

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
HOUSE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 23, 2022

8:04 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Harriet Drummond, Co-Chair  
Representative Andi Story, Co-Chair  
Representative Tiffany Zulkosky  
Representative Grier Hopkins  
Representative Mike Prax  
Representative Mike Cronk  
Representative Ronald Gillham

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 312

"An Act relating to dress codes and natural hairstyles."

- MOVED HB 312 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 350

"An Act relating to school bond debt reimbursement; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED HB 350 OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 108

"An Act relating to concurrent vocational education, training, and on-the-job trade experience programs for students enrolled in public secondary schools; relating to child labor; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 108(EDC) OUT OF COMMITTEE

CONFIRMATION HEARING(S):

Professional Teaching Practices Commission

- HEARING CANCELED

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 312

SHORT TITLE: ALLOW NATURAL HAIRSTYLES

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) TARR

02/09/22	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/09/22	(H)	EDC, L&C
03/11/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/11/22	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/14/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/14/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/14/22	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/23/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 350

SHORT TITLE: SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) DRUMMOND

02/22/22	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/22/22	(H)	EDC, FIN
03/04/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/04/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/04/22	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/14/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/14/22	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/16/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/16/22	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/23/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

BILL: HB 108

SHORT TITLE: CONCURRENT SECONDARY & TRADE SCHOOL

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) MCCARTY

02/22/21	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/22/21	(H)	EDC, L&C, FIN
04/09/21	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
04/09/21	(H)	Heard & Held
04/09/21	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/23/22	(H)	EDC AT 3:30 PM DAVIS 106
02/23/22	(H)	Heard & Held
02/23/22	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/04/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/04/22	(H)	Heard & Held
03/04/22	(H)	MINUTE(EDC)
03/14/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/14/22	(H)	Scheduled but Not Heard
03/16/22	(H)	EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

03/16/22 (H) Heard & Held  
03/16/22 (H) MINUTE (EDC)  
03/23/22 (H) EDC AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

#### **WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** As prime sponsor, answered questions and provided information on the proposed CS for HB 108, [Version W].

DEBORAH RIDDLE, Division Operations Manager  
Innovation and Education Excellence  
Department of Education and Early Development  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions on HB 108, [Version W].

JIM ANDERSON, Chief Finance Office  
Anchorage School District  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Answered questions and provided information during the hearing on HB 108, [Version W].

JAMIE BURGESS, Superintendent  
Nome Public Schools  
Nome, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided invited testimony on HB 108, [Version W].

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[8:04:24 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR HARRIET DRUMMOND** called the House Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Representatives Hopkins, Gillham, Cronk, Prax, Zulkosky, Story, and Drummond were present at the call to order.

#### **HB 312-ALLOW NATURAL HAIRSTYLES**

[8:05:29 AM](#)

**CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND** announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 312, "An Act relating to dress codes and natural hairstyles."

[8:05:57 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY moved to report HB 312 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 312 was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

[8:06:19 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:06 a.m. to 8:10 a.m.

[During the at-ease, Co-Chair Drummond passed the gavel to Co-Chair Story.]

**HB 350-SCHOOL BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT**

[8:10:14 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY announced that the next order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 350, "An Act relating to school bond debt reimbursement; and providing for an effective date."

[8:10:41 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND, as prime sponsor, stated that HB 350 simply would open up the process for school districts to collaborate with the governing bodies within their communities to create school bonds for presentation to their voters. She added that, according to the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), the process would take a couple of years before the first set of bond issues would come before voters and the legislature, thus the fiscal note would be indeterminate. There would not be a funding commitment until 2024, when the legislature and the governor could agree to return to the school bond debt reimbursement promises, as made and fulfilled for decades. She urged the committee to move the proposed legislation to the House Finance Committee where future implications could be discussed.

