

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SENATE EDUCATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 20, 2023

3:31 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Senator Löki Tobin, Chair  
Senator Gary Stevens, Vice Chair  
Senator Jesse Bjorkman  
Senator Jesse Kiehl  
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

SENATE BILL NO. 13

"An Act relating to costs of and charges for textbooks and other course materials required for University of Alaska courses; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED SB 13 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PRESENTATION ALASKA GRADS FOLLOWING 2005 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES INTO THE WORKFORCE

- HEARD

PRESENTATION STATE TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACTING OVERVIEW

- HEARD

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: SB 13

SHORT TITLE: UNIVERSITY: TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS COST

SPONSOR(S): SENATOR(S) MYERS

01/18/23	(S)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/9/23
01/18/23	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/23	(S)	EDC
03/13/23	(S)	EDC AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)
03/13/23	(S)	Heard & Held

03/13/23 (S) MINUTE (EDC)  
03/20/23 (S) EDC AT 3:30 PM BELTZ 105 (TSBldg)

**WITNESS REGISTER**

SENATOR ROBERT MYERS, District Q  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska  
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified as sponsor of SB 13.

JOSH WARREN, Economist  
Division of Research and Analysis  
Department of Labor and Workforce Development  
Juneau, Alaska  
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented the study Alaska Grads Following 2005 High School Graduates into the Workforce.

JOEL ISAAK, Director  
Tribal Affairs  
Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)  
Bethel, Alaska  
**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented an overview on Tribal Compacting.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

3:31:30 PM

**CHAIR LÖKI TOBIN** called the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Bjorkman, Stevens, Kiehl and Chair Tobin. Senator Gray-Jackson arrived shortly thereafter.

**SB 13-UNIVERSITY: TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS COST**

3:32:42 PM

**CHAIR TOBIN** announced the consideration of SENATE BILL NO. 13 "An Act relating to costs of and charges for textbooks and other course materials required for University of Alaska courses; and providing for an effective date."

3:33:03 PM

**SENATOR ROBERT MYERS**, District Q, Alaska State Legislature, Juneau, Alaska, stated the Textbook Cost Transparency Act allows students to know what the cost of textbooks will be prior to starting the semester. It will standardize the process across campuses both in person and online.

3:34:28 PM

SENATOR STEVENS said he wished to lodge a complaint against textbook companies for rearranging chapters in textbooks so that siblings cannot use the book later.

[3:34:51 PM](#)

SENATOR MYERS agreed as a former student and the sponsor of SB 13.

[3:35:06 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN opened public testimony on SB 13; finding none, she closed public testimony.

CHAIR TOBIN solicited a motion.

[3:35:30 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS moved to report SB 13, 33-LS0168\A, from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note(s).

[3:35:41 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN found no objection and SB 13 was reported from the Senate Education Standing Committee.

[3:35:54 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON joined the meeting.

[3:35:57 PM](#)

At ease.

**PRESENTATION: ALASKA GRADS FOLLOWING  
2005 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES INTO THE WORKFORCE**

[3:37:12 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN reconvened the meeting and announced the consideration of a presentation on following Alaska's 2005 high school graduates into the workforce. Mr. Warren based his presentation on the article he co-authored in the February edition of Alaska Economic Trends.

[3:37:49 PM](#)

JOSH WARREN, Economist, Division of Research and Analysis, Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Juneau, Alaska, moved to slide 1 and stated his presentation would be a summary of an Alaska Trends article that discussed Alaska's 2005 high school graduating classes and where they went following graduation.

[3:38:11 PM](#)

MR. WARREN moved to slide 2 which shows the status of the students in 2021. The pie graph shows that 52 percent were Alaskan residents. The sidebar shows that of the 52 percent living in Alaska, 17 percent were not working, 20 percent were working with no college, 37 percent were working with some college, and 26 percent were working college graduates. He noted that the research did not distinguish the self-employed within the "not working" group.

