APS eligible, the usage rates are very similar across the various ethnic groups, with about one in three eligible students taking advantage of the scholarship.

8:34:18 AM

Skipping to Exhibit 6, where we analyze the attendance patterns of high school graduates.

This exhibit uses data obtained from the National Student Clearinghouse, a repository of data on students attending postsecondary institutions throughout the United States. Of the 8,064 public school graduates in 2011, 30% attended in-state and 17% attended an out-of-state postsecondary institution. However, there's a notable difference in the attendance rates for the APS eligible population versus the ineligible population. 83% of APS eligible students pursued postsecondary education somewhere, while only 33% of the ineligible population did so.

There were also notable differences in the attendance patterns of the APS eligible population based on their award level. While there's a larger economic incentive for the higher award level students to stay in state – since the top award amount is twice that of the lowest award amount -- APS eligible students at the top award level are more likely to attend an out-of-state institution, while those at the second and third award levels are more likely to attend in-state.

For those interested, the National Student Clearinghouse identifies the states in which these students were attending. Maybe not surprisingly, Washington and Oregon were the two states attracting the largest number of Alaska graduates. A complete list of attendance by states is in Appendix B, on page 25 of the report.

8:36:33 AM

MR. RAE continued:

> Continuing to the next topic area, where APS recipients are PURSUING THEIR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, we skip to Exhibit 9.
>
> Overwhelmingly, it was at one of the University of AK system schools.
>
> This table was created with recipients' data as of November 11th. Since then, numbers for the UA system schools have increased slightly, to 505, 339, and 46 for UAA, UAF and UAS.

8:37:05 AM

> Since this is only the first year the scholarships have been awarded, we don't have any historical data to compare these results to. However, I think there were some expectations that there would be more postsecondary institutions represented in Exhibit 9.
>
> Although it's not broken out in the table, there were only 22 of these students who were using the APS to pursue a certificate, while the majority were pursuing a bachelor's degree.

8:37:35 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked whether due to the APS the university experienced an increase in students over last year.

MR. RAE recalled that the enrollment numbers of the University of Alaska were very similar to those of previous years. Since enrollment fluctuates from year-to-year, he couldn't parse out how much might have been a normal upward or downward trend.

8:38:09 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON, referring to Exhibit 9, related his understanding that only 22 [of the 870 students who received a scholarship immediately after graduating] pursued a certificate. He inquired as to whether anyone was using the APS for other certificated programs or apprenticeship programs beyond the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC).

8:38:49 AM

MS. BARRANS said that of the five institutions listed under the category "Other Institutions," she wasn't sure if they included a vocational institution.

MR. RAE specified that the five awards in the "Other Institutions" category do not include vocational schools, although some of the students are attending vocational certificate programs within the University of Alaska. The AVTEC focuses on that population as well. Mr. Rae said that he doesn't have the data to delve into the reasoning behind that, but there is speculation as to why there may be a smaller number. With regard to apprenticeship programs specifically, oftentimes they are the unmet need.

8:39:45 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON clarified that he was asking whether there were other programs beyond the five in the "Other Institutions" category that would have qualified to receive APS students, but did not have an APS recipient who chose to attend. He further asked whether that's well advertised in the program.

MR. BARRANS referred to pages 27-28 of the 2012 Alaska Performance Scholarship Outcomes Report, which lists the approved programs. There are quite a robust number of programs that a student could choose to attend and use their APS to do so. As Mr. Rae indicated, if it's a program through whatever structural means the costs are met, the student couldn't use their scholarship. However, if there is no tuition but tools are required to be purchased, the APS could be used to purchase those tools. The APS could also be used to pay for the student's room and board while attending the program. With regard to advertising, Ms. Barrans told the committee that in promoting APS it's made very clear that colleges as well as approved career training programs are available to students. Although she said she wasn't sure whether the institutions are actively marketing their programs to these students [who are eligible for APS] as a target population, she suspected that marketing probably isn't happening.

8:41:36 AM

MR. RAE returned to his presentation and paraphrased from the following written remarks [original punctuation provided]:

This leads us to the next topic area of HOW MUCH in APS funds were awarded, and for what TYPES OF ENROLLMENT?

