

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
JOINT MEETING
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 13, 2017

7:59 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Senator Shelley Hughes, Chair
Senator Gary Stevens
Senator Cathy Giessel
Senator John Coghill
Senator Tom Begich

HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Representative Harriet Drummond, Chair
Representative Justin Parish, Vice Chair
Representative Zach Fansler
Representative Ivy Spohnholz
Representative Jennifer Johnston
Representative Chuck Kopp
Representative David Talerico
Representative Lora Reinbold

MEMBERS ABSENT

SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

All members present

HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE

Representative Geran Tarr

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION: SCHOOL BOARD FLY-IN

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

JAMES FIELDS, Chair
Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development
Member

Copper River School Board
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information on the Alaska State School Board.

NORM WOOTEN, Executive Director
Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about AASB.

PETE HOEPFNER, President
Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
Member

Cordova School Board
Cordova, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about AASB.

MIKE HANLEY, Assistant Superintendent
Chugach School District
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Chugach School District.

CHARLENE ARNESON, President
Chugach School Board
Whittier, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Chugach School District.

DAVE HERBERT, Superintendent
St. Mary's School District
St. Mary's, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about St. Mary's School District.

FRANCIS THOMPSON, President
St. Mary's School Board
St. Mary's, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about St. Mary's School District.

KAY ANDREWS, President
Southwest Region School Board
Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about Southwest Region School District.

DAVID PIAZZA, Superintendent
Southwest Region School District
Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about Southwest Region School District.

MARIE PAUL, Vice President
Southwest Region School Board
Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided information about the Southwest Region School District.

KATHY TODD, M.D., Vice President
Valdez School Board
Valdez, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Valdez City Schools.

SEAN DUSEK, Superintendent
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD)
President
Kenai Peninsula Borough School Board
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about KPBSD.

PENNY VADLA, Vice President
Kenai Peninsula Borough School Board
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about KPBSD.

DANNY FRAZIER, Superintendent
Dillingham City School District
Dillingham, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about Dillingham City School District.

KEVIN SHIPLEY, Superintendent
Kake City School District

Kake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Kake City School District.

ANDI STORY, Vice President

Juneau School Board

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Juneau Borough School District.

KATHY TRAN, Student

Juneau Douglas High School

Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Juneau Borough School District.

TAM AGOSTI-GISLER, President

Anchorage School Board

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Anchorage School District.

STARR MARSETT, Member

Anchorage School Board

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Anchorage School District.

ANNA POTTER, Student

Anchorage School District

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information on the Anchorage School District.

HAILEY EDMONSON, Student, South Anchorage High School

Anchorage School District

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Anchorage School District.

PAT HIGGINS, Member

Anchorage School Board

Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Anchorage School District.

ALEISHA MOLLEN, Member

Wrangell School Board
Wrangell Borough School District
Wrangell, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about the Wrangell Borough School District.

STEWART MCDONALD, Superintendent
Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD)
Kodiak, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented information about KIBSD.

MARK SOMERVILLE, President
Copper River School Board
Glennallen, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Introduced students from the Copper River School District.

AMANDA FRIENDSHUH, Student
Copper River School District (CRSD)
Kenny Lake, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided information about (CRSD).

ACTION NARRATIVE

[7:59:52 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES called the joint meeting of the Senate and House Education Standing Committees to order at 7:59 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Begich, Stevens, and Chair Hughes, and Representatives Kopp, Fansler, Johnston, Talerico, and Chair Drummond. Representatives Begich, Parish, Spohnholz, and Reinbold arrived shortly thereafter, as did Senators Coghill and Giessel.

PRESENTATION: SCHOOL BOARD FLY-IN

[8:01:19 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES announced that the only order of business would be a presentation of the School Board Fly-In. She noted that the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development would be presenting again in March. She said today the committee will be hearing from the State Board, as well as from Norm Wooten from the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) and various school boards. Several school districts will also present.

[8:01:51 AM](#)

She recognized the arrival of Senators Begich and Coghill, and Representative Parish.

8:02:13 AM

JAMES FIELDS, Chair, Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development, Member, Copper River School Board, presented information on the Alaska State Board of Education. He welcomed all members of the Association of Alaska School Board (AASB) and students to the meeting.

CHAIR DRUMMOND noted the arrival of Representative Spohnholz.