[8:12:13 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX questioned whether Legislative Legal Services has been consulted on the issue of one community obligating the entire state to pay for school bonds. He expressed the concern that the state would be committing to bonds without a statewide vote.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND responded that the legislature is mandated to spend a certain amount of funding on rural schools and communities that do not have taxing authority. She asserted that the Alaska State Constitution directs that a system of public schools be maintained, which not only means paying teachers and providing students with transportation, but also maintaining school facilities. She argued that communities with taxing authority contribute to the operation of schools through the foundation formula and also contribute when a school is built, repaired, or remodeled. She directed attention to a spreadsheet from 2015, showing that when the school bond debt moratorium was first put in place there were 21 school districts around the state that had bond issues at various levels of repayment, including all the urban school districts that had passed a significant amount of bond issues. She said that in 2015 Senate Bill 64 [passed during the Twenty-Ninth Alaska State Legislature] ended school bond reimbursement for new bond debt from 2016 until 2020. In 2020 the legislature extended the moratorium to 2025. Since 2015, only Anchorage and the North Slope Borough have put school bonds before their voters, taking on 100 percent of the responsibility for paying off the bond debts. She stressed that paying off the debt is expensive. She said that before the moratorium the state reimbursed Anchorage an average of 65 percent of school bond debt. She offered the comparison that a property tax before the moratorium of \$35 would equal a \$100 property tax now. She deduced that the proposed legislation would actually be a tax reduction on local property taxes. She expressed appreciation for the support of the proposed legislation.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX stated that he understands the history of school bond debt in the state; he expressed the belief that the problem would be that [a decision to build a new school would force those who have no voice in the matter to pay for that school]. He questioned whether Legislative Legal Services has been asked for an opinion. He argued that the vote on school bonds should be put to the legislature.

[8:17:03 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS posed the question to Representative Prax on how the proposed legislation would not conform to the Alaska State Constitution, specially.

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX explained that, in his opinion, it would be unfair for certain communities to obligate the legislature. He stated that the legislature is supposed to represent the entire

state, but the legislature would not get a vote on bond issues. He said, "For four years I've watched bond elections and ... their selling point is somebody else is going to pay for it."

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS stated that [school bond reimbursement] was in effect for several decades before the 2015 cancellation. He asserted that if school bond debt reimbursement was not legally sound, then it would have been challenged decades ago. He voiced his strong support of HB 350.

[8:18:31 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CRONK expressed the understanding that any new bonds after 2015 would not be reimbursed, and HB 350 would continue only what was in place before 2015. He requested clarification that any bonds after 2015, up to this point, would not be reimbursed.

[8:19:08 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND stated that, prior to 2015, the state was reimbursing school bond debt. She asserted that the proposed legislation would simply return to the procedures in place before 2015. She pointed out that the indeterminate fiscal note for the proposed legislation relays that DEED does not know how many municipalities would qualify under the program and when they may seek voter approval for new school capital debt. The school districts and municipalities would work with DEED to determine projects that would qualify and to determine the reimbursement amount. She stated that a new school building would qualify at a different level of reimbursement than major repairs of school facilities. She stated that DEED maintains a list of priority capital projects that is currently around \$200 million. She added that every school district in the state has projects which qualify for reimbursement. She said that capital funds should be applied to those projects "because the state may stop reimbursing, but the kids don't stop trooping through the schools ... and the buildings continue to wear and tear and need repair." She argued that the state is way behind on this.

[8:22:02 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY observed that once new school bond debt reimbursement is approved, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough would have more new bonds; because of the increase in student enrollment, new buildings would be needed. She expressed the

opinion that it is the state's responsibility to help, and this is a way to help.

[8:22:50 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS moved to report HB 350 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HB 350 was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

[8:23:09 AM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 8:23 a.m. to 8:31 a.m.

[During the at-ease, Co-Chair Story passed the gavel to Co-Chair Drummond.]

**HB 108-CONCURRENT SECONDARY & TRADE SCHOOL**

[8:31:36 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 108, "An Act relating to concurrent vocational education, training, and on-the-job trade experience programs for students enrolled in public secondary schools; relating to child labor; and providing for an effective date."

