

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRIBAL AFFAIRS

April 8, 2025

8:04 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Maxine Dibert, Chair
Representative Ashley Carrick
Representative Robyn Niayuq Burke
Representative Andi Story
Representative Rebecca Schwanke
Representative Jubilee Underwood
Representative Elexie Moore

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 59

"An Act relating to demonstration state-tribal education compacts; relating to demonstration state-tribal education compact schools; and providing for an effective date."

- HEARD & HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 59

SHORT TITLE: STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACTS

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/22/25	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/22/25	(H)	TRB, EDC
02/11/25	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
02/11/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/13/25	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
02/13/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
02/18/25	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
02/18/25	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
03/13/25	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106
03/13/25	(H)	Heard & Held
03/13/25	(H)	MINUTE (TRB)
04/08/25	(H)	TRB AT 8:00 AM DAVIS 106

WITNESS REGISTER

JOEL ISAAK, PhD, Compacting Consultant
Department of Education and Early Development
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: On behalf of the sponsor, House Rules by request of the governor, gave an overview of HB 59.

MARK ROSEBERRY, Director of Education
Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
Barrow, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions and gave invited testimony on HB 59.

MISCHA JACKSON, Tribal Education Liaison
Education Development
Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions and gave invited testimony on HB 59.

RICHARD PORTER, CEO
Knik Tribe
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

BEN MALLOTT, President
Alaska Federation of Natives
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

CORRINE DANNER, Chair
Education Committee
Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope
Barrow, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

SONYA SKAN, Education and Training Director
Ketchikan Indian Community
Ketchikan, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

AYYU QASSATAQ, Co-Founder and Director
Ginga and Ikhin Collective
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

CARL CHAMBLEE, Education Director
Knik Tribe
Palmer, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Provided invited testimony on HB 59.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[8:04:55 AM](#)

CHAIR MAXINE DIBERT called the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Representatives Carrick, Burke, Story, Schwanke, Underwood, and Dibert were present at the call to order. Representative Moore arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HB 59-STATE-TRIBAL EDUCATION COMPACTS

[8:05:50 AM](#)

CHAIR DIBERT announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 59, "An Act relating to demonstration state-tribal education compacts; relating to demonstration state-tribal education compact schools; and providing for an effective date."

[8:07:15 AM](#)

JOEL ISAAK, PhD, Compacting Consultant, Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), on behalf of the sponsor, House Rules by request of the governor, gave a brief overview of HB 59. He explained that using a compact negotiation, [tribally compacted public schools] would be created. He provided a brief review of events that led to the proposed legislation. He advised the committee that the process would be student focused, with the goal of transformation. He pointed out that the legislative report on HB 59 was focused on the following topics: governance, funding, and teacher certification. He continued that the proposed legislation would create a pilot program to implement compacting in tribal schools, with the idea that future legislation would make the program permanent.

DR. ISAAK explained that the proposed legislation would create uncodified law; therefore, if the bill passes, the state's public education law, Title 14, would not have to be amended. He added that using uncodified law would keep the pilot program tightly focused. He stated that the tribally compacted schools would be public schools, but before a school could open and

receive funding, the compact would require negotiation and mediation, so any issues would not automatically go to litigation. He pointed out that this is part of the accountability piece built into compacting. He stated that the proposed legislation would create a two-year period for the compacted schools to come onboard, and then there would be a five-year pilot program.

[8:12:12 AM](#)

DR. ISAAK, in response to a question from Representative Story, clarified that the three focal points for the proposed legislation are governance, funding, and teacher certification. He noted that governance would be the oversight of the school, similar to the function of a school board. In response to a series of follow-up questions, he explained that the goal of teacher certification would be to verify that teachers have the necessary skills, as outlined in Title 14. Per the compacting agreement, the tribes would need to specify the resources used for teacher training and submit this to DEED. He gave an example, which is similar to the existing process, he said, but the tribe would be the entity to identify the types of trainings needed to meet the requirements.