Exhibit 10 graphically displays what I just mentioned – the APS recipients were predominantly enrolling in bachelor's degree programs. Also, as displayed in Exhibit 11, they were overwhelmingly enrolled on a full-time basis.

When we reviewed the data in Exhibit 6 we saw that the students eligible for the highest level award were the ones least likely to attend in-state and thus be eligible to receive the award. This tendency affected the amount of APS expenditures by award levels.

In exhibit 12, while the greatest amount of APS awards still went to the level 1 recipients, the differences would have been more dramatic if a higher percentage of level 1 recipients had chosen to pursue their studies in Alaska.

Going back to our regions as defined in Appendix E, Exhibit 13 shows the total funds awarded to students by their region, and the average award amounts for each region. For comparison purposes, the statewide average award was $3,402.

8:43:18 AM

Also, note that this graph does include the payments made to the 35 non-public school APS recipients.

The next two topic areas, how does the APS affect EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT and how it affects WORKFORCE SUCCESS, are areas that are much harder to judge at this time.

Workforce data for the class of AY11 is nonexistent, since APS recipients have not had an opportunity to pursue their postsecondary education in order to attain more gainful employment.

As for the APS' affect on educational attainment, we have only one semester of postsecondary education data available to analyze, and that data's still preliminary and subject to change.

Exhibit 14 does capture some of the earliest available information – the information on students' needs for preparatory classes once they enter postsecondary education. Using information from the University of Alaska, a total of 3,631 AY11 Alaska graduates attended UA in the fall semester immediately following their graduation. Of these, 880 were APS eligible.

An analysis of the course taking patterns of the APS eligible population compared to the non-APS eligible population showed some interesting differences. For example, ineligible students were more than twice as likely to take a preparatory class than were APS eligible students, at 64.8% versus 27.4%.

In terms of average preparatory hours taken, ineligible students took 2.9 hours compared to 1 hour for the APS eligible students. In addition, eligible students took more total hours as a group, 2.3 hours more than ineligible students. These numbers represent only the hours attempted in the fall semester, and are subject to change. Still, if both groups of students completed their semesters as planned, the average APS eligible student would earn 12.6 credit hours applicable to a degree at the end of their fall semester, while the average ineligible student would have earned only 8.4.

In the future, additional measures of the scholarship's affects on educational attainment will become available. Examples include the one and two year retention rates for students pursuing a degree, and degree completion rates.

Exhibit 17 and 18 use UA data for the entering classes for AY05 through AY07. It is not specifically APS data but data that we anticipate changing for the better because of the APS, and it provides a benchmark for future analysis.

8:46:20 AM

In exhibit 17, we see that for those students attending UA within one year of their high school graduation, approximately 3 out of 10 students do not show up for their second year, and roughly 4 out of 10

do not continue into their third year. This does not mean that these students dropped out – many may have attended UA to earn credit hours and transferred to another school. However, if the APS provides an incentive for students to stay and study in Alaska, we can expect these percentages to go up in future years.

Exhibit 18 tracks these same populations of students through AY11, analyzing the percentage of students completing their programs and the average years to completion. Degree completion rates are generally calculated using 150% of the normal time to degree, meaning allowing a student 6 years to complete a 4 year degree. As seen in the table, the difference in completion rates between the entering class of AY05 is significantly higher than the class of AY07, at 31.6% compared to 14%. While calculating comparable information for APS recipients will take several years, it's expected that these rates will rise if the APS has its intended effects.

8:46:50 AM

MR. RAE continued:

Finally, ACPE conducted a SURVEY of APS eligible students who completed a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid] FAFSA and had included an email address in their FAFSA filing. This included slightly over 1,800 of the 2,322 APS eligible students, and responses were received from 357 APS eligible students.

Response rates ran from a high of 23% for award Level 1-eligible students, down to 16% for award Level 3-eligible students.

Nearly 90% of respondents were pursuing a degree, and 5% were not pursuing postsecondary education. Of those pursuing postsecondary education, just over one-quarter were attending school outside of Alaska and were therefore not eligible to receive the award in AY12.

Two-thirds of the survey respondents, 237 students, said that the APS affected their decision to attend school. Nearly two-thirds of these students said the

APS affected their decision to pursue their education in Alaska, and over 20% said that it made them consider doing so, even though they eventually went to an out-of-state school. Over one-quarter of the respondents said it was extremely important in influencing their decision on whether or not to pursue postsecondary education.