[3:38:54 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked how many students graduated in the Class of 2005.

MR. WARREN replied that the universe was a little over 6,000 students.

[3:39:13 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked if that number included students from private schools and homeschooled students.

[3:39:28 PM](#)

MR. WARREN replied that it included anyone whose student records were with the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), primarily public and correspondence schools.

[3:39:40 PM](#)

MR. WARREN moved to slide 3 which shows students' wages from 2005 through 2021. The dark blue line represents students who obtained a college degree. The light blue line represents students with some college, and the orange line represents students without college experience.

CHAIR TOBIN asked what the average wage in Alaska is.

[3:40:12 PM](#)

MR. WARREN replied that he would report to the committee with an exact amount. He stated his belief that it is under \$49,284.

[3:40:28 PM](#)

MR. WARREN said students who obtained a college degree earned the least wages until 2009, or about four years after starting college. In 2009 college graduate earnings began a steep upward trend, and by 2021 averaged \$70,000 annually, or roughly \$20,000 more than their counterparts.

[3:40:59 PM](#)

MR. WARREN turned to slide 4 and compared the residency of students who attended college in Alaska against students who graduated outside of Alaska. Students who graduated outside of Alaska leave the state quickly. Students who graduate from schools in Alaska leave slowly over time. By 2021 about 55 percent of in-state graduates remain in Alaska compared to 25 percent of students who graduated out-of-state.

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CHAIR TOBIN asked why students leave.

[3:41:59 PM](#)

MR. WARREN replied that researchers have yet to study why students leave Alaska. Speculation is that they leave for better out-of-state opportunities.

[3:42:18 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked whether people with associate degrees were considered graduates.

[3:42:29 PM](#)

MR. WARREN confirmed that researchers included graduates with associate degrees.

[3:42:38 PM](#)

MR. WARREN moved to slide 5 and said the map shows all colleges that the 2005 high school graduates attended, not just the college they graduated from:

<u>University Location</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
Alaska	3,358
Washington	442
Oregon	353
Arizona	288
California	277
Colorado	180
Idaho	176
Texas	163
Utah	137
Montana	116
Minnesota	90
Florida	89
Nevada	88
New York	84
Iowa	80

Illinois	78
Hawaii	72
Virginia	62
Maine	60
Pennsylvania	53
Michigan	52

[3:43:35 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN asked how she could subscribe to a paper copy of Alaska Economic Trends.

MR. WARREN replied that a link to the magazine is available on the Research and Analysis Department of Labor website, and the electronic email subscription option is free.

[3:44:03 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS commented that Alaskan college graduates earning more than non-college graduates aligns with nationwide findings. It is one reason why going to college is a good idea. He expressed appreciation for the report.

MR. WARREN said he was happy to do the research and confirm the predicted outcome.

[3:44:39 PM](#)

At ease.

### PRESENTATION

#### STATE TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACTING OVERVIEW

[3:45:26 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN announced the consideration of an overview of State Tribal Education Compacting.

[3:46:08 PM](#)

JOEL ISAAK, Director, Tribal Affairs, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), Bethel, Alaska, began his presentation on slides 2 - 4:

[Original punctuation provided.]

#### **Mission, Vision, and Purpose**

##### **Mission**

An excellent education for every student every day.

##### **Vision**

All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them.

**Purpose**

DEED exists to provide information, resources, and leadership to support an excellent education for every student every day.