DR. ISAAK, responding to a follow-up question concerning the start-up process, stated that the Tribal Compacted Public Schools (TCPS) would have two years to hire staff and provide teachers with specialized training, as identified in the compact agreement for each tribe. He emphasized that this would be the "power of compacting." He stated that the key piece in the conversations with the National Education Association (NEA) Alaska was to make sure teachers would not lose their existing rights, such as collective bargaining, teacher contracts, and retirement benefits. He stated that HB 59 would not change these existing rights. In response, he explained that the State-Tribal Education Compacts (STECs) would function like school districts, and, like other school districts, they would engage with the Association of Alaska School Boards. He noted that this is based on Mount Edgecumbe High School, which functions as a school district.

[8:21:40 AM](#)

DR. ISAAK, in response to a question from Representative Burke concerning the retirement system for teachers, stated that the current system would continue. For example, he stated that if an individual is in the Public Employees Retirement System

(PERS) and takes a job as a teacher, this person would be moved into the Teachers' Retirement System (TERS) category, and vice versa. He added that this would be up to the individual preference.

[8:23:34 AM](#)

DR. ISAAK, in response to a question from Representative Swanke concerning health insurance, explained that for a teacher working in the school system, if it is part of the bargained agreement with the tribe, the tribe's insurance would be used. He expressed the understanding that not all teachers in the state system would be eligible for the insurance under TERS, as each school district makes its own agreement on the health insurance used for staff. He stated that during the discussions on compacting, it was decided that a teacher working in TCPS would have the option to be covered under the tribe's health insurance plan.

[8:25:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY commented on paraprofessionals, who often would like to move into a teaching role; however, paraprofessionals are covered by PERS, which is considered better than TERS. For the record, she expressed the opinion that this issue should be considered. She questioned NEA's perspective on teachers moving between PERS, TERS, and any TCPS system.

DR. ISAAK, in response, stated that in discussions with NEA Alaska, the movement of staff and students has been addressed. The key principle would be to have transparent and direct communication on this. He pointed out that teachers are already moving in the state, as the teacher turnover rate is over 50 percent and almost 80 percent in some areas. He stated that because of this, HB 59 would not be able to change the way this movement is currently addressed; however, he noted that TCPS teachers would have very niche skillsets, such as with immersion programs, and these teachers would need to be protected from movement. He expressed the opinion that STEC could be used to help control this movement in TCPS. He deferred to Mark Roseberry.

[8:30:53 AM](#)

MARK ROSEBERRY, Director of Education, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS), concerning teacher certification, stated

that ICAS has an active tribal school [Qargi Academy], which is supported by fundraising and grants. He stated that ICAS is creating its own education system, different than conventional systems, and the tribe would train its own teachers in this system. He stated that work has been done with different universities in the state; however, concerning teacher training and certification, the challenge is that "universities can't really budge." He pointed out that ICAS is interested in courses for teachers that would align with ICAS's model of education, so when a teacher steps into the classroom, the teacher would follow this model. He continued that ICAS is designing its training program with the universities and with consultants, while looking at the most current research and the Inupiat culture, which has a very effective way of transferring and implementing knowledge.

[8:33:03 AM](#)

CHAIR DIBERT questioned whether Indigenous curriculum from the local school district could be used for the tribal school.

MR. ROSEBERRY responded that the local school district does have resources to share. He added that Ilisagvik College, the borough, the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, and others are also providing support. He pointed out that the different partners are learning from each other.

[8:34:32 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK expressed the opinion that hurdles for the proposed legislation would be to understand and measure the curriculum. She suggested that this could look different for different Indigenous cultures across the state. She acknowledged the reason universities would not want to "budge" on the basic teacher certification curriculum. She questioned whether there has been an effort to create a statewide basis outside of the universities for an Indigenous format. She opined whether the curriculum would be "truly different" in regions throughout the state. Considering this, she questioned the measurement of the curriculum.

DR. ISAAK, in response, explained that once compacting is setup, each tribe and geographic area would bring its own expertise to the instructional framework in the classroom. He stated that curriculum measurement would be a statewide concern. He noted that the [five elected] tribes are currently communicating with each other to address compacting and other subjects "on nearly a

daily basis." He expressed the understanding that they are communicating TCPS needs with each other and with existing school districts.

