

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

February 11, 2022

9:01 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Roger Holland, Chair
Senator Shelley Hughes
Senator Tom Begich

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair
Senator Peter Micciche

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

SENATE BILL NO. 34

"An Act providing for the establishment of public schools through state-tribal compacts."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: SB 34

SHORT TITLE: STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACT SCHOOLS

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) STEVENS

01/25/21	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/8/21
01/25/21	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/25/21	(S)	EDC, JUD
04/21/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/21/21	(S)	Heard & Held
04/21/21	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
04/23/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/23/21	(S)	<Bill Hearing Canceled>
04/28/21	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205
04/28/21	(S)	Heard & Held
04/28/21	(S)	MINUTE(EDC)
02/11/22	(S)	EDC AT 9:00 AM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

JULIE KITKA, President

Alaska Federation of Natives
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation on SB 34.

JOEL ISAAK, Project Coordinator and Tribal Liaison
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Offered an overview on State Tribal Education Compacting.

RICHARD AGNEW, Outside Counsel
Van Ness Feldman
Alaska Federation of Natives
Federal Way, Washington

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 34.

BERNADETTE YAAYUK ALVANNA-STIMPFLE, Director
Eskimo Heritage Program
Kawerak Incorporated
Nome, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation on SB 134.

DIANE HIRSHBERG, Director
Institute of Social and Economic Research
University of Alaska Anchorage
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified by invitation on SB 134.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[9:01:29 AM](#)

CHAIR ROGER HOLLAND called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Hughes, Begich and Chair Holland.

SB 34-STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACT SCHOOLS

[9:02:08 AM](#)

Chair Holland announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 34 "An Act providing for the establishment of public schools through state-tribal compacts." He stated that the committee worked with the Alaska Native community during the interim to ensure the bill would be successful. The Department of Education awarded grants to the Alaska Native Foundation and the Cook Inlet Tribal Council to help determine the best path to achieving state-tribal compacts.

[9:02:58 AM](#)

JULIE KITKA, President, Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), Anchorage, Alaska, stated that AFN is Alaska's largest Native membership organization. The organization represents Alaska Native people, institutions, federally recognized tribes, tribal consortiums, and village and regional corporations. She stated that she supports SB 34, which would give the Commissioner of Education the authority to do a tribal demonstration compact project for Alaska Native students for five years. The demonstration project will require a meeting of the minds between the Native people and the Department of Education. SB 34 does not overturn or reform education. It does not take away the state's power. It will promote innovation, utilization of technology, and empowerment to accomplish more by the people involved in education. The compact would be a hybrid with the legislature empowering the commissioner to do the demonstration, while AFN would be asking the Secretary of Education to step up its federal trust responsibility efforts. She stated that her agreement with the commissioner would be contingent on the protection of federal trust responsibility and receiving federal government support.

[9:07:16 AM](#)

MS. KITKA requested that the committee review the white papers "The Transformational Education Post Pandemic: A Path Forward" and "The Origins, Meaning and Future of Indian Self-Determination." The papers provide insight into federal trust responsibility and the roles that the state and federal governments played in Alaska Native education. The goal of SB 34 is to move forward with bright, innovative people and ideas to benefit the education of Native children and leave past educational experiences behind.

[9:08:29 AM](#)

Senator Lisa Murkowski chaired a field hearing in Anchorage to gather input for the February 24 Senate Indian Affairs Committee meeting in Washington DC. The hearing addressed achieving better educational outcomes for Native students. AFN asked the Solicitor to enter on the record what the Department of Interior's legal authority is to accept money regarding Alaska Native education compacting. Opportunities slated to happen in Alaska have created a sense of urgency to move forward with SB 34 and not wait for direct federal authority from Congress.

[9:10:25 AM](#)

MS. KITKA stated that central to the project's success would be the ability to work side by side. The state would not give up

any power over education. The state would decide the size of the demonstration project and who participates. The role of AFN would be to set the legal foundation for maximum success.