- Alaska Statute 14.03.015

**Strategic Priorities:  
Alaska's Education Challenge**

**Five Shared Priorities:**

1. Support all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.
2. Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.
3. Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
4. Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals.
5. Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

**Agenda**

- Connection to Alaska's Education Challenge
- State Board Committee Priority
- What is Compacting?
- Compacting Overview
- Senate Bill 34
- Senate Bill 34 Implementation

[3:50:11 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 5 and said if members want to know more about how the tribal compacting initiative began, they can read The Alaska Education Challenge, a 130 page report and watch online videos. In short, it began with the following strategic priority being discussed and adopted:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Strategic Priority:** Inspire Tribal and Community Ownership of Educational Excellence

**Adopted Priority:** Self-Governance Compacting: 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

MR. ISAAK explained that Alaska has 229 federally recognized tribes. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) created regional corporations such as Doyon, Cook Inlet Region Incorporated (CIRI), and SeaAlaska. In addition to regional corporations, Alaska has village corporations and one reservation. Tribal partners sometimes handle interactions between tribes, corporations, tribal non-profits, and their foundations. Tribal compacting is about governance and is legally allowable due to the political status of federally recognized tribes. As governments, tribes can identify entities to provide and deliver educational services.

[3:53:57 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 6 and spoke to the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**State Board of Education Tribal Compacting Committee**

**Committee Mission Statement**

Support Tribal compacting by identifying and developing regulations that support the efforts of Tribes throughout Alaska.

**Alaska's Education Challenge Strategic Priorities**

- Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources.
- Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes.

[3:57:05 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK turned to slide 7 and spoke to the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Compacting in Education**

### **What is Compacting?**

- Government to Government Agreement
- Tribes as Political Subdivision
- Self-Determination
  - Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act

[3:59:08 PM](#)

SENATOR BJORKMAN joined the meeting.

[4:00:22 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slide 8 and said the image is a linguistic map of North America and a bit of Russia. He said the Native language families in Alaska are large and spread across the continent. Indigenous people have anchored themselves to the land for thousands of years with cultures, traditions, clan systems, and complex organized systems of governing.

[4:02:18 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 9 and said the map shows the indigenous languages recently spoken in Alaska and noted that most languages are endangered. The map is a way to visualize how indigenous people identify themselves with colors indicating the closeness of the language families. For example, Inupiaq and Yupik are different but related, so they are different shades of blue. The white lines are not borders but indicate areas of a 100-mile interface where people might shift languages and clan systems. Indigenous people of Alaska identify themselves by their language family. It is a sophisticated way of organizing that anchors the political status of tribal government.

[4:04:43 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 10 and said interruption to tribal organization and education began 150 years ago with the Comity Agreement. Shortly after the US government put the Comity plan into effect, Sheldon Jackson became the Federal Indian Agent over the Territory of Alaska. He divided the territory into areas based on religious affiliations and, a decade later, used federal funding to operate religious boarding schools. Agents captured children and delivered them to schools to increase enrollment and federal funding. Five years later the court ruled the practice illegal. Residential schools stem from the era of religious boarding schools that instituted the contracting process, which is why contracting has not been a successful mechanism for engaging tribes. It was a horrific time for children and their families. Children experienced physical and

sexual abuse, exposure, and death. Compacting affords healthy self-determination, hope, and optimism to move forward from the long-lasting effects of a dark period.

[4:08:33 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS asked why the Russian Orthodox Church was not included on the map.

[4:09:04 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK replied that although the Russian Orthodox Church had established a presence in Alaska through early Russian contact, it was not a denomination in the United States. He noted that the Treaty of Cession marked a shift from Natives sharing and learning other languages to Native language eradication by US policy.

[4:10:53 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slides 11-12 and said due to the history of contracting and the newness of compacting in Alaska, members of the Alaska Education Challenge recognized the need to partner with the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN). AFN is a fantastic partner but not a federally recognized tribe. AFN is partnering with Alaska as a subject matter expert, not a tribal partner. AFN has been assisting with the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Partnership with Alaska Federation of Natives**

- Identify relevant federal and State laws and regulations
- Compile relevant material related to educating Alaska Native students
- Engage with Alaska Native leaders and subject matter experts on educational compacting options

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[4:14:03 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK turned to slide 13 and said Cook Inlet Tribal Council is not a federally recognized tribe but works with the tribes and DEED because it has compacting experience. Many ask the

tribes and DEED what success in education compacting will look like. The reply is the Alaskan Native community is not a monolith; it is highly relationship-based. The grant with Cook Inlet Tribal Council facilitates communication as tribes and the state create a successful learning system that reflects communities and cultures.