MR. FIELDS shared highpoints from the State School Board's Annual Report. The Board's mission statement for public education in Alaska is, "An excellent education for every student, every day. All students will succeed in their education and work, shape meaningful life for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them." The strategic objectives the state has put forward are: amplify student learning, inspire community ownership for educational excellence, modernize the education system, ensure excellent educators, and promote safety and wellbeing.

MR. FIELDS drew attention to new offices, members, and staff, specifically the appointments of Dr. Michael Johnson as Commissioner of Education on July 5, 2016, and Sana Efird as the sole Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Education. Dr. Johnson has served as superintendent of the Copper River School District, principal, curriculum and staff development director, elementary teacher, and special education program assistant. During his tenure as a principal, Glennallen School Elementary School was named a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Johnson is a recipient of the prestigious Milken Educator Award. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master of Arts in Elementary Teaching from Columbia International University, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Education and Intercultural Studies from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.

8:04:44 AM

MR. FIELDS reported that before being appointed Deputy Commissioner, Ms. Efird was serving as an Assistant Commissioner in the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). She has a background in education serving as an executive director of a community college foundation, director of development for a private school, and teacher and staff development trainer in public schools. Ms. Efird holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Arts Degree in Philanthropy and Development from St. Mary's University in Minnesota.

8:05:20 AM

MR. FIELDS shared significant steps the Board will take this year. He reported that in December 2016, DEED selected Data Recognition Corporation (DRC) as the vendor of statewide assessments in English, Language Arts, math, and science to be administered the spring of 2017. School districts can choose to give the tests by paper or on computer. He described the process of selecting the vendor and he provided the history of DRC's involvement in Alaska.

MR. FIELDS turned to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which replaces No Child Left Behind and is authorized for four years. He said the department continues to reach out to all stakeholders regarding ESSA.

8:07:11 AM

MR. FIELDS discussed Mt. Edgumbe High School and the fact that the State Board serves as its school board. He said parents and other serve on an advisory board. In the fall of 2016, 434 students attended Mt. Edgumbe. Alaska Native students compose 86 percent of the student population.

8:08:11 AM

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Mr. Fields. She noted the Board would be back again before the Education Committee for a full meeting.

8:09:14 AM

NORM WOOTEN, Executive Director, Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), presented information about AASB. He related that AASB is a membership organization consisting of 52 of 53 school districts in Alaska. Their associate membership consists of the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the Deputy Commissioner of Education, and Mt. Edgumbe.

8:10:12 AM

MR. WOOTEN addressed AASB's three areas of focus: governance, the Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement (ICE), and the Consortium for Digital Learning (CDL). AASB believes that good governance by school boards leads to greater student achievement. Under governance, the Board offers workshops, strategic planning, self-assessment, superintendent searches, and conferences.

He said that under Alaska ICE the Board works with various school districts to engage their communities for greater

participation in schools and in Social Emotional Learning. They also administer the School Climate and Connectedness Survey. He described the Board's management of the Consortium of Digital Learning (CDL) for school districts. They are also heavily involved in language preservation and provide professional development to teachers and staff as it relates to technology.

[8:12:38 AM](#)

PETE HOEPFNER, President, Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), Member, Cordova School Board, presented information about AASB. He addressed AASB's resolutions and where AASB stands. He said AASB uses resolutions as a basis to advocate and deliberate and he provided the process they use. The resolutions provide a method of addressing district priorities and legislation.

[8:14:30 AM](#)

MR. HOEPFNER showed AASB's long-term goals for 2016-2019, which are based on data and resolutions. He stressed that Alaska can do better. He pointed out that AASB's goals can be found on BASIS.

MR. WOOTEN concluded that it was a brief synopsis of AASB.

[8:14:57 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Mr. Wooten and Mr. Hoepfner and introduced former-Commissioner of Education Mike Hanley.

[8:15:22 AM](#)

MIKE HANLEY, Assistant Superintendent, Chugach School District, presented information about the Chugach School District. He introduced himself. He said the committee would hear from five districts about their innovative work and unique ideas to best meet the needs of their students. He noted that the Chugach School District is a unique and successful model; the school board and community accepts and pursues change.

[8:16:36 AM](#)

CHARLENE ARNESON, President, Chugach School Board, presented information about the Chugach School District. She related that 18 years ago communities insisted that schools "do something better for our kids." District staff and leaders were willing to put forth the effort to make the change. She emphasized that they had to teach the way students learn.