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND announced that [Amendment 1] was adopted [on 3/4/22]. She stated that the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) generated a new fiscal note in advance, confirming there would be no change to the zero fiscal note for the Department of Public Safety (DPS). She notified the committee that the fiscal note and the accompanying memorandum from DPS were provided in the committee packet. She stated that, although there has been no updated information, the amendment would unlikely change the previous zero fiscal note for Department of Labor and Workforce Development. She said that the proposed committee substitute is accompanied by a memorandum from Legislative Legal Services, of which the bill sponsor is prepared to address. She stated that the memorandum and the draft of the committee substitute are also included in the committee packet.

[8:33:02 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 108, Version 36-LS0345\W, Klein/Marx, 3/17/22, as a

working document. There being no objection, Version W was before the committee.

[8:34:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor, answered questions on the proposed CS for HB 108, Version W. He directed the committee to the last two sentences in the memorandum from Legislative Legal Services that questioned whether DEED would continue to establish eligibility standards for agencies that contracted with school districts. He stated that in Version W school districts would have more authority in contracting and monitoring career and technical education (CTE) programs, while DEED would maintain eligibility standards by requiring agencies to have type M Certificates, pass background checks, and continue standards of education which already exist. He stated the school districts would manage the remainder of the CTE programs, as written in the bill.

[8:36:26 AM](#)

The committee took a brief at-ease at 8:36 a.m.

[8:36:49 AM](#)

DEBORAH RIDDLE, Division Operations Manager, Innovation and Education Excellence, Department of Education and Early Development, responded to the question in the memorandum from Legislative Legal Services on HB 108, Version W. She stated that DEED would continue to establish eligibility standards as set out in the legislation.

[8:37:44 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY reviewed that, in accordance with Version W, the school districts would have the responsibility to coordinate with industry partners so the DEED's [education specialist] position and the \$100,000 in funding would be removed from the fiscal note. She expressed interest in [what would happen with] the \$1,000 per student, represented by \$260,000 in the fiscal note. She questioned whether a [new] fiscal note would give this funding to districts, as they would be charged with making contracts with providers. She then pointed out Version W would give school districts the responsibility to create and monitor individual learning plans (ILPs). She expressed the understanding that this effort would be a collaboration between

parents and school counselors. She questioned the process of creating ILPs.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY deferred Co-Chair Story's questions to Jim Anderson and Jamie Burgess.

[8:41:21 AM](#)

JIM ANDERSON, Chief Finance Office, Anchorage School District (ASD), responded that he did not have an answer for Co-Chair Story's question concerning the \$1,000 per student on the original fiscal note. Addressing CTE programs in ASD, he stated that, before the COVID-19 pandemic, the programs were stronger. He added that ASD had partnerships with over 93 different businesses and programs covering 21 distinct career fields. He stated that ASD is rebuilding and strengthening pathways again for students, as [industry partners] are looking for a future workforce. He expressed the belief that many businesses realize there will be a competition for skilled employees. He stated that there has been little cost to the district for the partnerships to be arranged. He allowed that the district may have to pay to transport students to [CTE locations].

MR. ANDERSON stated, [per Version W], ASD would contract with CTE providers through a memorandum of agreement (MOA). He explained that if there are several businesses which have the same skill needs, ASD would not be obligated to make an MOA with every business. He continued that some businesses may require ASD to pay a sum of money, while other programs would be free. He stated that the MOA would be made with the business which offers the best value for the district and for the students. He outlined that if a program has a guaranteed entry into the workforce, but costs money, this program may provide the best value and opportunity for students. He expressed the opinion that there are not enough students in the area to meet Anchorage's skilled-labor needs. He said that, from past experience, the district has not had to pay for contracts, as there are many businesses in the area looking for future employees. He said there are career fields such as bio-medical, telecommunications, carpentry, horticulture, vet-assistant, welding, art design, and more. He suggested that, because of its size and scope, ASD would provide more [CTE] opportunities than other districts. He maintained that the cost has not been a focus for ASD in the past. He stated that the vast majority of high school students do not graduate college, and the district's focus has been on career, life-ready preparation so

students can enter the workforce. He indicated that this approach has been very successful.