9:11:30 AM

CHAIR HOLLAND asked if the project would have virtual learning and brick and mortar components.

MS. KITKA replied all options are open. She clarified that the term hybrid referred to grafting additional federal resources to state resources. No other state resources are requested. The state is only asked to allow the demonstration project to happen so that federal research can be included. She added that the idea is for the project to take advantage of the federal infusion of funds for broadband and e-learning. She noted that two areas that would need to grow with the project are teacher certification and incorporating indigenous knowledge into the curriculum.

9:12:54 AM

SENATOR BEGICH stated that in 2010 a pilot program for Pre-K was started. Gathering evidence to show that it was successful took years. He asked what outcomes AFN and DEED hope to see and what targets have been discussed to determine whether the compact schools were successful.

MS. KITKA stated that the outcomes had not been specified as a checklist. She explained that the federal government uses two effective mechanisms to move resources to Native communities. They are contracting and compacting. Compacting is a funding mechanism that has been shown to improve efficiency and accountability. The success of compacting has resulted in the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) having mature compactors. Mature compactors have years of success in passing audits.

9:16:36 AM

MS. KITKA said there are multiple types of compacts, ranging from just one tribal village to all tribes statewide. Compacting is a mechanism, and the outcome will demonstrate the results achieved by teaching from within a culture. It is not about courses that teach aspects of a culture. It is an education system that starts within a culture and then moves outward. She stated that First Alaskans would offer two webinars by Dr. Graham Smith, an education professor from New Zealand, who addresses transformational education. SB 34 provides an opportunity to demonstrate, prove, and show the value of embedded cultural education over five years.

[9:19:14 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND remarked that it is bold to give the project just five years.

SENATOR BEGICH agreed that five years might not be enough time. He noted that Mt. Edgecumbe was mentioned twice during the meeting and questioned whether it would be a good demonstration school.

MS. KITKA replied that Mt. Edgecumbe was only mentioned because the school had expressed interest, and it fit the example of an all-tribal compact negotiation. She suggested that one school per region might be a demonstration school or about ten schools total. She is not prejudging how many schools or which schools would participate. She mentioned that organizations with mature compactors might prove helpful to nearby demonstration schools.

[9:22:47 AM](#)

At ease.

[9:24:20 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND reconvened the meeting

[9:24:43 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES stated she is aware of the importance of schools in rural communities and is open to the demonstration project. Education changes lives, and students should not be robbed of opportunities to succeed. Alaska's broadband expansion would impact economies in rural Alaska, potentially bringing in outside workers. She asked if compact schools would accept non-native students.

[9:26:57 AM](#)

MS. KITKA replied yes because rural communities can be diverse. She reiterated that compacting is a funding mechanism for decision-making, stretching resources, and fostering innovation.

CHAIR HOLLAND interjected that it would also avoid duplication of effort for a small community.

[9:27:28 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES stated she likes that it is inclusive of the community and asked how state educational standards would be applied to compact schools.

MS. KITKA answered that the educational standards taught would be decided in negotiation between the tribe and the Commissioner of Education. The nature of the demonstration would be to learn from within the culture. There would need to be conscious decision-making and responsible efforts from both the tribe and the state.

[9:29:16 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH commented that one aspect of the reading bill [SB 111] was to build from the inside out, making it compatible with tribal education compacting.

SENATOR HUGHES stated that the committee should consider having statutes that limit a commissioner's free reign in decision-making. A change in commissioner could negatively impact the work done by the previous commissioner and tribes.

[9:31:13 AM](#)

MS. KITKA stated AFN has much experience working with the BIA, Indian Health Services, and compacting. All who have worked with compacting feel it should be tried. Compacting is a proven effective model. It provides people ownership over tasks and pride in their work. She invited committee members to submit testimony to the federal hearing and mentioned that tribal education compacting has the support of the Secretary of Education.

[9:35:56 AM](#)

JOEL ISAAK, Project Coordinator and Tribal Liaison, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Kenai, Alaska, stated recent conversation on education compacting arose from Alaska's Education Challenge, so the vision, purpose, and mission of the two projects are aligned. It also brought together stakeholders to determine the desired outcomes for Alaskan students.

