

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 13, 2013

8:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Lynn Gattis, Chair
Representative Lora Reinbold, Vice Chair
Representative Gabrielle LeDoux
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Peggy Wilson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Dan Saddler
Representative Harriet Drummond

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 142

"An Act increasing the monthly stipend available for students attending a statewide boarding school operated by a school district; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

HOUSE BILL NO. 120

"An Act adjusting pupil transportation funding; and providing for an effective date."

- SCHEDULED BUT NOT HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 142

SHORT TITLE: STIPEND FOR STATEWIDE BOARDING SCHOOL

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) GATTIS

02/25/13	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/25/13	(H)	EDC, FIN
03/11/13	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106
03/11/13	(H)	<Bill Hearing Rescheduled to 3/13/13>
03/13/13	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM CAPITOL 106

WITNESS REGISTER

LINDA SYLVESTER, Staff
Representative Lynn Gattis
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented the proposed committee substitute for HB 142, on behalf of the bill sponsor, Representative Gattis.

ERIC GEBHART, Superintendent
Nenana City Public School District
Nenana, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 142.

CHRIS REITAN, Superintendent
Galena City School District
Galena, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Responded to questions, during discussion on HB 142.

DR. NORMAN ECK, Superintendent
Northwest Arctic Borough School District
Kotzebue, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Responded to questions, during discussion of HB 142.

MIKE HANLEY, Commissioner
Department of Education and Early Development (EED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during discussion of HB 142.

SCOTT BALLARD, Superintendent
Iditarod Area School District
McGrath, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during discussion of HB 142.

LISA RIEGER
Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 142.

DOREEN LORENZ, Chair
Friends of Jesse Lee Home
Seward, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 142.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:04:15 AM](#)

CHAIR LYNN GATTIS called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Representatives Gattis, P. Wilson, Seaton, Reinbold, and LeDoux were present at the call to order.

HB 142-STIPEND FOR STATEWIDE BOARDING SCHOOL

[8:04:36 AM](#)

CHAIR GATTIS announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 142, "An Act increasing the monthly stipend available for students attending a statewide boarding school operated by a school district; and providing for an effective date."

[8:05:06 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 142, labeled 28-LS0570\C, Mischel, 3/11/13.

[8:05:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD objected for discussion.

[8:05:28 AM](#)

LINDA SYLVESTER, Staff, Representative Lynn Gattis, Alaska State Legislature, said that proposed HB 142 focused on an increase to the stipends for reimbursement to school districts which operated state funded boarding schools.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON suggested that it would be preferable to remove the objection before discussion of the proposed CS.

[8:06:20 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD removed her objection, and there being no further objection, Version C was adopted as the working document.

[8:06:45 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER noted that the State of Alaska currently funded and operated a boarding school, Mt. Edgecumbe High School, and that, in 2005, school districts which operated residential schools were also recognized. These were in Galena, Nenana, and the Bethel Alternative boarding school. In 2005, legislation had been passed for a modest stipend for reimbursement of residential costs to these school districts. The reimbursed costs included food, lodging, and full time supervision. She directed attention to the increased funding in the proposed committee substitute, and mentioned that the aforementioned school districts were the only districts which qualified for funding. She lauded the successful results from each of these schools.

[8:08:31 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER presented a brief video of the Galena Interior Learning Academy.

[8:12:21 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if these were the only boarding schools in the state.

MS. SYLVESTER replied that there were other boarding schools operating, and that she would further explain.

[8:13:04 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER referred to the handout titled "Galena Interior Learning Academy, Residence Life Revenues and Expenditures." [Included in members' packets] She directed attention to the second page, which listed the 26 school districts in 67 communities which were home for the 181 students. She moved on to page 4, which listed the offered curriculum. She declared that the Academy's appeal was as an alternative to very small schools or home schooling.

[8:14:03 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX directed attention to the bottom of page 2 and asked about the Anchorage notation.