MR. ANDERSON, in response to a follow-up question from Co-Chair Story, stated that ASD already has programs in place, and course credit cannot be given without an ILP. He stated that, because he is not an educator, he does not know the details of the ILPs, and can only offer what he has been told: in order to get course credit for hours spent in CTE, an ILP would be required.

[8:46:14 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND stated that the Alaska Vocational Education Center (AVTEC) in Seward offers postsecondary education, but the program does not produce enough students to fill all the job requests. She indicated that this speaks to the job market in Anchorage. She observed that ASD is prepared to meet the challenge.

[8:46:47 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY stated that the legislation reads that school districts "shall" negotiate contracts with businesses. She offered the understanding from Mr. Anderson's comments that school districts would not be required to contract with every business which may have interest.

MR. ANDERSON replied that this is his understanding of the legislation, as it would be unrealistic for every business that approaches the district to have a contract and receive \$1,000 per student. He expressed the belief that districts are required to develop MOAs in accordance with students' needs. He stated that he does not read the bill as a mandate to allow businesses to demand money from school districts. He offered that, whether it is Volunteers of America or a business, ASD would negotiate an MOA. He speculated that some of the businesses in Anchorage would not want to meet the requirements to provide fingerprints, background checks, and industry-standard trainers. He stated ASD would focus on student needs and find the best value. He deferred to the bill sponsor.

CO-CHAIR STORY referenced page 7, line 23 of [Version W] and questioned in what circumstance a district would pay tuition in a contracted CTE program.

MR. ANDERSON responded that there could be a unique CTE program with only one business available. In this case there could be a

cost, but [Version W] does not create a mandate to meet the desires of businesses. He stated that the process would require a joint negotiation. He explained that all over Anchorage businesses are having problems filling positions, as businesses everywhere are looking for a future workforce and these students would already be ready to work, so this would be an investment in the future. He stated that, just like all contracting, entities look for a win-win situation, and ASD would approach the MOAs with CTE providers this way.

CO-CHAIR STORY offered her support of the legislation but expressed concern that not all districts have counselors. She voiced that she would like assurance that districts would have resources needed for the programs, and the [proposed legislation] would not result in an unfunded mandate.

[8:52:14 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND stated that ASD has already developed 21 different career fields. She questioned whether this development has been through the Martin Luther King, Jr. Technical High School ("King Tech") and CTE programs in the other high schools.

MR. ANDERSON answered in affirmation. He stated ASD has been working with industry partnerships for quite a few years and Missy Frazee is the "CTE-expert guru" leading the effort. He stated it would take time to create MOAs that conform to the proposed legislation's requirements, but it would be worth the effort to have students able to get jobs. He pointed out that Dr. [Deena] Bishop did a nationwide study indicating 90 percent of all the students who did not graduate high school remain within 10 miles of where they lived. He expressed the opinion that either students [in Alaska] are promoted to become successful members of society, or "we're going to deal with it for a long time." He expressed the opinion that more than just English and math need to be [taught] in order to build the future. He observed that students in CTE programs finally understand the importance of math and other required subjects, and all these subjects help make the education experience stronger.

[8:54:39 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX offered the understanding that [Version W] enables school districts to establish contracts, but specific

contracts are not required, and the school districts are not required to pay contractors.

MR. ANDERSON answered in agreement. He indicated that, even though ASD has not done the types of MOAs required by the legislation, the district would be willing. When ASD developed partnerships in the past, as with any good business officer, it looked for the best value. He expressed the belief the legislation does not impose districts to be at the demand of industries. Instead, the district would be the initiator of partnerships. He said, "When you are the initiator, you have the high road." In response to a follow-up question, he stated that currently ASD is not paying any fees to CTE contractors. He stated that there have been some minor fees for certification tests and exams in the past, which the district has paid. He suggested that if a student wanted to develop a skillset and the provider asked the district to pay the \$250 fee for the certification test, the district would do that.