8:38:15 AM

MR. ROSEBERRY added that universities cannot "budge" on teacher certification because of accreditation issues, as teacher requirements are "set in stone." He stated that ICAS is working with universities on setting up a separate type of certification system, and the tribe would provide this. He noted that the universities are "willing partners;" however, they must follow their requirements. He pointed out that there are differences in the tribes across the state, so this would be about supporting the needs of local students.

8:39:56 AM

MISCHA JACKSON, Tribal Education Liaison, Education Development, Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, shared that the subject under discussion is one of her focuses. To respond to this, she posed the question, "How do we know teachers know how to teach?" She expressed the understanding that currently the state assesses a teacher on knowledge, skill, and disposition; however, different universities have different systems of evaluating teachers on these state requirements. She expressed the opinion that the impact of curriculum and teachers should not be measured without fidelity; however, she expressed uncertainty whether Indigenous curriculum in Southeast Alaska is currently being implemented with fidelity. Because of this, she expressed doubt that outcomes could be "truly measured." She argued that the tribe could create a system to ensure the curriculum is implemented with fidelity, and in this way, impact could be "truly measured." She suggested that controlling the variables would make the data more reliable. She pointed out that tribes do not have measurable data at this point, so creating a system from the ground up would allow tribes to define success for themselves and success in education. She added that readiness and preparedness would also be defined, from entry level to exit level, and then adjustments could be made. She discussed how this would work in a smaller school setting.

CHAIR DIBERT shared her own experience teaching in an Indigenous community and creating curriculum. She emphasized the importance of having a mentor. She added that Indigenous

evaluators should also be supported and be a part of the proposed legislation moving forward.

8:45:16 AM

REPRESENTATIVE CARRICK expressed the opinion that when a school is state funded, results would need to be measured. She questioned whether the goal of the proposed legislation would be to create a base-line system, which would allow a measurement of success.

DR. ISAAK responded that when DEED was working on Senate Bill 34 [passed during the Thirty-Second Alaska State Legislature], a video was created to address this. He added that the website (<https://www.ourfutureancesters.com>) is an existing model and an interactive. Using this website, he suggested that these questions could be asked, and it would demonstrate whether the system is working.

DR. ISAAK continued that, on the legal side of the question, if the school district interfaces with Title 14, the required state and federal assessments would still have to be taken. He pointed out that every district must submit an annual report to the legislature; however, the proposed legislation would create flexibility on what could be included in the report. He added that somethings would be required, but there would be no restriction on the inclusion of some of the other things. He surmised that each tribe would be able to tell its own success story. He discussed graduation rates and how this can be a measure of success.

8:50:45 AM

MS. JACKSON, concerning technical assistance, expressed the importance of the partnerships between the [five] tribes and with DEED. She discussed the importance of mentorships with Indigenous educators. She pointed out that this is already happening naturally, and now it could be leveraged into a system that teaches teachers how to assess, reflect, and qualify what new teachers are doing. She reiterated that the five [elected] tribes [for compacting] are consistently having discussions on data, evaluations, metrics, and performance indicators. She expressed the opinion that these five tribes would support each other through this process, with the different regions and tribes determining their own priorities. She gave examples of this.

MS. JACKSON stated that many systems have been discussed, such as mentorships, apprenticeships, learning on the job, and others that are not heavily academic. She noted that these systems would match the natural teaching and learning done in Native cultures. She suggested that each tribe would be using the same systems, but they would look different. She expressed the belief that if the tribes have the same evaluation tools, systems could be measured. She suggested that the tribes are ready for this conversation; however, she cautioned, "We don't want to get before the cart."

8:54:06 AM

REPRESENTATIVE STORY expressed the awareness of Western education-centric views, and she questioned the requirements teachers would need to be qualified to work in TCPS.