MS. SYLVESTER offered her belief that a student could arrive at the school from the Anchorage area, although they had community ties to another school district. She deferred for further clarification.

8:15:47 AM

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked for an explanation of the column headers on page 2, "Community" and "District of Residence."

8:16:10 AM

MS. SYLVESTER opined that the "community" was in the school "district of residence."

8:16:45 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON expressed her agreement.

8:17:30 AM

MS. SYLVESTER directed attention to page 1, line 4, of the proposed committee substitute, Version C. She explained that this would eliminate the original time restriction for stipends to schools in operation prior to January 1, 2005. She declared that, as the model had proved to be successful, the programs were encouraged by the State of Alaska. She reported that the Department of Education and Early Development (EED) had presented a request for proposal (RFP) to qualify three additional programs for reimbursement.

8:18:33 AM

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD asked why there was not a 5 or 10 year period for evaluation.

MS. SYLVESTER replied that there were tight checks and balances built into the system. She explained that, as the schools which were approved for the RFP would request funding from the Alaska State Legislature in the future, it was possible for legislators to approve continued funding. She detailed that, in 2005, the original legislation had provided a small stipend, which had remained in place until 2011, when it was doubled for a two year period. She pointed out that this would expire on June 30, 2013, and, if no action was taken, the stipend would be halved for the three participating schools and there would not be any expansion for the program.

8:20:47 AM

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON, recalling that financial support had been doubled from its initial amount, asked to clarify that the proposed committee substitute would triple the initial reimbursement.

MS. SYLVESTER clarified that the proposed increase to reimbursement would be 33.5 percent larger than the current amount.

[8:21:48 AM](#)

CHAIR GATTIS responded to Representative Wilson's query and indicated that further information would be presented, noting that the intent of the original bill was for contributions to be made by the participants and their communities.

[8:22:54 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked how the student test results compared with public schools.

MS. SYLVESTER deferred to testimony from other witnesses.

[8:23:44 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked to clarify that the legislature would have the option to fund individual schools.

MS. SYLVESTER directed attention to the proposed CS, Version C, page 2, line 21, and she read: "a district under terms and conditions required for licensing in the state and as specified by the department in regulation." She elaborated that the EED had regulations and conditions for school funding, some of which were listed in Version C, page 1, lines 12 - 13.

[8:25:33 AM](#)

CHAIR GATTIS suggested posing the question to the EED commissioner.

[8:25:52 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER explained that the proposed CS also included schools with variable length, flexible programs, although the school still had to be a 180-day public school.

[8:27:10 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON referred to page 1, line 10 of the proposed CS and asked if Mt. Edgecombe High School was operated by a district or the state.

MS. SYLVESTER replied that Mt. Edgecombe High School was not included in the proposed bill, as it was state owned and was funded through appropriations from the state operating and capital budgets. She shared that the schools referenced in the proposed CS were operated by school districts.

[8:28:23 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked about the requirement for a student dormitory on page 1, line 12, of the proposed CS. She asked for clarification regarding the students who did not have the need for a dormitory.

MS. SYLVESTER, in response, said that some students in Galena lived at home, and these students did not receive a stipend. She pointed out that Chugach School District had a similar situation, applied for the aforementioned RFP, and had submitted a letter of support for the proposed bill [Included in members' packets].

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked for more testimony regarding students living in dormitories and living at home.

[8:30:16 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if Galena Interior Learning Academy was the only option for high school in Galena.

MS. SYLVESTER replied that it was the high school in Galena.

[8:30:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON directed attention to page 1, line 14 and asked if average daily membership (ADM) and regular funding were also applied for the variable term length programs.

MS. SYLVESTER replied that the students would qualify for the base student allocation, and the school district could seek reimbursement. She deferred to EED for further response.

[8:32:56 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER directed attention to page 2, lines 18 - 22, and explained that this section allowed for a school district to cooperate with a non-profit organization for the operation of a boarding school on behalf of the school district. She pointed out that page 2, line 23, repealed the "preclusion in statute that a charter school may not have a boarding school component."