MR. ANDERSON, in response to a follow-up question, stated that the fee would come out of the district's general fund, but hypothetically, it could also come from the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 ("Perkins IV"). He continued that grants do not really provide enough funding and the foundation formula has its own challenges with CTE. He argued that, per the \$250 certification fee, during the time industry partners would be providing services, ASD would not be paying for the student's supervision, training, or material costs. These costs would not be absorbed by the school while a student is job shadowing or involved in on-the-job training. He stated that ASD has intentionally not partnered with providers who would charge an exorbitant fee because the district can find partnerships without costs. He suggested that if a student and his/her family is struggling financially, the district would help with transportation, as the Municipality of Anchorage would provide free busing. He stated that when the Municipality of Anchorage gives a discounted rate and high school students learn public transportation is a viable option, a future ridership would be built. He stated that this would be a win-win partnership with not much monetary outlay, and students who have gone through CTE programs become viable, employable adults. He continued that he would not be testifying [in favor of the legislation] if there was concern about the money.

[9:01:08 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND questioned whether students working and learning in local Anchorage businesses are paid by the businesses or whether this would be free labor.

MR. ANDERSON responded that he does not know if students are paid while they are receiving course credit. He added that [CTE programs] would open up opportunities for summer jobs where they would receive pay. He stated he would confer with Ms. Frazee and send her answer to the committee and bill sponsor. He stated there had been a discussion some time ago, of which he had the understanding that no pay would go through the district.

[9:03:04 AM](#)

MR. ANDERSON responded to Representative Hopkins that, whether the bill passes or not, ASD would still utilize MOAs, as defined in the legislation, and reach toward this process as a goal. He stated that ASD agrees with what the bill proposes, as it further strengthens the legitimacy of training programs. Knowing most of the students [in the state] do not graduate college, he said training programs and career readiness are good for students, and ASD would move forward whether the bill passes or not. In response to a follow-up question, he stated that the district is not paying any private employers who are currently contracted to provide CTE.

MR. ANDERSON, in response to a follow-up question, stated that, up to this point, the agreements made with the providers have not required the instructors to be credentialed. He suggested that [if the legislation passes] it would be a new start, but this would not mean an immediate obligation to have fully worked-out MOAs with credentialed partners. He stated that ASD would probably still have job shadowing, and if a student goes into a field with no confirmed standard, the student would still be allowed to participate. He maintained that, most likely, there would be a combination of job shadowing and on-the-job training with business partners who are credentialed and with those who are not. He insisted that the opportunities for students would not be limited, even if an industry standard could not be confirmed, as in something like art design. He stated that for some programs new partnerships may have to be developed, but either way, ASD's path would be a career-ready approach. He stated that, as for the prediction on how many partners would not be able to meet the need, this would be unknown until the path is taken.

MR. ANDERSON, in response to a follow-up question, expressed the expectation that Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District (MSBSD) is providing the same effort and programs as ASD. He stated that MSBSD has been providing medication-assisted treatment (MAT) training, and ASD has bussed students there for MAT training. He stated that MSBSD has reached out to ASD looking for future MAT operators, with no charge to the district other than transportation to the training site.

[9:09:37 AM](#)

JAMIE BURGESS, Superintendent, Nome Public Schools (NPS), provided invited testimony on HB 108, [Version W]. To begin a general discussion of ILPs, she stated that these plans ensure students are meeting requirements for graduation. She stated when a student spends time outside the classroom [in CTE or other learning programs] an ILP would be set up to make sure elective hours are fulfilled. The ILP also would ensure the student is meeting all the academic graduation requirements and taking state assessments. If the student is in an industry-certification plan, the ILP would help make sure those assessments are taken at the appropriate time. She stated that some rural districts do not have counselors. In these situations, a registrar, itinerate counselor, or principal would have the responsibility of putting together the learning plan. She asserted that someone would monitor a student's credits to make sure graduation requirements are met and classes are entered appropriately into the student information system. She said that ILPs look different depending on the district and the availability of a counselor. She expressed confidence that the process does not have to be complicated. She stated that a student in a nontraditional program would be monitored to make sure the appropriate graduation requirements are met, on-the-job learning experiences are recorded as electives, and transcripts reflect graduation requirements.