DR. ISAAK, in response, explained that the current requirements would be used. He noted the rigid requirements for the Alaska Reads Act, with DEED determining the acceptable requirements. He stated that by negotiating with DEED, TCPS would be held to this same level of accountability. He stated that with compacting, there is more of a government-to-government approach for demonstrating this. He expressed the understanding that a developmental process, with the goal of meeting the checks and balances, would be used to meet the regulations. He explained that the compacting approach would be more abstract, but it is based on the same premise. He stated that one of the fundamental differences is that tribal governments are governments, while other governing entities are not.

REPRESENTATIVE STORY expressed the understanding that teacher certification would occur through the "regular process," but with requirements on Indigenous knowledge and language. She expressed the understanding that teachers would be bargaining with the tribes for their salaries and benefits. She suggested that the movement between teaching positions would be in the negotiated agreement, as well, with some other details worked out in the future. She questioned whether there would be certified special education teachers in TCPS.

DR. ISAAK expressed agreement with Representative Story's summary. He added that there would be a clear communication on the options for teacher certification. He stated that the negotiations would begin after the passage of HB 59, as the previous negotiations were only for a draft document. He pointed out that school board policies are currently done on a

district level; therefore, STEC schools, functioning as a district, would have this outlined in their governing body policies.

[9:01:36 AM](#)

CHAIR DIBERT moved to invited testimony.

DR. ISAAK expressed his appreciation for the discussion. He noted that members should address follow-up questions to the [five elected] tribes.

[9:03:52 AM](#)

RICHARD PORTER, CEO, Knik Tribe, provided invited testimony on HB 59. Before his current position with Knik Tribe, he shared that he had worked for the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and these positions had involved standards and quality assurance planning. From this work history, he expressed the opinion that, in going through the STEC process, standards would be reached, "and then some." He spoke about the history of boarding schools for Native Alaskans, noting that Mount Edgecumbe High School had opened with a different direction, and it had brought "some great leadership." He expressed the opinion that from this steppingstone and others, there has been an advancement towards compacting. He noted that the plan to have a Native school began in Knik in 2005. He continued, expressing the commitment to bring Native Elders into the schools. He stated that segregation is not the goal; rather, it is to keep the community in mind while educating all peoples. He stated that in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley there is representation from every tribe, giving the opportunity to learn from each.

CHAIR DIBERT expressed agreement on the benefits of having Native Elders in the classroom.

MR. PORTER shared a personal anecdote, explaining that there had been two schools in [Yakutat] during the 1970s, separating the Native students; however, instead of seeing this as a competing interest, it had been used in a positive way and eventually the two schools were combined. He noted that the Native Elders were present in the Yakutat school where he attended, and he was taught the Tlingit language and song and dance. He conjectured whether the state knew this. He noted the inclusion of all peoples in the Yakutat community, no matter the blood quantum.

[9:10:36 AM](#)

BEN MALLOTT, President, Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), provided invited testimony on HB 59. He shared his Native heritage. He stated that AFN is the largest, statewide organization in Alaska, which includes 174 federally recognized tribes, 154 village corporations, 11 regional corporations, and 11 nonprofit and tribal consortiums. He stated that this represents around 160,000 Alaska Natives. He stated that AFN had worked closely with the state and DEED to pass Senate Bill 34, and it supports HB 59, as this would take the program farther.

MR. MALLOTT spoke about the progress made in the past few years, pointing out the increase in broadband in rural Alaska. He expressed the opinion that compacting has been the most effective tool for Native communities in rural Alaska, and he noted that the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is in a federal compact with Indian Health Services. He spoke about the benefits and efficiencies of this compact, indicating that it includes all the tribes and communities in rural Alaska. He expressed the belief that the proposed bill would be a step in the right direction, but it would require commitment from both sides. He pointed out that it had taken years to have the health consortium in place and functioning. He reminded the committee that this model of compacting is not new, and it works, but it takes time, patience, and commitment from both sides to build. In conclusion, he expressed support for compacting on the behalf of AFN.

[9:14:29 AM](#)

CHAIR DIBERT expressed her appreciation for including culture in schools. She questioned whether AFN has passed a resolution.

MR. MALLOTT responded that a resolution has been passed in support of tribal compacting and the pilot program. He stated that he would give a copy of the resolution to the committee after the meeting.