[8:18:12 AM](#)

MR. HANLEY pointed out that the Chugach Model is the only competence-based district in Alaska. It was recognized as the first competency-based school district in the country and received the Malcolm Baldrich National Quality Award in 2001 by President Bush for innovation and quality. He addressed how the district embraces innovation by changing educational variables, drivers, and delivery. Learning is the constant; timing is the variable. He explained that they have "levels" rather than grade levels, and students work at a pace they learn best at their level. Students have individualized learning plans.

Student needs are the drivers and they understand and meet State Standards. The delivery consists of direct instruction, technology, and combinations of methods. The goal is for students to be productive and successful adults when they leave the school system.

[8:21:19 AM](#)

MR. HANLEY described the Voyage to Excellence program, recognizing that students in small rural schools are challenged to have "a vision beyond" when their experience is in a small community. The program is a statewide variable-term residential school located in Anchorage with intensive instruction and life experiences for two to three weeks at a time. Students experience ETT training, culinary arts, construction trades, driver's education, SAT preparation, and other opportunities, as well as support to keep up with work from their home district.

MR. HANLEY explained that Chugach School District has blurred the edges of what is considered a "district." They changed the definition of who "our kids" are, their responsibilities, and educational partners. Students are those who need the opportunity to engage in any program; there are partnerships across the state; their role is to guide, lead, share with, and follow students, not just transmit knowledge.

The school is redefining who their partners are: Copper River - online classed, Voyage to Excellence, Northwestern Alaska Career and Technical Center (NACTEC) in Nome, Prince William Sound College, Kodiak School District, Alaska's Institute of Technology (AVTEC) in Seward, community businesses and agencies, and tribal corporations.

[8:24:37 AM](#)

He concluded that the district's innovative model has been in place for over 20 years and is showing results - students and communities are engaged and the graduation rate is 87.6 percent,

ten percent higher than the state average. He stated as the district continues to pursue partnerships and resources, it is becoming more innovative and effective.

8:24:50 AM

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Mr. Hanley and the district for "blazing the trail with innovation." She introduced Mr. Herbert.

8:25:23 AM

DAVE HERBERT, Superintendent, St. Mary's School District, presented information about St. Mary's School District. He described his small, single-site district with a 99 percent Yupik student population of 200. He added that the district has a three-star rating and outstanding parents, teachers, staff, and community members. He highlighted the Relevant Instruction program, which has helped to engage the community, make learning relevant, and gain parental support.

8:27:15 AM

MR. HERBERT described the Relevant Instruction program as an outdoor relevant instruction program that utilizes the State Standards in a rigorous and meaningful manner, which provides true relevancy to the unique student population, community, and environment. During the trips, students are required to collect such things as vegetation and water samples, perform mathematical computation, write daily journal articles, use GPS systems, learn the Yup'ik language and gather other specific data from the environment. Back in the classroom students are required to complete a comprehensive project following clear and concise rubrics which incorporate collected data, reading, writing, science, social studies, technology, and math, as well as meeting standards. Students must meet stringent criteria to go on the trip; good grades, behavior, and attendance.

He said that parents and community members are active in planning the trip and parents are required to attend meetings at school and are aware of the criteria for participation and the project. He shared how teachers and staff members participate in the trips. He provided an example of a new science teacher who got to go on a moose hunting trip, learning so much about Alaska and his students' lifestyle.

He concluded that once the project has been completed, the district holds a feast, which pulls together the entire community. Relevant Instruction has motivated students and built support for the program and pride in the community.

[8:31:30 AM](#)

FRANCIS THOMPSON, President, St. Mary's School Board, presented information about St. Mary's School District. He shared the district's mission to ensure that all students are able to realize their dreams through their educational experience. The district graduates a wide variety of students, including some that have gone to Stanford University and some who choose to live a subsistence life in the village. The district's goal is to produce contributing members of society who have the necessary skills to become gainfully employed in whatever vocation they may choose.

MR. THOMPSON said the Relevant Instruction program has helped the district and community. It has encouraged parents to become involved with their students, has motivated students to have good grades, attendance, and behavior, and demonstrated to the community that the school values their culture. The elders in the community are very supportive of the program and when "you have the support of the elders in a small village, things seem to work much better."