[8:34:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked about the rationale for restricting the ability to contract for the provision of room and board with only Alaska Native or non-profit organizations, and did not allow for a bid from for-profit organizations.

MS. SYLVESTER deferred.

CHAIR GATTIS replied that this had been a concern during the drafting of the bill. She stated that, as the sponsor of the proposed bill, she would welcome a further expansion for inclusion of other organizations.

[8:35:35 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER directed attention to the fiscal note for the proposed bill included in members' packets reflects a 33.5 percent increase to the current funding.

[8:37:01 AM](#)

ERIC GEBHART, Superintendent, Nenana City Public School District, explained that the Nenana Student Living Center, where students lived while attending the city school, was a part of the Nenana City School District. He reported that the facility had been in operation for 12 years. He stated his support for the proposed CS for HB 142. He said that the actual costs for food, housing, and student care were considered in formulating the request for a stipend increase. He declared that commitment from the community was significant, and that community resources were drawn on to support the facility. He shared that, although part of the student application required that grades and test scores be submitted, the primary consideration was for retention and success for an entire school year. He noted that the school district had not attained Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) during the last two years; however, the vast majority of students who remained in the program for at least two years had become successful and graduated. He noted that data indicated that students who did not finish school in Nenana, but graduated from

high school in their home district, also had a higher level of success. He described the opportunities that the program offered students, which included college level math courses, an excellent music program, a student leadership team, work experiences, and local civic assistance.

[8:43:36 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked for quantification to the statement that the community provided significant support.

MR. GEBHART replied that the City of Nenana provided the financial support for the student housing, and that local activities and engagement included the students.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked for a comparison of AYP test scores at the Nenana High School to those at the schools which the students had previously attended.

MR. GEBHART replied that the returning student scores indicated that AYP was being achieved, noting that it took time to raise the level of achievement.

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX restated her question for a comparison of scores from Nenana High School with the students' originating schools.

MR. GEBHART offered to provide this information to the committee.

[8:47:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked what grades were served by the Nenana boarding school.

MR. GEBHART replied that the school was for grades 9-12.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked for the total number of students, and how many were from the immediate area.

MR. GEBHART, in response, stated that there was an enrollment of 200 students, with 85 student residents at the living center.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked if this enrollment was for all grade levels.

MR. GEBHART replied that the enrollment was for K - 12, and that there were 10-12 students per grade.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON inquired about the application process.

MR. GEBHART explained that the parents and students completed an application, which included a statement explaining why they would like to attend.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked for more information regarding the retention rate.

MR. GEBHART reported that in July, 2008, when he first arrived, the living center had 40 students and there were now 70 students.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked about the percentage of retention.

MR. GEBHART reported that 70 students remained from an original 88 students, which approached the goal of 80 percent retention.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked about the number of graduating students each year.

MR. GEBHART replied that, in 2013, there would be 11 graduates, and, in 2012, there were about 22 graduates.

[8:51:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON, directing attention to the variable term length proposed in the CS, asked how that would affect the Nenana High School compared with the full school year option.

MR. GEBHART replied that Nenana had a full school year program and would not participate in the variable length program. He stated his support for the variable length program at other schools as it provided additional choices for students.

[8:53:11 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD reported that she was "worried about long term sustainability and we wanna get a good rate of return on our investment." She asked if Nenana City School District anticipated an increase in its AYP.

MR. GEBHART replied that the school district endeavored annually toward this end. He clarified that the priority was for substantial growth by every student, but the level of increase could be dependent on their educational background and their work ethic.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD questioned the low graduation rate, citing graduation of only 34 students out of 500 students. She then asked about the cost per student, and whether the parents contributed. She declared that "it just seems like where people invest themselves, you tend to get, you know, more buy-in and a commitment."

MR. GEBHART questioned the figures cited by Representative Reinbold, pointing out that, although approximately 500 students had attended the Nenana Student Living Center and 134 students had graduated, virtually all of them had graduated from high school somewhere. He emphasized that there was a very high graduation rate of students who had attended the center.