[9:16:25 AM](#)

MS. JACKSON provided invited testimony. She shared that she is a mother and a tribal citizen. She noted that she is married to a teacher and her mother had worked in the schools during the 1970s. She pointed out that there has been an ongoing conversation on school compacting, and she expressed the

importance of tracking the impact of the conversation over time. She spoke about William Demmert, Ed.D. (1934-2010). She explained that he was a tribal citizen and had served as the National Indian Education Association president. Concerning the history of the conversation on school compacting, for the record, she paraphrased from a speech Dr. Demmert gave in 1983 during the Southeastern Conference on Native Education, as follows:

The educational process must be the root for creating a culture society and technology, that not only feeds a person, but also keeps him/her caring and belonging. The system must reflect, re-enforce, and further the cultures of the students that attend. The educational system must belong to them; there must be a sense of ownership. At minimum, the culture of the community and its people must be compatible with the culture of the educational system and its students.

MS. JACKSON then quoted from a speech given by Dennis Demmert during the same conference in 1983, as follows:

Decisions about education are made within our educational institutions, and if we want change and constructive development of education, we need to focus on our educational institutions.

MS. JACKSON expressed the understanding that, while the conversation has been about tribal students, it is also about every student. Concerning institutions and systems, she said, "There are pathways to education right now for us, but there are a lot of challenges and a lot of fights." She reiterated that this conversation has been ongoing since the 1980s.

[9:19:39 AM](#)

CORRINE DANNER, Chair, Education Committee, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, provided invited testimony on HB 59. She stated that from time immemorial the Inupiat people of the North Slope have been responsible for educating their youth with practices of transferring knowledge. She argued that the people have not only survived but have successfully built sustainable communities in one of the harshest environments in the world. She stated that Elders have mentored the younger generation on providing food, shelter, and other skills. She pointed out that the Inupiat expanded, as there were no "dropouts" because every person in the community played a role. She discussed the

historic negative influence of outsiders, pointing out that the Indigenous people had remained healthy while the outsiders became malnourished. She further discussed the survival of the Indigenous people of the Arctic, as they knew the science and geography in the area, and they knew how to use these resources sustainably.

MS. DANNER reported that when the Western education system was "forced" on the Indigenous people, their way of being was considered "less than." She stated that families were separated, and local knowledge was lost. She argued that in Western-based public schools "our Native youth are not doing well," as the system does not work for these students. She stated that this seen by consistent low-test scores, lack of career planning and development, and large dropout rates. In conclusion, she argued that this should not be tolerated.

MS. DANNER stated that HB 59 presents a "glimmer of hope," as the current model of education could be transformed by compacting. She continued that this would provide an appropriate education for all rural youth, as compacting would place the control of education back into the hands of students, parents, and communities. She pointed out that the culture in Native schools reflects the culture in the community. She spoke about the learning process in Qargi Academy, as a child's whole life would be addressed. She stated that students do not come to school stressed because Qargi Academy reflects their community. She emphasized that tribal compacting is needed in local communities "now," as waiting for appropriate education for these students represents another year lost, and the students would fall further behind. She urged the committee to support the proposed legislation.

[9:28:23 AM](#)

MR. ROSEBERRY provided invited testimony on HB 59. He concurred with Ms. Danner's testimony and added that the Inupiat people have been asking for control over their education for decades. He stated that a tribal school, like Qargi Academy, does not just support cultural knowledge, but it also supports Western knowledge, using the concept of "code switching." In the context of the village, he argued that students should be taught the skills, language, and customs needed to live in their rural areas. In addition, students should understand how to live and be a part of the workplace; therefore, it is not "one or the other." He urged the passage of HB 59, so the project phase and demonstration on compacting could begin, and the tribes could

show the effectiveness of their education system. He argued the education system in the entire state would be made stronger, as compacting would expand opportunities, while not taking away existing systems. In conclusion, he stated that tribal compacting would focus on giving students an appropriate education.

[9:32:14 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BURKE commented on her experience working with Mr. Roseberry, and she shared her gratitude for the testimonies from Mr. Roseberry and Ms. Danner.