MS. BURGESS stated that rural districts are significantly different from Anchorage. She related that there is not a large list of employers who provide CTE training in Nome, but the CTE partners that are in Nome are very active. She stated that for the proposed legislation, agreements between NPS and the CTE providers would become formalized, especially with the Northwest Arctic Career and Technical Education Center (NACTEC) partnerships. She emphasized that NPS would work to retain [industry-certified instructors] for the students as soon as possible.

MS. BURGESS stated that NPS's budget has funds set aside to cover the tuition for dual enrollment programs for college credits. She maintained the opinion that CTE programs working toward student certification are equal to programs for dual college credits. She stated dual enrollment funds could potentially be used towards certification exams or other small costs associated with CTE program participation. She expressed the belief that these programs are equal and [these funds] should be balanced between the students. She stated that NPS has on-the-job training programs where, depending on the employer, students could possibly be paid while receiving high school credit. These opportunities work well for high-risk students. She described that some students are in a position where, if they are not able to work to actively support their family, they would drop out of school. She said that, in these situations, the district provides structure so students would not be getting class credit "just for having a job," but their hours would be monitored. These students would be required to maintain workplace standards and keep weekly journals on their learning experiences. She stated that she would provide support, in whatever way, to encourage students to learn skilled trades. She expressed the belief that rural communities would benefit the most from the proposed legislation. She stated that [Nome] sorely lacks skilled tradesmen, as they are brought in from Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the Lower 48 to meet the community's project needs. She provided that NPS would be very supportive of anything that bolsters these programs.

[9:18:57 AM](#)

MS. BURGESS, in response to Co-Chair Drummond, stated that NACTEC is a joint venture between the Bering Strait School District (BSSD) and NPS. She stated that the Nome-Beltz Middle High School was built in the 1960s and was originally a Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school for Alaska Native youth ages 16 through 24. She provided the opinion that the school probably has one of the largest, well-equipped shop facilities in Alaska. She indicated that there is a welding shop, construction shop, and automotive shop. There is also an office, classrooms, and residential housing next to the school. She stated that NACTEC offers CTE classes to NPS students, but NPS also has a fulltime CTE instructor for metal and woodshop classes. Students from the BSSD are brought in for intensive residential programs during the school year and summer. She stated that both NPS and BSSD fund NACTEC from their general funds and Perkins IV. She stated that there are also residential funds and large grants which focus on engineering,

aviation, health care, and other trades. She described the program as very busy and complex. She stated all students are expected to keep up with regular classes, and in the evenings work on their assignments. She described NACTEC as a unique experience.

[9:23:40 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY expressed the understanding from Ms. Burgess's testimony that ILPs already exist in NPS, and anything new from the proposed legislation would be incorporated in the current process. She expressed the understanding that graduation requirements would be reviewed by an advisor and the parent. She questioned whether a parent's participation would be required, per the legislation.

MS. BURGESS stated that, according to her interpretation of the proposed legislation, students doing CTE courses, whether in or outside of the school setting, would be monitored to make sure academic classes needed for graduation are completed. Students would be monitored on state assessments and the certification assessments, if required. Monitoring would be annual, so students are not off track. She expressed the belief that, in most cases, a system is already in place, but an agreement would need to be made ahead of time for how hours of concurrent education classes would equate to elective credits. This would make sure there are no surprises close to graduation time.

CO-CHAIR STORY recalled that, in a previous letter of support to the committee, Ms. Burgess cautioned that resources may not be available to deliver all the requirements of the legislation. She questioned whether this was still true.