[9:37:06 AM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slide 4 and stated that four strategic priorities are embedded in Alaska's Education Challenge. The fourth is to "Inspire tribal and community ownership of educational excellence." A committee was formed to address this priority, it reached a sole determination to "Create the option for self-governance compacting for the delivery of education between the State of Alaska and Tribes or tribally-empowered Alaska Native organizations," and the State Board of Education adopted it.

[9:38:14 AM](#)

MR. ISAAK said that the State Board of Education formed a compact committee to support its determination. The committee's mission statement was to "Support Tribal Compacting by identifying and developing regulations that support the efforts of Tribes throughout Alaska." The State Board of Education cannot create statutes, but it can assist in implementing educational tribal compacting by having supportive regulations.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if a future administration could remove the regulations and if it would be better if some regulations were made statutes.

[9:40:48 AM](#)

RICHARD AGNEW, Outside Counsel, Van Ness Feldman, Alaska Federation of Natives, Federal Way, Washington, replied that generally, it is true. Compacts are government-to-government agreements that typically include a provision for negotiating change. So while a commissioner could negotiate for change, both governments would need to agree to effect change.

[9:42:53 AM](#)

SENATOR HUGHES asked if any federal laws would need to change to progress from a demonstration project to permanent implementation.

MR. AGNEW replied that compacting exists under the [Indian Self-Determination and Education Act of 1975]. Compacting started as a demonstration project and then became a statute in 1977. He stated his belief that federal law would not need to be changed. The Department of Interior has existing authority to take the Department of Education federal money and put it with state and tribal funds for compacting purposes. The federal government is interested in compacting because it avoids duplication of programs.

[9:45:15 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH asked that tribally empowered Native organizations be defined.

MS. KITKA deferred the question but added a draft addressing the definition is pending.

[9:46:21 AM](#)

MR. AGNEW replied that a tribally empowered Native organization is an organization that has been given a level of authority by a federally recognized tribe to act on its behalf. It is beneficial for smaller tribes as it allows tribes to form a

broader federally recognized group and provides a way to leverage resources.

[9:47:54 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH stated that when he worked for Cook Inlet Tribal Council, he handled contracts with Chickaloon and Knik tribes. Those two tribes gave some of their tribal health authority to Cook Inlet Tribal Council, which may not be a federally recognized tribe. He asked if this is an example of a tribally empowered organization.

MR. AGNEW replied that is a perfect example. He commented that for 150 years, federal law keyed to the sovereign status of federally recognized tribes. Sometimes federal law differentiates between federally recognized tribes, tribal organizations, and Alaska Native Corporations. Broadening to tribally empowered organizations allows status to be leveraged.

[9:49:05 AM](#)

MS. KITKA clarified that Tlingit and Haida is one of two federally recognized regional tribes in Alaska.

MR. ISAAK added that the terminology used to empower an organization is tribal resolution. A tribe's government passes an official communication by vote. It is signed by a tribal authority, such as an executive director, president, or chair of the tribal council. Signing makes it an official government notice that the tribe identifies the specified entity as having authority to perform selected services on its behalf.

[9:50:58 AM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slide 6 and stated that compacting is a government-to-government agreement that allows the funds to be transferred and services rendered.

He stated there are different ways tribes are considered governments. A political subdivision is a legal term sometimes used to describe tribal governments. For example, the IRS considers tribes to be political subdivisions for tax exemption. Other governments may also be referred to as political subdivisions, such as cities or municipalities.

MR. ISAAK said that self-determination allows for creativity and innovation. It will enable a tribe to do what is best for its people by its people. In the past Native children were captured and taken to boarding schools, which is the opposite of self-

determination. Self-determination is very different from that horrific experience not so long ago.

[9:53:52 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH agreed that self-determination is important. Compacting schools would allow self-driven control over destiny versus imposed control.