REPRESENTATIVE REINBOLD stated that the Anchorage School District had a 70 percent graduation rate. She repeated her question regarding parental contributions.

MR. GEBHART explained that the stipend provided for room and board at the living center, while the students paid for personal entertainment and needs. He reported that the State of Alaska reimbursed the school district for student travel to the school at the beginning of the school year, and then return travel at the end of the school year. He pointed out that any additional travel was the responsibility of the family. He noted that some students could not afford to return after the Christmas holiday. He reported that activity fees, including travel for sports, music events, or similar, were the responsibility of the student.

[8:59:18 AM](#)

CHRIS REITAN, Superintendent, Galena City School District, explained that, although Galena and Nenana had similar operational nuances, each had a different focus and program offering, which allowed for student choices to best fit their needs. He addressed the question for "skin in the game," and pointed out the difficulty for parents to not have their children at home. He lauded this selfless commitment to offer the best opportunity to their child. Regarding the financial aspect for "skin in the game," he reported that there was a

student activity fee of \$150.00 each per semester. He reported that occasionally local students in Galena had applied and lived in the dormitory for specific personal reasons. He said that the school district was not funded for these students, but that it was "best for the family and best for that particular student." Directing attention to the aforementioned handout titled "Galena Interior Learning Academy, Residence Life Revenues and Expenditures," he noted the difference between "District of Residence" and "Community" and explained that the data reflected the District from which the student had previously attended school, but the Community could be the result of a family move after acceptance into the residential program, and was the current home of the family. He reported that the graduation data and the AYP were considered independently, noting that there was 100 percent graduation by any student who had arrived into the boarding school program as a freshman. He pointed out that, when students arrived, the AYP may not indicate proficiency, but by the senior year, if the student was retained, graduation would occur. He explained that the application for Galena was completed entirely online, and then an interview was conducted with the parent and the student. Galena had a focus on career and technical education, and that should be reflected in the application. He said there was not extensive screening of academic background. He shared that Galena also had a local high school, but would accept a local student based on interest and need.

[9:07:30 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked if the application process, specifically the interview aspect, had changed over time to give a better feel for the student. She asked whether students were allowed to solely focus on the vocational education classes, or were required to also take other course work.

MR. REITAN replied that the previous paper application process had been streamlined from the back and forth telephone calls to the current online application with a telephone interview. He repeated that it was most important to ensure that students would be a good fit in the residence hall. He shared that students would leave for interpersonal reasons but not because of the academic classes. In response to Representative P. Wilson, he said that full high school requirements were in place for students to complete the high school graduation requirement exam. He said that it was impossible for a student to complete the required hours for a technical certificate, such as the requirements for cosmetology, and still meet the other

graduation requirements. He said that many students would return for a semester as a postsecondary student, or transition into another program, in order to complete the necessary hours to qualify for the state boards. He reported that most students took at least two career technical education (CTE) course programs.

[9:12:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked if the students were allowed a stipend for postsecondary work.

MR. REITAN replied that postsecondary students paid 100 percent of the costs.

[9:13:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON, pointing to the variable length program proposed in the CS for HB 142, asked how that would impact school districts, specifically for the ADM funding.

[9:15:02 AM](#)

MR. REITAN replied that the proposed variable length program would not impact the Galena City School District, as all of the CTE programs were long term.

[9:15:48 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked to clarify whether students were present for the entire school year, or for the calendar year.

MR. REITAN stated that the school year began in August and was completed in May.