MS. BURGESS stated that for many rural districts the challenge would be obtaining certified instructors; however, many school districts have partnerships already, either within the district, with a larger district, or with a district on the road system. She stated that it has been discussed to possibly have DEED help facilitate partnerships. She posited that the greatest challenge would be for the smaller districts that do not have resources. However, smaller districts tend to be ingenious at collaborating with each other to deliver CTE. She stated that to fulfill the requirements in the legislation districts would probably build on existing partnerships and programs already in place.

[9:29:06 AM](#)

MS. BURGESS, in response to Representative Prax, stated that her understanding of [Version W] is, if school districts can, they would try to make CTE available. She stated that an industry instructor would have to be available with the appropriate certification, but districts may be able to partner to create programs. She noted that this is how BSSD and NPS made their programs possible; otherwise, it would be a challenge to individually build robust CTE programs which would significantly benefit students in both districts. She indicated that most instructors in the NPS and BSSD partnership possess industry certifications. If [the instructors are not certified] NPS would help them move towards those certifications.

MS. BURGESS offered her interpretation that the legislation directs districts to work towards providing CTE, whenever they can, but in some cases if [certified instructors] are not present, or there are no local organizations willing to work with students, then districts should continue to look and build towards providing a program. She posited that in Nome there may be small businesses interested in working with the district, but they might not hold the industry certification. She stated that NPS would work with the entity that meets the requirements. She asserted that NPS would continue to actively work to formalize MOAs with entities that meet the requirements set forth in the bill. If they do not meet the requirements, the district would be creative and look outside the district.

[9:32:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS reviewed that NPS already has programs in place for on-the-job training. He questioned whether NPS has ever encountered an instructor who would not work with the district unless he/she receives compensation.

MS. BURGESS responded that this has not been an issue, as most industry partners have not asked for money. She stated NPS mostly reaches out to industry partners, and the discussion usually is about whether internships would be paid or unpaid. In some cases, NPS has partnered with organizations that have provided pay to the students, similar to a three-party agreement. She reiterated there has not been an entity that has requested pay in order for the student to be in its program. In response to a follow-up question, she stated that the proposed legislation would request districts to run background checks. The legislation also requests that districts would preferentially work with entities that have industry standards

and help students work toward receiving their own certifications.

[9:35:15 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY noted that on page 7, line 7 of [Version W] it is indicated students would not receive compensation from DEED or the district for program participation. She added this does not mean students could not be compensated from the industry.

[9:35:50 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY, concerning the districts creating ILPs, questioned Ms. Riddle whether DEED expects to review the ILPs and whether the plans would be flexible.

MS. RIDDLE responded that ILPs are a process created by districts to follow a student's progress within a program. She said the process would not be reported to DEED. In response to a follow-up question, she stated that, in the original fiscal note, the \$1,000 was an arbitrary amount used as an incentive to promote [CTE providers] to work with DEED and the districts and help defer tuition costs. She acknowledged that the districts are better suited to find industry partners in their areas. She reiterated that most of the time there would be no tuition cost associated with the student. She stated that when DEED's responsibility for contracting was removed from the bill, all the pieces associated were removed. She stated that [Version W] is more aligned with what districts are currently doing.

CO-CHAIR STORY commented that many districts may not have counselors. She expressed hope the legislature would provide more resources for districts to expand CTE programs. She speculated that when districts are asked to [implement programs] without an increase in funding, [the programs] may go to the wayside. She expressed hope the committee would consider putting an increment into the foundation formula that would point to students in CTE programs. She conceded that money is limited, and Perkins IV has not been increased. She suggested that resources would need to be increased strategically to make sure the programs develop and flourish. She stated that, for the record, it is her understanding the school districts would need to provide the resources to enter into contracts with CTE providers and pay for the programs, and that the CTE programs are not mandated. Even though the language in the legislation states districts "shall" pay for the programs, she acknowledged that testimony pointed out CTE providers are not asking

districts to pay. She suggested Legislative Legal Services offer an opinion on whether districts are obligated to provide the programs and pay for them. She argued that the districts would need funding. She offered her support for the intention of [Version W] but would like to know that the districts would have the resources.