MR. ISAAK said that AFN has been helping DEED identify relevant state laws and regulations using COVID funds. Alaska has limited experience working with the federal government regarding federal trust responsibility. In addition to working with AFN, DEED has spoken to tribal leadership, school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers' associations to determine the processes that need to be in place. Tribes stated they want top-quality programs, efficiency, and rigorous quality assurance.

[9:56:51 AM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 8 and said he cold-called every tribe in Alaska and created a spreadsheet of the tribes' capacities and infrastructures. Calling gave perspective to the various needs, concerns, and considerations of the tribes.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if the plan had received recipient input and, if so, what it was.

[9:58:51 AM](#)

MS. KITKA replied that AFN had not done outreach to families. Its role is to lay out the legal and foundational work to keep education tribal compacting moving forward in a reasonable and responsible way. It has identified that additional authority needs to be delegated to the commissioner, and clarification is needed from the federal government on moving money to the Department of Education for compact funds.

SENATOR HUGHES asked if grassroots community engagement would be part of the plan.

MS. KITKA replied that she would love to have grassroots engagement. The point of tribal education compacting is to create caring through ownership and bring together people and mechanisms to achieve it.

[10:00:32 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH asked if SB 34 would give the commissioner the needed authority.

MS. KITKA replied yes. SB 34 is the legal authority needed to advance compacting. SB 34 gives broad delegation to the commissioner for the demonstration project so that he is not micromanaged.

10:01:45 AM

BERNADETTE YAAYUK ALVANNA-STIMPFFLE, Director, Eskimo Heritage Program, Kawerak Inc., Nome, Alaska, stated she was hired in 2010 by the Eskimo Heritage Program to work on Inupiaq language revitalization. She worked in Nome public schools as an educator for 25 years specializing in second language learning in children. She read from her script:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Let me begin by thanking the distinguished members of this Committee for the opportunity to be here today. My name is Bernadette Yaayuk Alvanna Stimpfle and I serve as the Chairwoman of the Alaska Native Language Preservation and Advisory Council and the Director of the Eskimo Heritage Program at Kawerak Inc., a regional tribal social services non-profit in the Bering Strait region with twenty Tribal Councils.

I was born in Nome, Alaska in 1955 right before Alaska became a State. Our State is as young as I am and the opportunity for partnership before us is one that will make a difference for generations to come. The urgency to pass this bill during this legislative session will chart Alaska on a new course. The consequence of inaction is the failure of another generation of Alaskans. My tribe, the King Island Native Community is ready to compact tomorrow.

I appreciate the leadership of Governor Dunleavy, Commissioner Johnson, and Senator Stevens for moving the ball forward to improve educational outcomes for Alaska's children. Presidents Nixon and Reagan who advanced the policies of Native Self Determination in the United States laid the foundation for tribal compacting. Recognizing it is the responsibility of parents and communities to ensure the success of Native children, this bill today, will establish a pathway for the educational success of Alaska.

You can have faith that when afforded the opportunity to improve education, we are ready. Across Alaska,

there is a history of demonstrated success. From the North Slope, throughout Interior, along Western Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, to here in Southeast, our

Native knowledge systems are alive. Our languages are alive in the schools. In our elders and in our adult speakers in our communities. Our children are beginning to speak our languages.

[10:04:54 AM](#)

MS. ALVANNA-STIMPFLÉ interjected that there are very successful immersion schools, and the students can transfer Native language knowledge to all of their subjects in English. She continued reading:

I can tell you from experience how Alaska Native students learn. As a former elementary school teacher, I have observed how students learn, how students engage, how students thrive, and shared love when there might be turbulence in the home. In fact the success of Native education was studied in a project sponsored by the Alaska Federation of Natives and the National Science Foundation, through the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative.

[10:05:40 AM](#)

MS. ALVANNA-STIMPFLÉ added that she was involved in the project and represented the Bering Strait region. She continued reading:

This initiative brought together Native teachers from all across our State. I'd like to recognize our "pioneers in Native education, Jana Harcharek originally from Utqiagvik, Nita Rearden originally from Kotlik, Esther Ilutsik from Dillingham, Lolly Carpluk originally from Mountain Village, and the many Native educators and Elders who have invested their time to ensure the next generation of Alaskans are connected to our lands.