[9:16:13 AM](#)

DR. NORMAN ECK, Superintendent, Northwest Arctic Borough School District, declared support for the proposed bill, sharing that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District would apply to become a boarding school district. He stated that, although the school district planned to primarily offer a full year program, the variable length program could also be offered for semester length courses such as Process Technology, which prepared students for trades work in the mines, the pipeline, and the oil fields. He declared that a goal was to be a magnet school district in order to attract students, and would specialize in

Process Technology, Education, Culinary Arts, and Health Care training. He declared that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District was the only school district in Alaska with a post-secondary technical center, and, after renovation, would serve both high school and adult students. He pointed out that the current kitchen and cafeteria were being remodeled into a teaching kitchen for the culinary arts, which would allow high school students to graduate with a certificate in Culinary Arts and be ready for a job. He announced that these variable length programs were important for specific certifications. He declared his support for the increase to reimbursement costs, as the current amount was not sufficient. He stated that rural Alaska students needed programs which provided the skills necessary to be job and career ready. He reported that, as his school district had five schools with fewer than 3 teaching positions, it was difficult for these schools to have the variety of curriculum to offer students the necessary options. He stated that "the time for boarding facilities for Rural Alaska has come again."

[9:23:34 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX, referring to the aforementioned "Galena Interior Learning Academy, Residence Life Revenues and Expenditures," pointed out that 18 of the 181 students attending Galena were from the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, and she asked for further clarification.

DR. ECK explained that his district did not yet have the residential program, but it was applying. He declared that this was about choice and options for students, and that Galena offered many excellent programs. He stated that Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna students were some of the only ones in the state that had viable options close to home.

[9:26:45 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked to clarify that currently there was not a residential program in the Northwest Arctic Borough School District.

DR. ECK explained that the district application for residential schooling was currently being considered.

[9:27:18 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked how the ADM funding would work for the variable courses at the proposed magnet school. As students would only be in attendance for a shorter period, this needed to be fair to all the schools.

[9:28:47 AM](#)

MIKE HANLEY, Commissioner, Department of Education and Early Development (EED), pointed out that, as the Alaska Board Of Education & Early Development had recently adopted a regulation to recognize variable term programs, a student would not be funded for a full year, if attending a variable term program. He stated that the regulation only allowed for a boarding stipend, while the basic student allocation (BSA) remained with the student's home district.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked to clarify that it would only be stipend funding for the variable term program.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY expressed his agreement, pointing out that it was the home school districts which had brought this question forward.

[9:30:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX asked about program opportunities for urban students, similar to those provided in Galena.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY offered his belief that these programs were not available "to the extent that Galena does," but that components were available in many other districts.

[9:31:38 AM](#)

COMMISSIONER HANLEY, in response to Representative P. Wilson, explained that these were monthly stipends for student room and board. He noted that a one day student count would be performed for the variable term programs in October and based on enrollment this would be the annual average. This regulation would also allow for the average number during a full school year.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked if the State of Alaska would pay for a student to attend any school of choice.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY replied that there were currently statewide programs which were open to any students. He stated that the

proposed bill would also allow programs that were less than a full year.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON, observing that students from a rural area could go to any school, questioned if the same would be true for urban students, with the State of Alaska paying for room and board, when it was possible for similar programs in their home area.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY replied that this opportunity was currently allowed, and that the proposed bill did not change that option. He pointed out that it was unusual for a student to apply from an urban area.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON countered that the proposed bill did change that, as the state would now pay \$1,230.00 for each student, which was a substantial increase. She asked if any school would consider this to be a money making venture. She suggested that an unintended consequence of the proposed bill could be a greater expense for education to the state.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY explained that this reimbursement was up to \$1,230.00 of the actual cost, and was not changed with the proposed bill. He offered his belief that the intent was to provide equity between full year and variable term programs. He pointed out that the travel component allowed for one round trip per student count, based on the average cost for transporting students to residential boarding schools. He clarified that, as the funding was received by the school, the district would determine how to distribute the fund to maintain equity between the variable term and the full year programs.

[9:38:55 AM](#)

MS. SYLVESTER directed attention to an earlier question regarding the expansion of the RFP and the programs. She explained that the RFP process allowed for a response in cooperation with the department, an acceptance, and then an approval for funding by the legislature, which would control the growth of the program. She asked that the commissioner speak to this mechanism.