[8:34:21 AM](#)

MR. THOMPSON listed those who recently visited the school: Governor Walker, Senator Murkowski, Senator Sullivan, and Senator Olson. He said they would agree that St. Mary's School is doing some innovative things with limited resources to ensure that students receive the best possible education while being careful how state funds are utilized. He concluded that Relevant Instruction is one of many programs used by the school district to improve the quality of education "outside of the box."

[8:35:16 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Mr. Thompson. She introduced Ms. Andrews and Mr. Piazza.

[8:35:32 AM](#)

KAY ANDREWS, President, Southwest Region School Board, presented information about Southwest Region School District. She said Southwest Region schools are meeting Alaska's education challenge for children through its innovative and collaborative efforts sustained by stable education funding.

[8:36:54 AM](#)

DAVID PIAZZA, Superintendent, Southwest Region School District, presented information about Southwest Region School District. He related that over the years, Southwest Region School District has, along with other school districts across the state and

nation, focused its limited resources on core reading, writing, and mathematics; basic skills due to the emphasis placed on measurement by standardized tests. Staff size has been reduced in this period as well due to increasing costs and shrinking budgets. As a result, the variety of courses and opportunities and experiences for students in areas like music, art, home economics, business, and many of the other career and technical pathways have dwindled dramatically. This state of affairs was not acceptable. To provide more options and variety of classes to students, the District has implemented several collaborative and innovative programs:

Collaborative Exploration Weeks designed to increase course offerings.

Refocused instruction in the local Yup'ik language and culture to promote student well-being and a sense of place and self.

Increased use of technology to access new curricula and share resources between schools.

[8:38:23 AM](#)

MS. ANDREWS explained that to address the issue of limited course offerings, the district established a series of mini-term courses called Exploration Week offered four times per year for one week. They were created by extending the school days during normal school weeks to allow for this instructional time without cutting time in other more standard courses. These week-long learning opportunities provide a variety of hands-on career and life skills experiences for students that promote engagement and spark student interest, while also providing additional high school or dual credit options.

Through a partnership of all four Bristol Bay region school districts, the collaborative establishment of a concurrent calendar with Bristol Bay Borough and Lake and Peninsula School districts for the four Exploration Week sessions has allowed situation where students can travel to take courses where the instructional expertise or equipment may be located. This past spring, students in three of the four districts were surveyed to determine interest in career and vocational education course areas. From this data, a range of courses were planned and hosted in Naknek, King Salmon and Dillingham. Among the options provided was a Private Pilot Ground School course taught in King Salmon, an Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) certification class

in Dillingham taught by hospital and volunteer fire department staff, and many other courses.

Students from across the four districts applied and were selected for attendance. The success rate was high. A number of students returned home with recognized industry and state certifications. All students not traveling to the Career Technical Education (CTE) region-wide courses were also given new options in their local schools, based on the student interest survey data. Students in each of Southwest Region's schools were allowed to select courses that they had interest in. On site, at home, a wide range of courses were offered.

Career and Technical Education courses including:

- Driver's Education
- A range of cooking classes
- Furniture Making
- Journalism
- Digital Moviemaking
- Computer Aided Design
- Computer Aided Fabrication
- Introduction to Computer Programming
- Introduction to Robotics

Art courses including:

- Wood Burning
- Introduction to Painting
- Introduction to Photography
- Creative Writing

Commercial Fishing related courses like Net Bench Making

Personal Safety related courses including:

- Hunter Education
- Firearms Safety
- Outdoor Survival Skills

She concluded that none of this would have been possible without collaboration with area organizations and other districts in the region.

[8:41:44 AM](#)

MARIE PAUL, Vice President, Southwest Region School Board, provided information about the Southwest Region School District. She explained that the parents and communities of their region see a need to ensure that the young people remain grounded in local language and culture. Students who are well grounded in their language, traditions, customs, and values will become contributing members of their communities in whatever role they choose to undertake, whether that requires additional training

outside of the community or whether it can be accomplished with survival and life skills that have been passed on for generations. The District's Yup'ik Studies program integrates Yup'ik language, art, science, and local knowledge to ensure that students know who they are and build their sense of belonging in the world.

