

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

March 24, 2014
8:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Gary Stevens, Chair
Senator Mike Dunleavy, Vice Chair
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Charlie Huggins
Senator Berta Gardner

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission

Maureen Van Wagner - Anchorage
David Piazza - Dillingham

CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

SENATE BILL NO. 208

"An Act increasing the school construction debt reimbursement percentage for certain municipalities; and providing for an effective date."

MOVED CSSB 208(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 208

SHORT TITLE: SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BOND DEBT

SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) OLSON

02/26/14	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/26/14	(S)	EDC, FIN
03/10/14	(S)	EDC AT 8:00 AM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/10/14	(S)	Heard & Held
03/10/14	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/14/14	(S)	EDC AT 8:00 AM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

03/14/14 (S) Heard & Held
03/14/14 (S) MINUTE(EDC)

WITNESS REGISTER

MAUREEN VAN WAGNER, Appointee
Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

DAVID PIAZZA, Appointee
Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission
Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as appointee to the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission.

DAVID SCOTT, Staff
Senator Donny Olson
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented changes in SB 208, version N.

ELIZABETH NUDELMAN, Director
School Finance and Facilities
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions related to SB 208.

SENATOR DONNY OLSON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 208.

TY MASE, Superintendent
Lake and Peninsula School District
King Salmon, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions related to SB 208.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:00:33 AM](#)

CHAIR GARY STEVENS called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Gardner, Dunleavy, Huggins, Stedman, and Chair Stevens.

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

CHAIR STEVENS announced that the first order of business would be confirmations of Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC) candidates.

Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission

[8:01:18 AM](#)

MAUREEN VAN WAGNER, Appointee, Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission, Anchorage, Alaska, testified as appointee to the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission. She offered information about herself as a candidate for the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission (PTPC). She shared her professional history in special education and as a mentor and instructional coach. She said she is excited to be a part of the PTPC and she brings 18 years of teaching to the table. She noted she could be fair and balanced when making decisions.

[8:03:00 AM](#)

CHAIR STEVENS asked what is required of a member of the commission in terms of time and issues.

MS. VAN WAGNER related she has gone through training to be on the commission. Membership will require patience and good decision-making skills, as well as a high level of confidentiality. The commission meets quarterly.

[8:04:14 AM](#)

SENATOR GARDNER requested comments about restraining students with disabilities, a topic of recent bills.

MS. VAN WAGNER replied that she is aware of the bills, but does not deal with students who have to be restrained at the high school level. She opined that the best option is to make the environment safe and she has the training to effectively use restraint.

SENATOR GARDNER suggested, if after 18 years of never having to use restraint, it may not be an essential tool.

MS. VAN WAGNER shared her resource classroom experience, noting class size is a factor. She said she has not had to use restraint, but could imagine times when it could be needed.

SENATOR DUNLEAVY asked why Ms. Van Wagner wants to be on the commission.

MS. VAN WAGNER said she answered that in her first statements, but she repeated her work history and her ability to give a fair and honest decision about teachers in the field.

CHAIR STEVENS thanked Ms. Van Wagner.

[8:08:48 AM](#)

DAVID PIAZZA, Appointee, Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission, Dillingham, Alaska, testified as appointee to the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission. He noted he is the superintendent of Southwest Region School District and he shared his work history of 29 years in Alaska public education. He stated why he is interested in the superintendent position on the commission and work that focuses on prevention so that educators understand their responsibilities. He said he could listen to the facts presented and work to ensure that the integrity of the profession is maintained at the highest level.

CHAIR STEVENS asked how many cases have been decided against teachers.

MR. PIAZZA thought there were about nine cases of sanctions.

CHAIR STEVENS noted the commission meets quarterly.

MR. PIAZZA said yes - in Anchorage.

CHAIR STEVENS thanked Mr. Piazza.

[8:12:15 AM](#)

SENATOR DUNLEAVY moved to advance the names of Maureen Van Wagner and David Piazza for appointment to the Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission to the full membership of the legislature in joint session for consideration and a final vote. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

CHAIR STEVENS reminded committee members that this does not reflect any intent by the members to vote for or against the confirmation of the individuals during any further sessions.

[8:12:48 AM](#)

At ease

SB 208-SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION BOND DEBT

[8:14:48 AM](#)

CHAIR STEVENS announced the consideration of SB 208.

DAVID SCOTT, Staff, Senator Donny Olson, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, presented changes in SB 208, version N. He noted one change on page 7, lines 1 and 2, the words "are less than or equal to the 20 percent participating share" were revised. The intent of the bill is to catch those districts whose participating share is 20 percent or less.

CHAIR STEVENS asked Mr. Scott to summarize the bill.

8:16:18 AM

SENATOR DUNLEAVY moved to adopt the CS for SB 208, labeled 28-LS1527\N, as the working document.

CHAIR STEVENS objected for discussion.

8:16:49 AM

MR. SCOTT explained that the bill is designed to encourage small and rural districts to address facility improvements via issuing debt, rather than through the state school construction grant program. He said there are two mechanisms for the state to provide for capital projects for education facilities. One is bond debt reimbursement program, which is typically a 70/30 split where the municipality pays 30 percent and the state pays 70 percent. There is also a 60/40 split which has space requirements. The second is the school construction/major maintenance grant program.

He related the bill takes a data point of reference from the school construction and major maintenance program, which is 20 percent or lower, and uses it in the bond debt reimbursement program. If eligible for the participant share, in debt reimbursement it would be 20/80. He pointed out precedence page 5, line 30. The participating share requirement there is 10 percent. From 2005.

He said that some schools have been on the grant list for some time. Not every district has the ability to bond, but those who can, can be reimbursed at a lower rate.

8:20:40 AM

ELIZABETH NUDELMAN, Director, School Finance and Facilities, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Juneau, Alaska, answered questions related to SB 208.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked if the department supports the program or has any concerns.

MS. NUDELMAN said the department does support the programs and will continue to move them forward.

[8:22:20 AM](#)

SENATOR DONNY OLSON, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, sponsor of SB 208. He said it is a very popular bill and will affect many across the state.

SENATOR HUGGINS thanked Senator Olson for sponsoring the bill. He asked which schools are immediately affected.

MR. SCOTT said there is a list in members' packets and it includes all schools eligible for 20 percent and below. He read several schools. He addressed the immediate effects of Section 2.

SENATOR HUGGINS couldn't find it.

MR. SCOTT commented on Lake and Peninsula.

CHAIR STEVENS thanked.

TY MASE, Superintendent, Lake and Peninsula School District, King Salmon, Alaska, answered questions related to SB 208. He described the issues surrounding Port Alsworth School. He explained how the borough passed a bond to fund the repairs on the school. SB 208 provides equity for their district.

[8:27:20 AM](#)

CHAIR STEVENS thanked Mr. Mase.

SENATOR GARDNER

MR. MASE

SENATOR GARDNER

MR. MASE said yes.

CHAIR STEVENS closed public hearing. [The assumption is that Chair Stevens removed his objection to adopting the CS.]

[8:29:09 AM](#)

SENATOR DUNLEAVY moved to report CSSB 208 (EDC) from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note.

SENATOR GARDNER objected to tell a story about the Little Red Hen. She withdrew her objection.

There being no further objection, CSSB 208(EDC) moved from the Senate Education Standing Committee.

[8:29:34 AM](#)

At ease

[8:31:06 AM](#)

CHAIR STEVENS brought the meeting to order and then adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee at 8:31 p.m.