[9:33:02 AM](#)

SONYA SKAN, Education and Training Director, Ketchikan Indian Community, provided invited testimony on HB 59. She concurred with the previous testifiers and expressed appreciation for those working on the proposed legislation. She voiced that every child should have the opportunity for success. She noted that people learn differently, and she expressed the opinion that the proposed legislation would [positively] affect education in the state.

[9:35:17 AM](#)

AYYU QASSATAQ, Co-Founder and Director, Ginga and Ikhin Collective, provided invited testimony on HB 59. She shared that she is a tribal citizen of Unalakleet. She stated that she has done advocacy work with educators, traveling extensively to promote education on knowledge-systems of place. She discussed exercises she has directed to help people connect with their heritage and generational knowledge. She noted that policies created years ago are still affecting education today. She related that during one of these exercises, a white male educator had expressed the realization that his educational experience had always affirmed his place in the world. She expressed the realization that the system had not done this for others; instead, it had taken away their sense of belonging. She spoke about the exclusion of Indigenous and geographic knowledge in the current education system. She expressed the opinion that Native students are being measured on their ability to assimilate, which separates them from their cultural knowledge. She argued that an educational system promoting decentralized knowledge not only harms Native students on their sense of belonging, but it also harms non-Native students by excluding them from learning the geographic and cultural

intelligence of a place. In conclusion, she stated that compacting would enrich every student. She encouraged the passage of HB 59. She thanked all those working on the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in education.

[9:41:02 AM](#)

MS. QASSATAQ shared a video with the committee, titled "Self Determination Over Alaska Native Education."

[9:48:47 AM](#)

CARL CHAMBLEE, Education Director, Knik Tribe, provided invited testimony on HB 59. For the record, he expressed support for all the previous testimony on HB 59 given during the meeting. He expressed the opinion that STEC, as a pilot program, would have many advantages. He explained that the proposed legislation would support a pilot program for only five tribes, allowing these tribes to gather data, which could be used by stakeholders to measure the program's impact on student achievement, engagement, and outcomes. It would identify challenges, which could be addressed before the program is expanded statewide. He expressed the opinion that this would ensure the program is sustainable in the end. He continued that the pilot would also build capacity and give tribes autonomy over their educational system.

MR. CHAMBLEE noted that the five tribes participating in the pilot program would act as liaisons on compacting for future tribes. He continued that the program would help with community engagement, emphasizing that the school and the community would reflect each other. He discussed the funding element of compacting, suggesting that tribes would be able to allocate funds through their relationship with the federal government.

MR. CHAMBLEE shared his professional experience of working for 35 years in education in the state. He noted that he worked in rural Alaska for 20 years. He expressed the belief that culturally relevant education preserves cultural heritage by promoting Native languages, traditions, and values. He pointed out that the cultural standards created in the 1980s and 1990s have not been implemented in schools in the state. He noted that many teachers come from out of state and are unaware of the resources available. He expressed the opinion that HB 59 and the pilot program would help teachers become more aware of the resources available. In conclusion, he explained that the pilot program would create a scalable model, as this would help with

certification and training, and he discussed how this would improve education for all students in the state.

[9:55:26 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STORY thanked the presenters, commenting on the efforts of tribal entities to incorporate cultural education into schools. She discussed the local efforts in Juneau. She expressed interest in discussing the funding mechanism in a future hearing.

[9:57:57 AM](#)

DR. ISAAK expressed appreciation for the time before the committee and to all the testifiers. He expressed the understanding that compacting would be best for students, as this answers the fundamental question. He pointed out that the tribal partner is the missing partner in the current public education system, and he maintained that HB 59 would allow this to take place. He indicated that it had been 2016 when federal law was amended to include the use of Native languages in the Head Start program. He said, "So we're not talking 1916, we are talking 2016," noting that this was when the Alaska Education Challenge conversations were taking place. Concerning the length of time it takes for these types of laws, he pointed out that the proposed legislation was pushed forward by having tribes at the table, helping to draft HB 59.

[HB 59 was held over.]

[10:00:59 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Tribal Affairs meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.