Providing instruction in the Yup'ik language is a vital part of our programs. This requires both the use of distance learning technologies and a collaborative effort in scheduling. In some smaller sites, where the number of staff are limited or where the language has not been spoken at concentrated levels for many years, this was a challenge. An example of how they are meeting this challenge is the course taught by experienced Yup'ik language teacher, Larry Bartman. He teaches Yup'ik Eskimo Orthography daily to students in another small site by video-conference. To make this and other courses possible, the District established a common bell schedule across all its schools so that students could have access to additional course offerings taught by highly effective instructors.

In addition to culture courses like this one, during the Exploration Weeks the district is able to bring courses back into schools that promote students' sense of culture and self.

Yup'ik culture related courses were offered including:

- Storytelling
- Yup'ik Dance
- Qaspeq Making
- Trapping
- Steam Building
- Native food preparation
- Skin Sewing
- Uluag and harpoon making
- Parka Making
- Subsistence Meat Processing

She concluded that none of this would have been possible without technological innovation and collaboration with instructors across the district.

[8:44:21 AM](#)

MR. PIAZZA added that in addition to collaborative efforts to make CTE and other course offerings possible, and a renewed focus on culture, the District has also expanded the use of online curricular content and resources. These online courses and materials do not replace instructors, rather they provide

additional tools that allow for blended instruction and the offering of courses not possible before. The face-to-face support of locally-based teachers with the effective technology skills, an understanding of necessary pacing, and access to resources found in online course management and delivery systems are all critical for the success of this initiative. The use of online platforms allows for a variety of course offerings enabling student interest levels to be pursued. In addition, it ensures that the quality of instruction remains consistent across all schools. For example, this semester students in Koliganek, which is a high school with two teachers, were able to study forensics, a field which a number have expressed interests in during the year. Students received instruction from a local instructor, and an online curriculum utilizing a blended model.

He emphasized that none of this would have been possible without exploring new models of instruction and utilizing new sources of materials.

[8:45:51 AM](#)

MS. PAUL said that they know that these innovations are making a difference in the learning of students. During a recent basketball tournament held at the "Chief" Ivan Blunka School in New Stuyahok, a group of 5 or 6 students were running a print shop on their own, to raise funds for student activities. Utilizing skills learned in a Computer Aided Design (CAD) Fabrication & Entrepreneurship course, the students operated computer aided design software, industry standard vinyl cutting equipment, business concepts for the purchasing and manufacturing of goods, and customer relations skills. The students were hardworking, dedicated, and responsible and completed all their orders for custom tee shirts. There was pride and ownership displayed by these students. The students recognized each other's strengths and expertise and worked as a team.

[8:46:55 AM](#)

MS. ANDREWS concluded that the District realizes the importance of ensuring that students graduate with the skills necessary to meet Alaska's education challenge. Students deserve stable educational funding to meet the high expectations of our state. "We stand ready to meet Alaska's Education Challenge and hope for your continued support in doing so."

CHAIR HUGHES thanked the presenters.

[8:47:32 AM](#)

KATHY TODD, M.D., Vice President, Valdez School Board, presented information about the Valdez City Schools. She related that Valdez is a city school district with about 650 students. She said she is here to advocate for a sustainable fiscal plan that continues to invest in students. Cuts alone will not create a sustainable fiscal plan and are incompatible with a sustainable future for children. She said even with flat funding there are rising costs like insurance that eat into classroom expenditures. She requested a plan that puts money into the revenue side of the budget to have enough funds to quit burning through savings and make funding predictable and adequate.

DR. TODD related that Valdez has worked for years to try to make efficient use of funds and she provided an example. She noted a need for methods that teach all students at their own levels all day. She said they have used grants to offset costs to certify teachers in multiple subjects. She described solutions within teacher negotiations and the ability to decrease the workforce by attrition, not pink slips, and strategic hiring. She described methods that the district has used to make up for the loss of funding. She provided an example of a local student who returned to teach after employment outside of Alaska. She related how positions were combined and community members recruited. She provided examples how these efforts would offer more choices for students.

[8:52:17 AM](#)

She stressed that cost-effective and educationally-effective solutions take predictable funding. She concluded that districts need the predictability in funding that will come from a sustainable fiscal plan that supports education. "Then, districts can invest in ways that will support what we have now and move our kids forward."

[8:52:43 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Dr. Todd.