4:15:46 PM

CHAIR TOBIN said she heard that an immersion school DEED visited described how it reimagined assessments rooted in its worldview. She wondered if and how tribal compacting would use tools reflective of communities and cultures to build assessments for determining student learning.

4:16:41 PM

MR. ISAAK said the short answer is yes, but the department and Western education systems will need help with how to assess or show progress and student success that is articulated from an indigenous or tribal perspective. He noted that the outcomes of that question are being tracked at <https://ourfutureancestors.com>

4:20:05 PM

MR. ISAAK returned to slide 13 and said people have suggested that tribal compacting begin as a pilot program. Evaluation is critical to show that the program works before it is expanded.

4:21:03 PM

MR. ISAAK moved to slides 14-15 and said the screenshots from the interactive website Our Future Ancestors illustrates the work of the Cook Inlet Tribal Council in starting conversations about what success in education looks like. Written answers and recorded stories are available and creating a login allows individuals to add their answers and stories.

4:23:51 PM

MR. ISAAK turned to slide 16 and spoke to the following points:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Senate Bill 34**

- State Tribe Negotiation
- State Board
- District Consultation
- Teacher Union Consultation
- Report to the Legislature

[4:26:49 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK turned to slide 17 and spoke to the following:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Request For Application: State Tribal  
Education Partnership Grant**

- Up to five (5) Tribal Partners
- Up to five (5) \$100,000 grant awards
- Application window: October 8 - December 30, 2022
- Department of Education and Early Development Review
- State Board of Education Compacting Committee Review
- State Board of Education Selection at March 2023 quarterly meeting

[4:28:36 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 18 and said the request for application (RFA) process shows that tribal partners can think about the technical side of drafting a report and how to transform education in Alaska. He provided the purpose of the State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP) program as follows:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Purpose of Program:** The purpose of this program is to provide support for Tribal partners to work with the Alaska State Board of Education on the negotiation, consultation, and co-development of a legislative report on what is necessary for creating the opportunity enacted through statute and regulations to provide for future State Tribal Education Compact schools.

[4:29:28 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 19 and spoke about the STEP grant award amount and funding period:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Award Amount**

- The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) will award up to five (5) grants of \$100,000 each. Grantees will draw down funds through quarterly reimbursement requests through DEED's established grants procedures.

### **Funding Period**

- The grant will be awarded for March 31, 2023 through January 31, 2024. If selected for an award, grantees shall provide budgets and quarterly reimbursement requests in both FY2023 and FY2024.

[4:29:44 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 20 and said DEED wanted to be a good partner and have the application process available to tribes without needing a grant writer. The general application requirements for the grant are:

### **Overview Narrative**

- 5 pages, maximum
- Provide a one-to-three sentence mission statement for applicant's proposed Tribal school
- State the vision of the school in one paragraph (250-300 word maximum)
- Describe your Tribe's education model and pedagogical approach to education
  - Provide succinct examples of education activities that help visualize the educational model and pedagogy
  - Briefly explain how elder guidance will be integrated into the educational model
- Explain how this school aligns with the Tribes overall mission, vision, and goals
  - Include a description of how your Tribe has been preparing for a Tribal school in areas such as community input, organizational capacity building, and infrastructure, etc

[4:31:53 PM](#)

SENATOR GRAY-JACKSON asked if compact schools would include grades K-12.

MR. ISAAK replied that applicants can list how they want to build the school. For example, one applicant intends to start with a school that is grades 9 - 12 and eventually work towards K-12. A second applicant operates a Head Start program and wants to start with earlier grades. Another school wants to operate a school based on the enrollment ages, so the report would need to

include a vehicle to cover grades K-12. There are also conversations about including PreK because of the Reads Act.