8:48:16 AM

In conclusion:
With the first-ever APS recipients just finishing the first semester of their postsecondary studies, it is impossible to determine the long-term effects of the scholarship, and it is too early to tell if the eligibility and enrollment patterns seen in this first year were caused by the APS, or if they will continue into the future.

In future years, as more data becomes available, additional assessments of APS' effectiveness will be possible, and a better determination can be made as to whether the program is meeting its intended goals.

I appreciate your interest in the APS Outcomes Report, and would be happy to try to answer any questions you might have about it.

8:49:11 AM

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI, referring to Exhibit 1, asked if there is any way to disaggregate the data more than is already presented.

MR. RAE responded that the data can be aggregated, which was done by placing the school districts at a regional level in order to report more specifically at the region and bypass the minimum cell size requirements. He mentioned that a number of school districts could be rolled into an undisclosed number. Therefore, data could be provided on the aggregate population.

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI, referring to Exhibit 4, remarked that the 8.3 percent of Alaska Native/American Indian percentage of eligible graduates seems statistically significant. He inquired as to whether there are any theories for that low percentage.

MR. RAE explained that because this is a 100 percent sample of the population of students eligible to receive the APS, statistical significance doesn't have to "play into it." He acknowledged that it's a different number of eligible students as a percentage of their ethnic group, and suggested that one would have to look at other factors beyond that to determine why those students weren't eligible to receive the APS. Still, he agreed that it's a noticeable difference in eligibility per ethnic groups.

8:51:30 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON recalled that when the APS was created, there was concern that smaller schools might face disadvantages such as in course offerings. Therefore, the aggregated data in terms of the size of schools would be helpful to the committee. With regard to the email analysis, he asked whether responses were received by those who qualified for a level 1, 2, or 3 scholarship. He expressed curiosity because much of the data is the data he would expect from those students who are the best students in their school. He then expressed interest in the reports of the level three recipient responses. He said he would expect more level three respondents to attend college than would have in the past.

MR. RAE explained that different groups of email surveys were sent, although students weren't identified. From those surveys, there was a higher response rate for the level 1 eligible students than for the level 3 eligible students. However, the underlying reason for that differing response rate is unknown. The report does separate the three populations by their eligibility status.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked whether there was a significant difference in the level 1 or 3 students, regarding whether the APS changed their behavior or made them more likely to attend postsecondary education.

MR. RAE pointed out that the comments from the students have been included in the appendix of the report, but the comments were not analyzed based on their eligibility levels.

8:55:52 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked whether the requirement that all institutions receiving APS funds must provide an advisory advocate program has been tracked.

MS. BARRANS answered that is not a component in the existing program, but could become a component in the future if HB 104 becomes law. She informed the committee that UAA provides aggressive support for students. In fact, for the last two years UAA has used MAP-Works, which is a predictive analytical tool that targets danger signs that would alert them that a student is struggling socially, academically, or financially and allows the deployment of the appropriate resources to the student. This aggressive strategy is being used by UAA to increase their completion rates. She related her understanding that UAA is experiencing very positive results.

8:58:01 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON, referring to Exhibit 1, inquired as to the minimum number.

MR. RAE said the minimum number was five.

8:58:33 AM

MR. BARRANS, returning to the question regarding the ethnicity analyses, clarified that there is no knowledge of the underlying situation of those students who didn't qualify for the APS. However, the true measure of the effectiveness of the program will be the change in those rates over time. This report allows the populations to be scrutinized and discover whether it's an achievement primary to the student, their family, and their community. If it is primary to the students, their families, and their communities, then [there could be review regarding] increasing the opportunities for them to achieve the APS.

9:00:04 AM

CHAIR DICK emphasized that the results are really encouraging, particularly from something that has been implemented so recently. Chair Dick informed the committee that due to scheduling conflicts the continuation of the discussion with Esther Cox, Chair, State Board of Education, won't occur today. Therefore, he encouraged members to provide their questions in writing for Ms. Cox's response in writing. Chair Dick referred to the handout entitled "HD6 IPADS4LITERACY" and encouraged the committee members to familiarize themselves with the data provided.

9:02:50 AM

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:02 a.m.