[9:43:17 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GILLHAM commented that if the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) is reinstated it could be made available to ninth graders and alleviate the financial concerns.

[9:44:03 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND stated that both the APS and the Alaska Education Grants were funded from the Higher Education Investment Fund, but this fund has been swept into the constitutional budget reserve and can no longer produce revenue. She stated that this fund was slated for recipients for postsecondary education, not high school. She added there are many interwoven bills before the committee and thanked Representative Gillam because the issue is important. While the Alaska Education Grants could be applied to trade schools, she expressed uncertainty about the APS. She stated that Representative Story introduced a bill [HB 48] that would include CTE in high school graduation credits and could overlap with [Version W].

[9:45:07 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY stated that [HB 48] proposes a change in the APS that would allow credits earned in CTE to count towards qualification for the scholarship. She stated that currently the scholarship is not available to students who take a year in an internship. She stated that CTE would count as part of the curriculum if the APS were expanded.

[9:45:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE GILLHAM expressed the belief that the APS should begin in the freshman year of high school, because many students do not go to college. If these students could spend four years in high school working towards a technical career, then they would be ready to go to work once they graduate. He asserted that the students would not have to wait until their senior year to apply for a grant or a scholarship and then spend time in

college. He stated that the entire country lacks employees, and students coming out of high school could be prepared to enter the workforce. He expressed the opinion that there are high-paying jobs and students could be prepared.

CO-CHAIR STORY suggested that students would have to begin in the ninth grade to satisfy the APS's rigorous curriculum. She stated that if students began in the ninth grade, this would allow them to use scholarships for CTE and industry certification.

[9:47:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS referenced that both ASD and NPS already have CTE programs in place. He expressed the understanding from testimony that employers are currently not receiving pay for CTE programs. He pointed out that page 7, line 15 and line 21, of [Version W] conveyed that the districts "shall" pay the tuition for enrolled students. He questioned Ms. Riddle on how this may limit the ability for districts to continue the programs already in place if employers are not currently paid. He questioned whether contracts would need to be renegotiated. He expressed concern that the program may be limited because of this language.

MS. RIDDLE voiced the understanding that the legislation implies "if" there would be a tuition, and currently there is not. She deferred the question to the bill sponsor.

REPRESENTATIVE HOPKINS, in a follow-up question, pointed to the language in the proposed legislation that conveyed districts "shall" negotiate with industry-standard providers. He questioned whether this language would limit what a district could supply to a student. He provided the example of a student who would like to study museum design, but there is not an industry standard for this program of study. He questioned whether this would limit the ability of that student to work in an art gallery to understand this career. He inquired whether the district could provide a contract if there is not an industry standard.

MS. RIDDLE stated that there are multiply ways for a career pathway, and there are many ways to get to the certification within ILPs. She deferred to the bill sponsor on the intent of the language.

[9:50:40 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRAX commented that he is not concerned about funding for the programs, as businesses would realize this is a win-win relationship. He offered his support for the legislation.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND stated that the proposed legislation would next go to the House Labor and Commerce Committee and then from there to the House Finance Committee. She recommended moving HB 108, Version W to next committee of referral.

[9:55:15 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY asked if the bill sponsor intended for ILPs to be flexible or had different expectations.

[9:56:01 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCARTY responded that the districts should have the responsibility to create the ILPs for CTE training as they have done for concurrent college enrollment programs. He offered the opinion that school districts know best. Responding to a follow-up question, he stated that the intention would not be to put school districts in a bind and for the industries to [abuse school district funding].

[9:57:12 AM](#)

CO-CHAIR STORY moved to report HB 108, Version 32-LS0345\W, Klein/Marx, 3/17/22, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes.

CO-CHAIR DRUMMOND objected, then removed her objection. There being no further objection, CSHB 108(EDC) was reported out of the House Education Standing Committee.

[9:58:02 AM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Education Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.