[4:33:30 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slides 21-22 and discussed the program design narrative portion of the application as follows:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Program Design Narrative**

- 10 pages, maximum
  
- Detail the approach for selection and development of **curriculum and instructional frameworks** to be used in the school
  
- Describe the process for ensuring **community engagement and parent involvement**
  
- Provide an overview for how programs will be offered for **special populations**
  - For example, how students eligible for special education, English language learners, and various federal title programs will be addressed
  
- Provide the **school calendar** and explain how it directly supports the school's educational model

[4:35:38 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN asked if the schools would be open to every student in the community or only specific students.

MR. ISAAK replied that they must be open for everyone to enroll. There have been conversations about what to do if there is limited space. The current programs that tribal partners operate follow the laws for their types of schools. He provided an example of a private school and a charter school. The schools must be available to all students as the Constitution requires.

[4:37:55 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slide 22 and continued:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Program Design Narrative** (continued)

- Explain how the proposed school will be culturally based
  - Include how instructional methods, classroom environment, and assessment will be culturally based
- Describe **how students will be grouped/organized** for instructional purposes
  - For example, grouping by grade, age, or developmental ability, etc.
- From the standpoint of the Tribe, describe what student success will be
- Describe how **assessments, standards, and targets** will be grounded in the school's educational model and pedagogy that show student achievement/success
  - Provide one succinct example that showcases how assessments will be used to inform instruction and visualize student achievement
- Briefly explain the school's approach to **discipline/correction**
- Include any other program design considerations that are relevant based on your **Tribe's expertise** and knowledge of working in your community

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MR. ISAAK moved to slides 23-24 and discussed the following points of the general application requirements:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Operations Narrative**

- 10 pages, maximum
- Describe the **school governance/oversight** structure
  - Include how the school governance/oversight body is established and its relationship to school programming and operations
- State the **number of students** (both in grades and ages) the school programming is designed to serve, as well as state the intended student enrollment for the school

- Outline the **number of anticipated staff** and their roles and responsibilities as needed to carry out the school's goals
  - Describe the approach for providing professional development for staff as needed to carry out the educational model of the school
- Provide **two organizational charts**
  - Tribal Governance organizational chart
  - School Operations organizational chart

**Operations Narrative** (continued)

- Outline the **facilities needs** for the school
  - Include the ability to provide for these facilities needs independently or if partnerships are needed to meet the facilities needs for the school
- Outline **transportation needs** for the school
  - Include the ability to provide for these transportations needs independently or if partnerships are needed to meet the transportation needs for the school
- Describe the anticipated support and connection to **the local school district needed** to operate the Tribal school
- Include any other operations design considerations that are relevant based on your **Tribe's expertise** and knowledge of working in your community

[4:41:17 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 25 and said the application empowers and sets tribes up for success. The application is a checklist of the nuts and bolts needed to start a school.

[4:41:44 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK turned to slides 26-27 and read the application's scoring rubric:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Centering Tribal Voice

10

Tribal Community and Tribal

Administrative Support	10
Transformational Design	10
Carrying out Educational Services Presents strong expertise and understanding of what is necessary to carry out educational services within the PK - 12 arena, including:	30
1. Program design	
2. Leaderships/governance	
3. Administration	
Demonstrates Capacity to Carry out the Work	10
Diverse Representation Priority	30
The applicant represents the following priorities for diversity:	
1. Geographic diversity	
2. Methodology	
3. School size	
4. Community size	
<b>Total (Maximum)</b>	<b>100</b>

[4:43:11 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 28 and said the Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development (SBOE) felt strongly about the priorities for diversity and addressed it in the application as follows:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Diverse Representation Priority**

- The Alaska State Board of Education and Early Development (SBOE) is seeking a variety of applications based on **geographic representation, variety of educational methodologies, representation of different size schools, and communities, and overall statewide representation**
- The intent is to have a demonstration project that shows how State-Tribal Education Compact schools can **work across all of Alaska**
- The goal of the demonstration phase is to lead to a **more permanent widely available** education compacting process

- The Department of Education and Early Development staff and the SBOE Compacting Committee will evaluate all applicants to ensure a broad and diverse representation
- Final selection is made by the SBOE based on the totality of the criteria described above

[4:43:35 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slide 29 and said implementation dates for Senate Bill 34 are:

[Original punctuation provided.]