[8:52:49 AM](#)

SEAN DUSEK, Superintendent, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (KPBSD), President, Alaska Superintendents Association (ASA), presented information on KPBSD.

[8:53:52 AM](#)

PENNY VADLA, Vice President, Kenai Peninsula Borough School Board, presented information about KPBSD. She described KPBSD's diverse populations, a microcosm in the state due to its large

size. She said that KPBSD works to provide a quality diploma and has prepared students using a variety of methods and programs to be career ready or college ready.

MR. DUSEK added that they work hard to prepare students for life. He pointed out that 419 students received industry certifications. He described the Jumpstart program, which lets students earn college credit.

[8:55:57 AM](#)

MS. VADLA explained the Effective Instruction Committee has allowed schools, teachers, and partnerships to collaborate and the district has become more efficient and effective. She described how workshops and professional development training allows teachers to be collaborative. The district has also aligned curriculum and grades, which has allowed for best practices. She gave examples of Classroom Without Walls, Hybrid School, distance delivery, and partnerships, which allows students to succeed and possibly to return to the community.

[8:58:59 AM](#)

MR. DUSEK described the Digital Technology Initiative (DTI), partnerships, in which they use video conferencing and Skype for Business. He showed a list of the district's innovative programs. He said he is excited that KPBSD students will be presenting how they facilitate video conferencing to the legislature on February 22.

[9:00:52 AM](#)

MS. VADLA spoke of the offerings in the Career and Technical Education (CTS) academies. She noted they are aligned with Jumpstart and with vocational technology offered in Seward. She said the district is well-rounded.

She stressed that a challenge to the district is the uncertainty regarding education funding. A fiscal plan is needed that is adequate and sustainable to provide a quality education for all students. She stressed the importance of students' futures. She thanked the committees for their time. She concluded that "education is the most important thing that we do in this state."

[9:02:25 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked the presenters. She said she is excited to hear from students. She requested that presenters submit written documents. She noted the presence of Senator Giessel.

[9:03:44 AM](#)

DANNY FRAZIER, Superintendent, Dillingham City School District, presented information on Dillingham City School District. He shared a story about education management and the need for schools to be innovative. He suggested that doing away with some legislation would be helpful, such as unfunded mandates. He requested sustainable funding and less unfunded mandates.

[9:05:54 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES suggested Mr. Frazier provide a list of the unfunded mandates he would like to see removed.

[9:06:05 AM](#)

KEVIN SHIPLEY, Superintendent, Kake City School District, presented information about the Kake City School District. He noted their School Board has been very forward thinking and has approved a resolution to adopt college and career indicators. He said one of the indicators is that a student not need remediation courses to enter college. ASSA has launched a national campaign called "Redefining Readiness" which proposes researched-based metrics and indicators that more accurately reflect the educational landscape of the 21st Century, while including multiple researched-based metrics that include advanced placement courses, Algebra II, early college credits, industry credentials, attendance, and community service, among others. When implemented as part of the Alaska Performance Indicators, it would give an accurate picture of student and district performance, providing a consistent, fair, and long-term solid road map for the state, business communities, and school leaders to accurately effect and evaluate performance. He stated advantages of the program, which is research based. He concluded that the Kake City School Board wants to have 21st Century accountability.

[9:08:20 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Mr. Shipley and requested that he send the resolution electronically to the committee.

CHAIR DRUMMOND noted the arrival of Representative Reinbold.

[9:08:49 AM](#)

ANDI STORY, Vice President, Juneau School Board, presented information about the Juneau Borough School District. She voiced appreciation for the committee, the Governor's education budget, and the Senator Majority's education survey.

She shared a program at Thunder Mountain High School (TMHS) called Extension/Enrichment time scheduled within the school day. It provides more minutes of instruction or enrichment. Also, TMHS began a "caring alert" that consists of an online form distributed to teachers and support staff for the purpose of getting help for students. She said she is proud of their 100 percent Alaska Native graduation rate. She concluded that the Juneau School District made the AP Honor roll last year, the first school in Alaska with an enrollment of under 8,000 to receive the award. It means that students scored a 3 or higher on their AP tests.

[9:11:18 AM](#)

KATHY TRAN, Student, Juneau Douglas High School, presented information about the Juneau Borough School District. She spoke of gratitude for the education system, her teachers, peers, and school programs and organizations, and for the legislature's support of education.

