

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

February 27, 2012

8:06 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Alan Dick, Chair
Representative Lance Pruitt, Vice Chair
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Peggy Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Eric Feige
Representative Sharon Cissna
Representative Scott Kawasaki

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SUPERINTENDENT PRESENTATION: NOME SCHOOL DISTRICT

- HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 242

"An Act relating to funding for digital learning as a component of public school funding."

- MOVED CSHB 242(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 272

"An Act providing for a reduction in interest on postsecondary education loans for residents."

- BILL HEARING RESCHEDULED TO 2/29/12

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 242

SHORT TITLE: PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING: DIGITAL LEARNING

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) P.WILSON

04/17/11	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/17/11	(H)	EDC, FIN
02/20/12	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
02/20/12	(H)	Heard & Held
02/20/12	(H)	MINUTE (EDC)

02/27/12

(H)

EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

MIKE BRAWNER, Superintendent
Nome School District
Nome, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided the presentation from the Nome School District.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:06:09 AM](#)

CHAIR ALAN DICK called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:06 a.m. Present at the call to order were Representatives Dick, Seaton, and P. Wilson. Representative Pruitt arrived while the meeting was in progress.

Superintendent Presentation: Nome School District

[8:06:55 AM](#)

CHAIR DICK announced that the first order of business would be a presentation from the Nome School District.

[8:07:09 AM](#)

MIKE BRAWNER, Superintendent, Nome School District, began the presentation with the district mission statement, which reads [original punctuation provided]:

Educating Students in a Positive Learning Environment
to be Competent and Productive Citizens

MR. BRAWNER reported district enrollment of 667 students, with 71 percent Alaska Native, 14 percent Caucasian, and the remaining 15 percent as other. The district has an average daily attendance (ADM) of 91 percent. He moved on to the average yearly progress (AYP) report, indicating that three of the five district schools made AYP proficiency in 2011. Nome Elementary made AYP significantly in the area of Language Arts, through the safe harbor process. A bar graph, available in the committee packet handout, titled "Nome Public Schools," dated 2/24/12, was used to compare the reading, writing, and math progress for the last two school years. He provided the school

configuration, as indicated in the handout, which reads [original punctuation provided]: Nome Schools Pilot Pre-K program, Nome Elementary School (K-6th), Anvil City Science Academy, Charter School (5th-8th), Nome Youth Facility (7th-12th), Extensions Home School Program (K-12th), and NACTEC (Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center) Career and Tech - Partnership with Bering Strait School District. Continuing, he reported that a district wide reading remediation program was instituted this year in the k-3 classes, which has boosted the reading scores, as indicated on the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) assessment program. He said MAP allows academic gains, even those made over a short period of time, to be tracked. School partnerships with community entities have been successful, and the Homework Club is an example, which allows club members an opportunity to receive free tutorial assistance. The Alaska Head Start Association recently presented the Nome district with the 2011 collaboration award, in connection with the Pre-K program. He reviewed the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-3) scores, and indicated the progress of the participants comparatively for the last two school years. Moving on to the high school programs, he reported enrollment of 220 students, and said that 12 students are in a successful credit recovery program to earn a diploma. The high school has community partnership programs, which include Junior ROTC and a Homework Club. He directed attention to a bar graph, in the committee handout, comparing the graduation rates demographically in the Nome district with districts across the state. Moving on to the Alaska Performance Scholarship graph, he indicated that 60 percent of the eligible students received this award; exceeding the remainder of the state. The Anvil City Science Academy has 44 students. The four year program focuses on a different theme each year. Art and music skills are taught by the class teacher, and language is delivered via a computer based instructional program. The Anvil program incorporates community service as an integral aspect, and currently the Active Community Teams Involved in Outreach for Nome (ACTION) is collecting recyclable items to be sold and the money donated for construction of a city park. He then reviewed a bar graph to indicate the academic progress of the academy and levels of achievement attained from 2008-2011, utilizing Standards Based Assessment (SBA) scores. The district challenges include: a winter storm, 11/8/12, when Nome schools suffered over \$70,000 in property damage; the high profile delivery of fuel to Nome via ice breaker escort resulting in increased fuel costs; and January was named the coldest month on record. The community and district operations are affected by these events. Finally,

he said that SB 84 was a help to the district, and passage of SB 171 will provide a direct benefit to the classroom due to the impact it will have on staffing.

[8:25:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON noted 667 students, and asked for a full accounting of the enrollment distribution.

MR. BRAUNER said the home school program has about 11 students. The pre-K numbers are not noted, but the program has two staff members who are expected to have 20 students between them. However, 40 children are currently in the program, and 40 more are on a waiting list, an area that needs to be expanded. Finally, the Nome Youth facility has 14 spaces, and the attendance fluctuates. Students who attend in Naknek are considered in the Nome roll.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON inquired which grades have personal technology devices available, for the students.

MR. BRAUNER said none. He indicated that interest exists, but funds have not been available, although grants are being pursued. The high school has two computer labs, and audio visual carts circulate in some schools; providing limited opportunities.

[8:29:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked for a kindergarten entry assessment comparison chart showing data on students who have versus those who have not attended a pre-K program.

MR. BRAUNER responded that there is a very telling report available, which he will forward to the committee.

HB 242-PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING: DIGITAL LEARNING

[8:34:43 AM](#)

CHAIR DICK announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 242, "An Act relating to funding for digital learning as a component of public school funding."

[8:34:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRUITT moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 242, labeled 27-LS0845\B, Mischel, 2/22/12, as the working draft.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON objected for discussion.

8:35:19 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON explained the CS, paraphrasing from a prepared statement, which read as follows [original punctuation provided]:

Two changes were made to the bill based on the comments heard from the Committee last week when this bill was heard.

1. Issue: No reporting or accountability for the new funds

a. Page 2, line 17, We have added a reporting requirement to provide insight into how the school districts are using their digital learning funds.

2. Issue: Using the funds for professional development

a. Page 3, line 14, e explicitly called out professional development of teachers as a use for the funding.

8:36:53 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON removed his objection, and without further objection Version B was before the committee.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON requested that the required accountability report include information noting whether technical devices are retained at the schools for use at specified time periods, or checked out to the students for continuous access. Research conducted in Canby, Oregon, has reported that dramatic scholastic improvement has been achieved when students have full accessibility to the devices. Practice time is increased through the availability the student experiences by having the device checked out to them, similar to a schoolbook, he said.

8:39:02 AM

REPRESENTATIVE PRUITT moved to report CSHB 242, Version LS0845\B, Mischel, 2/22/12, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. Without objection CSHB 242(EDC) was moved from the House Education Standing Committee.

The committee took an at-ease at 8:39 a.m.

[8:39:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON commented that the legislation is important to facilitate change in the classroom, and thanked the committee for the input and swift movement of the bill.

CHAIR DICK said there is a creative and inspiration aspect to technological devices, and he said curriculum development may well be improved by their use.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON said the cost of curriculum is reported to be reduced through the use of technological devices. The teaching standards remain the same, but learning styles for each child can now be tailored in a way that heretofore would have been costly to create and maintain. He stressed that the use of technical devices provides a cost efficient means to create individualized, targeted, accessible curriculum.

CHAIR DICK noted that development and engineering of games and applications for computer devices is among the ten most desired college careers.

[8:44:45 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:46 a.m.