- **October-December 2022:** Request For Application
  - Up to five (5) \$100,000 grant awards
- **January-March 2023:** Review and Selection of Tribal Partners
  - State Board Compacting Committee and Department Staff
- **March 16, 2023:** Meet with Tribal Partners
- **March-December 2023:** Negotiations and Consultation
- **January 2024:** Report to Legislature Transmittal

MR. ISAAK noted that grant partners are to use the funding to help draft the legislative report. It is to cover items like legal fees, travel, and planning. The grant is not funding to start or operate a school. The grant would not cover items like teacher salaries, custodial staff, or curriculum. DEED, through the negotiation process, will draft the report in consultation with the tribes. The negotiation process ensures that tribes know the report's content before it is transmitted to the legislature.

[4:45:42 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK advanced to slide 30 and said a newsletter on tribal compacting developments is available at <https://education.alaska.gov/compacting>.

[4:46:56 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK moved to slides 31-32 and provided contact information.

[4:47:22 PM](#)

SENATOR STEVENS stated that he participated in the Alaska Education Challenge. He expressed appreciation to DEED for how

far the program has advanced. He asked how the state board of education and tribal schools would interface.

[4:47:59 PM](#)

MR. ISAAC replied that there are a series of ways they relate. The state board of education represents Alaska on educational issues and may negotiate with a tribal council. Also, tribal schools as public schools, will still interface with the board in ways other public schools do, such as submitting assessment data. Regulations, reports, approvals, and other processes will still exist between the board and tribal schools. Tribal compacting is a government-to-government relationship; there is no third-party intermediary.

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SENATOR BJORKMAN asked what the overall effect will be when tribal compact schools draw from the population of the existing school system and how will students not attending tribal schools be affected.

[4:51:53 PM](#)

MR. ISAAC answered that tribal compacting does not create a net loss because students are not leaving the state or the public education system. Therefore, there is no decreased obligation to fund public school students. Students also stay in their communities, so hiring personnel or creating and maintaining a building has no economic impact. The five tribes that applied have building use needs and will work with school districts to figure out how the operating costs of the building are fiscally covered. All five tribes involved in the demonstration project will function under a school within a school model, or the demonstration school will be autonomous with multiple education entities in the community. The demonstration project hopes to explore what would occur if only one school existed in a community. The project also addresses potential federal funding opportunities for the tribes, such as using Indian Health Services (IHS) funding for cultural programs such as suicide prevention. However, the demonstration school could not use those federal funds to cover direct classroom instruction.

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SENATOR BJORKMAN asked if local districts already receive and utilize IHS funding through Title IV. He also wondered if tribal entities that compact with the state would make a local contribution to assist in covering the cost of compacted schools.

[4:56:33 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK replied that tribal schools and districts would negotiate local contributions, which they have flagged as a critical conversation. A specific answer will be available in January 2024. Local contribution, federal impact, and state aid are the three main channels funding education in Alaska. He clarified that the IHS funding he referenced comes directly to tribes. School districts are not eligible to receive it. It is not Title IV funding.

[4:58:41 PM](#)

CHAIR TOBIN thanked Mr. Isaak for his presentation.

[4:58:55 PM](#)

MR. ISAAK said he appreciates the time the committee is giving to learning about tribal compacting because it can bring partners together and transform education. Tribal compacting is the braiding of tribal, state, and federal governments to form a strong partnership instead of being three divided entities.

[5:00:34 PM](#)

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Tobin adjourned the Senate Education Standing Committee meeting at 5:00 p.m.