In Bethel and Kotzebue, immersion schools are teaching children to speak, read and write in Yupik and Inupiaq. The Lower Yukon Kuskokwim School District is establishing K-12 Social Studies and Science curriculum based in the Yupik language. Cook Inlet Tribal Council has improved Alaska Native graduation rates in Anchorage. The North Slope Borough School

District has had a robust Inupiaq Education Department providing instructional support and curriculum development centered in our culture and our language.

The fact is when schools implement Native ways of learning in the subjects of Reading, Writing, and Math not only do standardized testing outcomes improve, but those students become confident and productive people in our communities and Alaska society. Alaska Native students are grounded in their identity. They know who they are and where they come from.

[10:07:18 AM](#)

MS. ALVANNA-STIMPFLÉ interjected that during the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, she and her colleagues learned from Elders that Alaska Native people live a subsistence lifestyle. This lifestyle involves a lot of math, science, and art. Therefore, students' education should occur within their natural environment. She continued reading:

When Alaska Native children are grounded in their identity, they become productive members of their community and in our State. The school system provides an environment where the values, discipline and expectations of Alaska Native cultures are the foundation of the school.

Our State has a foundation for culturally relevant standards on how to engage students that are adaptable to local needs, which are in the Alaska Standards for Culturally Responsive Schools. The next steps in local control of our schools is compacting with our tribes and tribal consortiums. This bill recognizes local control the way Alaska Native communities exercise local control, through our tribes and tribal organizations.

With this bill, Alaska will be the cutting edge of excellent education by recognizing and acknowledging Alaska's first people. We are capable of educating our children, to prepare them for their future. It is time for our State to build good history with our tribes.

We all call this beautiful State home. We know how to be good neighbors in good working relationships. This bill will prepare our children for the Alaska workforce. We have seen the success of the Alaska

Native Science and Engineering Program in delivering generations of Native engineers that continue to work in the oil and gas sector, or designing water and sewer systems. This bill will ensure Alaskans are working in fields that drive our Alaskan economy.

Again, I want to thank all of those working in the tremendous bill. Quyaanaavak, iliganamiik.

[10:09:39 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH said that culturally responsive school standards written in the 1990s are outdated. He asked if AFN would be interested in making them more relevant.

MS. KITKA replied that the standards were developed during a 10-year partnership with the National Science and Annenberg Foundations. It was a massive undertaking. Through the Rural Systemic Initiative, AFN had partnerships with 23 school districts, the State of Alaska, and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF). AFN gave the administration a list of items to be addressed, such as Arctic research. There was also a hunger for more people to get involved. AFN is receptive to updating the standards. However, the role of AFN would be to connect people that have credible skill sets.

SENATOR BEGICH agreed that the wonderful role of AFN was to reach out and bring people together. Alaska Native legislators and others have asked for the standards to be updated.

[10:12:49 AM](#)

MS. ALVANNA-STIMPFLE stated that during a three-year project with the Inuit Circumpolar Council, she met people from Canada, Russia, and Greenland. They discussed the difficulty of instilling culturally responsive standards into schools when the language necessary to teach the standards was environmental engagement.

[10:14:37 AM](#)

DIANE HIRSHBERG, Director, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska, Anchorage, Alaska, stated she was speaking from her personal experience as an education researcher and that her comments and views represent only herself. She said she had worked 19 years at UAA but had been researching educational equity and policy issues in Alaska for 30 years. Reports show that 60 years after statehood, Alaska schools continue to show systematic failure to meet the needs of most indigenous students. However, the data does not explain

why. She opined that the problem was not the abilities of the students and teachers. At fault was a curriculum, calendar, pedagogies, and epistemologies developed by people outside Alaska.