[9:40:02 AM](#)

COMMISSIONER HANLEY explained that the student counts in the boarding programs were considered for additional needs prior to the approval of new facilities. After approval, EED would work

with the Governor to include these schools in the Governor's budget. He declared that there was an obligation for funding, if a school was approved. He pointed out that the success and quality of the school was always open for review.

[9:41:10 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE LEDOUX shared her concern for a large expansion, which had been previously expressed by Representative Wilson. She pointed out that 37 students from urban areas attended Galena which was 20 percent of the total enrollment of 181 students.

[9:42:40 AM](#)

CHAIR GATTIS explained that, although there was a large influx of people moving into the Matanuska-Susitna area from Rural Alaska, many students chose to stay in the villages to finish school.

[9:43:47 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON offered his belief that not very many institutions would provide a variable length program, as the cost to the district was not supportable. He requested more information, if this was the intent of the proposed bill; however, if this bill did not accomplish this, he questioned why the bill was being introduced.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY said that the school districts had "skin in the game," as the state was not building these schools, and the school districts would not make money. He clarified that the proposed bill allowed for some basic measures: a funding increase to recognize program costs; a variable term program; and, district-wide programs.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked if EED anticipated that the variable term programs would be provided on a district-wide basis, as the BSA had already been allocated to the district for cost coverage.

COMMISSIONER HANLEY directed attention to the Chugach model, "The Voyage to Excellence," which had an Anchorage-based program, and brought students for variable term programs after contracts to support the students had been established on district levels.

DR. ECK added that, although his school district had an overall 54 percent graduation rate, students who had taken two or more CTE classes in a career pathway had an 83 percent graduation rate.

[9:49:42 AM](#)

SCOTT BALLARD, Superintendent, Iditarod Area School District, said that the school district would like to offer an in-district residential learning center, which would support the small school sites and expand the curriculum by offering more choices to students, especially in preparation for qualification for the Alaska Performance Scholarship.

REPRESENTATIVE P. WILSON asked how many schools were in the district for the residential learning center to draw students.

MR. BALLARD replied that there were seven schools, in a district comparable in size to the State of Ohio, with about 200 students district wide. He declared that four of the seven schools had less than 30 students.

[9:51:32 AM](#)

LISA RIEGER, Cook Inlet Tribal Council (CITC), stated that the Alaska Native organizations were working in cooperation with school districts to provide residential components. She declared support for the proposed CS for HB 142 by CITC and the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) as there was general consensus that more partnerships would lead to greater success for students. She briefly described the CITC program, which was a public-private partnership with the Anchorage School District. She reported that CITC supplied the room, board, and residential components, while the Anchorage School District provided the academic and extra-curricular programs. She explained that the residential program was designed to be an Alaska Native culture-based leadership program with social and academic support, but the program was not a therapeutic environment for drug, alcohol, or emotional issues. She said that 43 percent of the students arriving in Anchorage were not accompanied by parents, sharing that students could be homeless, or have home disruptions, and "just need a stable place to live and go to school." She pointed out that the Alaska Native graduation rate was 50 percent, compared to the Anchorage School District general population rate of 70 percent. She mentioned that the stipend increase did not cover the entire cost of room and board, and

CITC would be leveraging other monies to provide this opportunity and support.

[9:57:28 AM](#)

DOREEN LORENZ, Chair, Friends of Jesse Lee Home, said that the school was very different than any school in Alaska and would begin a variable term program in 2014. She described that the education was hands-on, esteem based, and would allow students to experience different types of vocations, in order to better determine what direction they would like to pursue. She listed the opportunities for learning in the Seward area. She said that this approach would be similar to the Chugach model, although unique to all other institutions.

[9:59:54 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON asked to clarify that the model would not require a base student allocation through the school, but that the funding would be through contracts with school districts.

MS. LORENZ expressed her agreement.

[10:00:36 AM](#)

CHAIR GATTIS said that HB 142 bill would be held over.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.