[9:12:22 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked the presenters.

[9:12:32 AM](#)

TAM AGOSTI-GISLER, President, Anchorage School Board, presented information about the Anchorage School District. She listed positives from the district: saving money by sharing services with the Municipality of Anchorage, shifting the debt bond reimbursement from a liability without impacting taxpayers, and strategies for dealing with increasing health care costs through an employer-sponsored clinic.

She described the Alaska Middle College Program in the Anchorage School District. Anticipating that the demand will be greater than the availability, she said they are looking at making the Teen Career Center into a Middle College Campus.

[9:14:30 AM](#)

MS. AGOSTI-GISLER recalled a story when she was an at-risk teacher about students that could not read. She said by third grade, a student who is not literate, has a diminished chance of graduating. She related that the Board has invested in a new K-2 curriculum, a reading program to improve reading proficiency. They are also providing instructional coaches to help teachers improve reading proficiency. She concluded that the district has found a better measurement of academic progress in the MAP test, which will be given in grades 3 - 8 because it provides more information.

[9:16:05 AM](#)

STARR MARSETT, Member, Anchorage School Board, presented information about the Anchorage School District. She explained the expansion of Site-Based Behavioral Support that will be used in four schools and will close the "segregated behavioral school." It will help increase student learning, lower the achievement gap, and create academic success. She shared her son's success in site-based behavioral support.

[9:17:59 AM](#)

ANNA POTTER, Student, Anchorage School District, presented information on the Anchorage School District. She spoke of the Data Dashboard, a public service for education stakeholders that lists problems in the district and proposed solutions. This information can be found on the ASC website.

[9:18:55 AM](#)

HAILEY EDMONSON, Student, South Anchorage High School, Anchorage School District, presented information about the Anchorage School District. She listed several innovative programs in the district like Lee Butterfield's Announcement, Media, and Drum Class, and Captured Kids Heart, which trains teachers.

[9:20:14 AM](#)

PAT HIGGINS, Member, Anchorage School Board, presented information about the Anchorage School District. He discussed the impact of increased health care costs in the district, especially health insurance. He said they are trying to address the problem by having an employee clinic. He stressed the importance of addressing the high costs of health care.

[9:21:59 AM](#)

ALEISHA MOLLEN, Member, Wrangell School Board, Wrangell Borough School District, presented information about the Wrangell Borough School District. She related that Commissioner Drygas from the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) reported that 75 percent of Alaska students are not successful at getting a four-year degree. She said preparing students for jobs is an area that needs work.

She noted that career and technology college programs are on the rise, an area in which Wrangell exceeds. She described a collaborative effort between the community and the school district in which the local hospital provides instruction in the Certified Nursing Assistant Program. The local fire department provides EMT and ETT training. She described a fabrication

program the uses a 3-D printer to make musical instrument parts. She highlighted the welding program. She concluded the legislature to provide stable funding for those programs.

[9:24:58 AM](#)

STEWART MCDONALD, Superintendent, Kodiak Island Borough School District (KIBSD), presented information about KIBSD. He noted that KIBSD is known as a career/technology and research district. He introduced four students in his district and shared their stories. He stressed the importance of individual learning and the uniqueness of Alaska. He spoke of high costs in rural Alaska. He said district performance matters when they collaborate with industry leaders that motivate students. He provided examples of leadership partnerships in Akhiok School and in the Yupiit School District. He concluded that KIBSD needs sustainable education funding to remain innovative, focus on individual students, and not let national statistics tell Alaska's story.

[9:30:24 AM](#)

CHAIR HUGHES thanked the presenter.

[9:30:51 AM](#)

MARK SOMERVILLE, President, Copper River School Board, introduced students from the Copper River School District.

AMANDA FRIENDSHUH, Student, Copper River School District (CRSD), provided information about (CRSD). She provided a student's view of an online classroom.

CHAIR HUGHES thanked Ms. Friendshuh and noted the committee has been focusing on distant education. She thanked all the presenters. She suggested committee members submit questions and presenters submit presentations to her office.

CHAIR HUGHES announced the next meeting.

[9:33:18 AM](#)

CHAIR DRUMMOND thanked the presenters and shared that she is always inspired by school boards and students.

[9:33:33 AM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Hughes adjourned the joint meeting of the Senate and House Education Standing Committees at 9:33 a.m.