MS. HIRSHBERG stated that when she and her colleagues looked at schools and systems that work for indigenous youth, whether in New Zealand, Hawaii, Canada, or Bethel, the common factor was local school ownership. She found that education systems that emerged from and reflected the community led to better educational results. She gave an example of the consequence of an imposed system. Visiting a new school in an Interior community, villagers told her that the school was not theirs because the children could not play on a playground with a chain link fence surrounding it. Ownership is necessary to create robust learning opportunities and outcomes in rural schools.

[10:17:20 AM](#)

MS. HIRSHBERG noted that rural schools struggle to attract and retain educators, and Alaska's universities do not provide enough teachers to meet the state's needs. Educators from outside must adapt to living and working in a place different from what they are accustomed to. This contributes to high turnover, which correlates to lower student achievement. Teachers want to feel successful, but a vicious cycle where high turnover requires communities and students to repeatedly rebuild relationships and trust with educators is tiring.

Some attempts at change have been grounded in Alaska Native cultures, languages, and pedagogy, but sustained widespread transformation has not occurred. For example, adopting the Alaska Cultural Standards has not been implemented statewide.

MS. HIRSHBERG concluded that the status quo has not worked and something else should be tried because all students should be equipped with skills and knowledge to choose for their future. She stated it needs to be acknowledged that critical learning and knowledge transfer happen both inside and outside of a school building.

[10:18:54 AM](#)

While there are no definitive answers to accomplish educational tribal compacting in Alaska, evidence indicates that student learning improves when schools reflect local culture and teaching methodologies. When UAA offered the Alaska Partnership for Teacher Enhancement program, non-Indigenous teachers reported that the training in Native methods of teaching and

learning better equipped them to meet the needs of students. This is because place-based active learning is more engaging than static classroom learning. The prospect of a demonstration project on tribal compacting is exciting. However, there needs to be a commitment that, if successful, it will be a sustained investment.

[10:19:55 AM](#)

MS. HIRSCHBERG quoted from a forthcoming publication she co-authored with Edward Alexander and Douglas Cost:

We support people working towards a more holistic and community-minded approach to schooling. But, to truly achieve this, the schools need to belong to their communities and reflect their communities and not look like schools from thousands of miles to the south that exists within an entirely different context and cultures. And yet, we are not arguing for the elimination of Western schooling. Schools must prepare young people to have a choice when they reach adulthood of being successful wherever they choose to be, whether in their home village, at a university, or working in a job fifty, one hundred, or three thousand miles from home. Some will argue against the state relinquishing control of rural schools, but given that little progress has been made toward fixing the schools, and the multi-generational impacts on rural communities, schools, and students, from decades of a system that created deep and constant failures, shifting the locus of control is likely the only way to achieve the needed changes and outcomes. If tribal schools are to succeed, however, we must provide scaffolding and resources so that communities can enact genuine self-determination in education.

MS. HIRSHBERG stated she was glad to hear COVID recovery funds could be directed towards the demonstration project and is hopeful it will not be a lost opportunity.

[10:21:54 AM](#)

MR. ISAAK gave his correct phone number and said that the demonstration project was very doable because preparations have been ongoing for decades. The Department of Education was also supportive. There is a grassroots effort, and many people call his office daily, wanting to be involved. The commissioner must be authorized to enter compacts with tribes to move forward.

There must be clear identification of dependable funding, academic accountability, and fiscal accountability.

[10:25:17 AM](#)

SENATOR BEGICH stated that education is one of the largest areas of responsibility as a legislature. There was collaboration on many initiatives. He indicated his desire that SB 34 be moved forward along with the other initiatives to benefit Alaska's children.

[10:27:45 AM](#)

10:27:38

MS. KITKA said an annual convention brings together about 5000 leaders. The meeting is broadcast through live radio and internet streaming. There will be intense interest in the demonstration project and excitement at the grassroots level as it is viewed nationwide and internationally. She stated that the department and AFN are willing to report on the project's progress every year. SB 34 is a historic seed change that would empower the Native people to take ownership over education.

[10:29:23 AM](#)

CHAIR HOLLAND held SB 34.

[10:29:44 AM](#) There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Holland adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 10:29 a.m.